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DECLARATION

This thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other university.

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To my late parents, Benson and Margaret Otieno, my lovely wife and friend Mary Oduor and children Crystal Atieno and Kelly Ondimu.
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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

IMF- International Monetary Fund
WB- World Bank
SAPs- Structural Adjustment Policies
VERS- Voluntary Early Retirement Scheme
DPM- Directorate of Personnel Management
CSRP- Civil Service Reform Programme
AAPAM- African Association for Public Administration and Management
PSC – Public Service Commission
OPEC- Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries
CSRP -Civil Service Reform Programme
W I – Women who were retrenched
W 2- Women whose husbands were retrenched
M 2- Men who were retrenched
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ABSTRACT

The civil service retrenchment programme implemented in 2000 had great social and economic implications on the lives of different social groups in Nakuru town, Kenya. Given their multiple roles as wage earners and being in charge of household domestic duties, women were affected in different ways. This study specifically investigates the effects of civil service retrenchment on women’s provision of family healthcare, nutrition and education in Nakuru town. The effects of retrenchment on women’s decision-making power in the household in Nakuru town have been examined. The extent to which retrenchment of the male spouse affected the woman in the household has been evaluated. The mechanisms and coping strategies adopted by women in response to loss of regular household income have also been analyzed. The study traces the factors that precipitated retrenchment in the civil service from the 1970s and the modes of implementation in the year 2000.

To achieve its objectives, both primary and secondary sources of data were consulted. To obtain the significant oral data, a field interview of women who were retrenched and those whose spouses were retrenched from the civil service in Nakuru town was conducted. For comparative purposes a small number of men who were retrenched were also interviewed. A sample of 100 respondents was purposively identified as follows; 96 women and men from 3 selected administrative locations of Nakuru town and 4 government officials from selected ministries. Both qualitative and quantitative methods were employed in analyzing the collected data. This study employs the social relations gender approach in its analysis and theoretical explanation of the subordination of women.

In its findings, this work established that retrenchment in the civil service in Kenya was precipitated by lack of stringent and gender balanced recruitment procedures that resulted in an overstaffed service. This prompted a retrenchment exercise that was conducted without due consideration of gender. Since gender was not a consideration in its implementation, civil service retrenchment
negatively affected women in their provision of family healthcare, nutrition and education of children in Nakuru Town. Loss of regular income through retrenchment was found to have eroded the woman’s autonomy and decision-making power. It was further established that that retrenchment of the male spouses negatively affected women in the household, who had to intensify their income generating activities to compensate for the loss of household income. Women in Nakuru town were found to have devised several coping mechanisms and survival strategies to deal with the negative effects of civil service retrenchment.

Finally this study gives recommendations to the Kenya Government on how to conduct future retrenchment exercises to avoid suffering of the persons involved. This work further recommends that the government should initiate and promote gender sensitive policies and encourage affirmative action in recruitment of employees in the civil service.
CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study
The civil service inherited from the colonial regime in Kenya was relatively small and mainly dominated by expatriates. The major challenge for the newly independent nation concerned the replacement of those expatriates by nationals. There was a natural desire on the part of African nationalists to see the imbalance in the racial composition of the public service redressed as quickly as possible (G.O.K, 1963).

This necessitated the Africanization programme which aimed at making the service at all salary levels a reflection of the indigenous section of the population. As a result, the size of the civil service in Kenya increased significantly as the usual practice was automatic recruitment of all those graduating from training institutions without regard to the country’s economic situation.

The justification given for this growth was that the government was providing more services to a greater population and had to extract more resources and regulate more activity than it did at the time of independence (Gok, 2000). The expansion was also a consequence of pressure on the government to provide employment to its citizens as it embarked on an ambitious plan of reducing unemployment through the massive recruitment of its citizens into the civil service.
A hostile external environment heightened the African crisis in the mid 1970s and the early 1980s. The high oil prices of the 1970s led to a collapse in international primary commodity prices. Declining foreign investments and foreign assistance, higher interest rates on foreign loans, all culminated in serious debt, food and energy crises throughout the African economies.

African countries inherited from colonialism very fragile and unstable institutions of governance, economic development and social integration, characterized by high levels of underdevelopment and external dependence (Mkandawire & Soludo 1999). The narrow productive base and the over reliance on non-oil products for export exposed the economies of African countries to the harsh international economic conditions that characterized the mid-1970s (Mengisteab & Ikubolajoh 1995).

As the economic crisis spread and deepened, developing counties unable to sustain their economic and financial imbalances were forced to undertake remedial measures (Maxon & Ndege 1995, Nzomo, 1995). The call for comprehensive reforms was first articulated in the World Bank (WB) 1981 report entitled ‘Accelerated Development in Sub-Saharan Africa’ (also known as the Berg Report). Through the Berg Report, the WB and International Monetary Fund (IMF) directed developing countries to implement Structural Adjustment Policies (SAPs) as conditions for aid.

SAPs were supposedly curative medicine to ‘assist’ African countries to recover/ adjust from the crisis of debt and mismanaged economies and move towards sustainable
development. As part of the structural adjustment package, the Kenya government specifically undertook reforms which included; decontrol of prices in the economy, removal of subsidies in healthcare, education and foodstuffs, currency devaluation, privatization of government-owned enterprises and civil service retrenchment.

SAPs had great social, political and economic impacts on different social groups, who included the youth, men, women and children, which were both negative and positive. Olukoshi (1993) and Zeleza (1997) show that SAPs had negative effects on industry, agriculture and growth. In Kenya, Coughlin & Ikiara (1988) attribute increased unemployment, rising prices and falling wages as the most negative effects of SAPs.

There were also positive sides of SAPs. Guyer & Olukemi (1991) argue that the ban on imported food and the resultant price hikes encouraged Yoruba women in Nigeria to cash in on higher producer prices. Ensminger (1991), shows that price liberalization in Kenya meant greater incomes, education, nutrition, health and political power for Orma women. SAPs have also been credited for bringing efficiency and accountability in service delivery and encouraging good governance among developing nations.

As part of SAPs, the Kenya government implemented the civil service retrenchment programme. Retrenchment refers to the deliberate process of terminating the services of employees for any reason whatsoever other than punishment inflicted by way of disciplinary action in the hope of obtaining an optimal staffing level (Dia 1994, Ragut et
In Kenya, retrenchment involved the dismissal of employees from the lower cadres of the civil service (Oyugi 1993, Omondi 2003).

Studies show that women were greatly affected by retrenchment programmes in developing countries. Manuh (1994) in Ghana, Musyoki and Aluko (1993) and Nzomo (1995) in Kenya document that women were the most affected by the lay-offs, since they were usually employed in auxiliary positions. The loss of monthly income and removal of subsidies on essential social services had great implications on women.

Studies on the effects of SAPs on women abound (Cornia 1987, Elson 1989, Guyer & Olukemi 1991, Ensminger 1991). These studies have however been on the general effects of SAPs on women without specific focus on civil service retrenchment. Studies have also been conducted on civil service retrenchment in Africa (Oyugi 1993, Mbaguta 1996, Omondi 2003) but have concentrated on the general performance of the civil service with little focus on the effects of civil service retrenchment on women.

There exist works on retrenchment of women in Africa in general (Manuh 1994) and Kenya in particular (Musyoki & Aluko 1993, Nzomo, 1995). Effects of retrenchment and strategies employed by women in coping with retrenchment repercussions have also been documented (Cornia 1987, Whiteford 1988, Stewart 1992). These works are however general with no specific focus on women in Nakuru town. There exist gaps in tackling the effects of civil service retrenchment on women in Nakuru town.
1.1 Statement of the Problem

Few local studies have been undertaken on the effects of retrenchment on women who continue to live in urban areas. Little is also known of how these women respond and the strategies they adopt to survive under conditions of loss of a regular income. This study attempts to fill such gap by investigating the effects of the Kenya civil service retrenchment on women in Nakuru town.

1.2 Research Questions

It is against this background that this study has responded to the following research questions.

(a) Which factors precipitated retrenchment in the civil service in Kenya and how was it implemented?

(b) What effects did civil service retrenchment have on women’s provision of family healthcare, nutrition and education in Nakuru town?

(c) In what ways did retrenchment affect women’s autonomy and decision-making power in the household in Nakuru town?

(d) To what extent did retrenchment of the male spouses affect women in the household in Nakuru town?

(e) How did women in Nakuru town respond to civil service retrenchment and what strategies and mechanisms did they devise to cope with it in the household?
1.3 Study Objectives
The following objectives were formulated for the study:

(a) To trace the factors that precipitated retrenchment in the civil service and how it was implemented in Kenya.

(b) To investigate the effects of civil service retrenchment on women’s provision of family healthcare, nutrition and education in Nakuru town.

(c) To examine the effects of civil service retrenchment on women’s autonomy and decision-making power in the household in Nakuru town.

(d) To evaluate the effects of retrenchment of the male spouses on women in the household in Nakuru town.

(e) To analyze the responses of women in Nakuru town to civil service retrenchment and the strategies and mechanisms they devised to cope with it in the household.

1.4 Research Assumptions
This study was based on the assumptions that:

(a) Poor recruitment controls led to considerable gross overstaffing in the civil service in Kenya culminating in a retrenchment programme which was implemented without gender considerations.

(b) Civil service retrenchment impacted negatively on women’s provision of family healthcare, nutrition and education in Nakuru town.

(c) Retrenchment of women eroded their autonomy and decision-making power in the Household in Nakuru town.

(d) Women in Nakuru town were negatively affected by the loss of the male spouses’ income due to retrenchment.
(c) Women in Nakuru town were not simply victims of civil service retrenchment; they devised strategies and mechanisms to cope with the resultant loss of income.

1.5 Justification and Significance of the Study
In the developing world, lay-offs in both the public and private sectors is a nightmare for the employed and mention of it instills fear in most of them. The retrenchment repercussions affect all aspects of the retrenched's life and can culminate in mental breakdown as he/she struggles to meet daily needs. Although retrenchment in the civil service in Kenya had great implications on the affected persons, it has not been given the attention it deserves. Retrenchment affected not only the persons who were retrenched but also their immediate and extended families. Those employees who survive the axe of retrenchment are equally affected as they constantly live in fear of losing their jobs.

Retrenchment in the civil service advocated by the WB and the IMF, and implemented by the government of Kenya had great implications on the social and economic lives of Kenyans especially the poor. Loss of income as a result of retrenchment had great impacts on the provision of family healthcare, nutrition, education and even decision-making in the family, which cannot be ignored. It impacted on different social groups in different ways, the youth, men, women and children included, depending on their roles in society. Given their multiple roles as wage earners and household managers in the family, women were more affected as compared to other social groups.
Studies have shown that retrenchment in Kenya as elsewhere in Africa targeted workers from the lower echelons of the civil service. Works by Tacoli (2002), Manu (1994) and Musyoki & Aluko (1993) show that a majority of women who tended to be concentrated at the lower ebb of the occupational hierarchy were extremely vulnerable in the retrenchment exercise. Although a majority of women dominated the subordinate ranks in the civil service in Kenya, it should be acknowledged that there existed a proportionality of women in the management ranks. Women were also affected even when their spouses were retrenched from the civil service. When it is the man rather than the woman who suffers loss of income due to retrenchment there is a spillover effect on women, because as wives they must manage the adjustment of the household budget to loss of income (Standing 1989).

In spite of its gendered effects, civil service retrenchment has not been given a gendered face in the production of knowledge in Kenya. Moreover, retrenchment has not been tackled in relation to the retrenched who did not relocate to rural areas but continued to reside in the urban areas where they were retrenched. Some of the studies on retrenchment have also been general. This prompted the need to undertake a local study whose effects could be replicated elsewhere in Kenya.

In tracing the factors that could have led to massive overstaffing in the civil service, this study will help the Kenya government in come up with stringent employment and recruitment procedures based on which skills are needed in the service and in what areas. Apart from providing invaluable empirical data and knowledge on how government
policies impact on women, this work will offer insights to policy proposals on the 
problems facing women in the public employment sector in Kenya and help the 
government in achieving its objective of gender equity in the distribution of public sector 
jobs to women.

By capturing the effects of retrenchment on women, the study contributes to the growing 
number of women studies and the realization of the goals of gender equity as per the 
1995 Beijing Conference. As a local study on the effects of retrenchment on women in 
Nakuru town, its findings are helpful to the government as they could be replicated 
elsewhere. It will provide information and guidance that are currently needed to come up 
with gendered policies and practices and also help the Kenya government in devising 
more gender sensitive policies in the future. The findings will help in achieving the 
Millennium Development Goals of eradication of poverty and unemployment in the 
Third World.

Several factors made Nakuru town an ideal study area to conduct a local urban research 
of this nature. The historical development and geographical positioning of Nakuru town, 
its socio- economic activities and its cosmopolitan composition provide adequate 
justification for the study. The historical significance of Nakuru town dates back to the 
colonial times as the hub of the settler economy. In the colonial days, Nakuru town was a 
settler area with big farms which attracted immigrants from different parts of the country 
in search of employment.
After independence, the settler farms remained but their ownership changed. The town is surrounded by several big farms and is also home to a number of big industries which have contributed to its growth and form a large part of its economic activities. Being a farming town, standard of living is cheaper as compared to other urban areas hence offering options not available in the vicinity of the capital city, Nairobi or other towns. It is also Kenya’s fourth largest town and its major bread basket.

Its location along the Kenya-Uganda railway and the Trans- Africa highway, linking the coastal region, Nairobi and western part of Kenya enhance its importance as a centre of economic activities and a rapidly growing agricultural town. The town is cosmopolitan in nature and inhabited by people from diverse ethnic, religious and socio-economic backgrounds who in most cases settled in the town from other area in search of employment. Others were attracted to the town as farmers because of the climatic conditions and the productive potential of the area.

Since this study investigates the effects of the Kenya civil service retrenchment program on women in Nakuru town implemented beginning June 2000, the thrust of the work is from 2000 -2006 as it is in this period that the effects of retrenchment are felt. The period 1970 to 2000 has been taken as a general historical background to the study in order to trace the factors that led to massive overstaffing especially in the lower echelons of the civil service, introduction of SAPs and how civil service retrenchment was implemented in Kenya.
The year 1970 has been taken as the point of departure for this study because it marks the second oil crisis which created balance of payments deficits which were difficult to handle especially for the low-income countries in Africa, Kenya included. It is around this period that Kenya’s economy started experiencing problems prompting the World Bank and the IMF to institute structural adjustment policies beginning the early 1980s. The period 1970-2006 provided adequate time to investigate the factors behind the Kenya civil service retrenchment programme and how it was implemented, its effects on women in Nakuru town and how they responded and adjusted to cope with it.

1.6 Scope and Limitations of the Study
This study is on the effects of the Kenya civil retrenchment programme on women in Nakuru town from 2000-2006. Although the thrust of the work is from 2000 to 2006, the study period has been extended backwards to the period 1970 to 2000 in order to furnish a solid historical background to the retrenchment exercise. Two categories of women have been covered in the study; the first are those women who were themselves retrenched while the second included those women whose spouses were retrenched. Since gender is not about women alone, a number of men have been incorporated in the study for comparative reasons.

The study is limited to retrenchment in the civil service which refers to the Kenya central government departments and sections that fall under the Public Service Commission (PSC) and answerable to the Directorate of Personnel Management (DPM) in the Office of the President. The private sector and the various government parastatals are not
covered although they were equally affected by retrenchment as this was too expensive to cover in the stipulated period. This study is only limited to those who were working in Nakuru town and continued being residents there even after retrenchment. It is beyond the scope of this study to incorporate those who after retrenchment re-located to other areas. However, a research of this magnitude may be necessary when there is adequacy of funding to enable the Kenya government to know the magnitude of the effects of retrenchment on its population with reference to women as a focus.

1.7 Review of Related Literature:
Retrenchment in the civil service in Kenya has to be understood from an historical perspective dating back to the economic crisis that befell the country in the mid-1970s and the subsequent introduction of SAP in the early 1980s. Because of its central role, many factors, historical, political and ideological, have shaped its function and structure. The civil service inherited from the colonial regime was relatively small with limited objectives of maintaining good governance, law and order.

The Pratt Commission of 1963 noted that there was a natural desire on the part of African nationalists to see the imbalance in the racial composition of the public service redressed as quickly as possible (G.O.K, 1963: 11). This necessitated the Africanization programme which aimed at making the service at all salary levels a reflection of the indigenous section of the population. As a result, the size of the civil service increased significantly as the usual practice was automatic recruitment of all those graduating from training institutions.
Since most of the newly independent countries inherited civil services dominated by expatriates, the major challenge concerned the replacement of those expatriates by nationals. According to the Kenya Manpower Survey of 1969, Africans held only 6.2% of the 8,000 posts classified as ‘senior’ in the national civil service. Even in the intermediate grades where more Africans could have been employed, the proportion was equally very low (GoK, 1969).

The Pratt Commission Report of 1963 and the Kenya Manpower Survey of 1969 helps this study by giving evidence the rapid growth of the civil service as a result of the Africanization Programme. The justification given for this growth was that the government was providing more services to a greater population and had to extract more resources and regulate more activity than it did at the time of independence. The expansion was also a consequence of pressures on the government to provide employment to its citizens as it embarked on an ambitious plan of reducing unemployment through the massive recruitment of its citizens into the civil service without regard to the country’s economic situation.

In the mid-1970s there were strong trends towards high levels of inflation in the developed world aggravated by the action of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) of drastically increasing the price of crude petroleum (Zeleza, 1997). This resulted in a decline in the relative price of exported agricultural commodities on the international market and a rise in the cost of imports raising the cost of living.
Mengisteab and Ikubolajoh (1995) attribute this crisis to deep-rooted internal and external structural problems. Excessive dependency on international markets and reliance on a few primary products for capital accumulation made them more vulnerable to adverse fluctuations in the global economy. The narrow productive base and the over reliance on non-oil products for export exposed the economies of African countries to the harsh international economic conditions that characterized the mid-1970s.

This supports this study’s emphasis that the economic downturn experienced by developing countries was not only due to externally problems as there existed internal problems as well. African countries inherited from colonialism very fragile and unstable institutions of governance, economic development and social integration, characterized by high levels of underdevelopment and external dependence. Their economies were least diversified and relied on non-oil primary commodities for their export earnings.

During the period 1970-1980, the economy of Kenya encountered severe difficulties both of internal and external origin and was presented with formidable challenges as the country sought to sustain the impressive record of growth witnessed in the early years of independence. The government’s response was to adopt structural adjustment programmes (SAPs) beginning in the early 1990s on recommendations of the WB and the IMF (Maxon & Ndege 1995).

SAPs refer to a set of ‘free market’ economic policy reforms imposed on developing countries in the early 1980s by the Britton Woods Institutions (The WB & IMF) as
conditions for the receipt of loans. SAPs promised to correct severe inflation, stagnating or deteriorating output, prolonged and unmanaged trade deficits, unsustainable government budget deficits and the inability to attract sufficient development funds in developing countries.

As part of the structural adjustment package, the Kenya government specifically undertook reforms which included: decontrol of prices in the economy, removal of subsidies in healthcare, education and foodstuffs, currency devaluation, privatization of government- owned enterprises and civil service retrenchment. The Kenya civil service retrenchment programme implemented from June 2000 became a prominent management tool for downsizing the public service and minimizing cost (Oyugi 1993, Omondi 2003). Oyugi (1993), Maxon & Ndege (1995), and Omondi (2003), help this study in unveiling the reasons that prompted developing countries to undertake SAPs as a remedy to their ailing economies.

In most African countries the rapid expansion of the civil service had adverse consequences on its overall performance (AAPAM, 1984:167). In Kenya, the expansion had serious effects on government budget as revenue could not sustain expenditure in salaries. By end of 1990, the civil service had grown to 274,000 employees. Some of the problems associated with this growth were a bloated service, high wage bill, low and depressing levels of service delivery to the public, corruption and lack of transparency and accountability, among others (Omondi 2003).
Retrenchment refers to the deliberate process of terminating the services of employees for any reason whatsoever other than punishment inflicted by way of disciplinary action in the hope of obtaining an optimal staffing level. Civil service retrenchment was a means by which significant numbers of serving state or government employees were actually dismissed or declared redundant (Dia 1994, Ragut et al 1996). In Kenya, retrenchment involved the dismissal of employees from the lower cadres of the public service. This literature on the rapid expansion of the civil service will help this study in arriving at the conclusion that by the 1990s the over expansion of their civil services was affecting performance and efficiency.

Scholars have argued that although retrenchment in developing countries affected both men and women, women were the most affected since they are usually employed in low status and expendable jobs (Manuh 1994, Musyoki & Aluko 1993, Tocoli 2002). Women were most affected by retrenchment than their male counterparts due to low education levels, which in most cases placed them in the lower cadres of both the public and private sector that were targeted for retrenchment.

Although these sentiments hold some truths, they fail to acknowledge that there were a considerable number of women in the professional ranks of the civil service at the time of retrenchment. Men could also have been affected more than women since there were more men than women working in the public sectors in developing countries at the time of retrenchment including in the lower ranks.
Stewart (1992) argues that the ways in which the various structural adjustment policies affected men and women depended on their roles in society. While both men and women perform a number of functions, women are different in having so many demands on their time and capacities. Women play roles of producers, household managers, and mothers and are also active members in the community. These multifaceted roles are subject to time constraint. Each of these functions denies women adequate time to concentrate on their household chores and official obligations.

Declining household income had great effects on women and children in the Third World in general and Kenya in particular. It affected their health, nutrition and also education (Rogo, 1995, Nzomo1995). They posit that declining household income had severe implications on child and maternal health. As conditionality for aid, the WB and the IMF instructed developing countries to reduce public expenditure on health, education and other social services i.e. minimize the role of government as a provider of public needs. Removal of government subsidies and the introduction of cost-sharing in government hospitals made health services unaffordable the citizens.

The situation was even worse for those households in which one or both spouses had been retrenched. Prior to being retrenched from the civil service, most workers were medically covered, a benefit they lost upon being declared redundant. This hurt women more because they relied most on these social services as social arrangements gave them more responsibility for the care of the young, the elderly and the sick.
Loss of employment can also psychologically affect its victims. Dawson (1992), documents that loss of employment has some psychological effects that include deterioration in mental health. The psychological pressure of losing a job causes people to suffer stress-related illnesses such as anxiety and despair, frustration and desperate unhappiness.

Whiteford (1988); Kanji (1994); Mupedziswa and Gumbo (1998) argue that sudden changes in prices of foodstuffs, affect the ability of households to obtain available food in the market. These writers also report of the consumption of cheap sources of calories and the avoidance of meat and milk, which were seen as expensive. Abolition of subsidies and price decontrols effectively increased relative food prices.

Escalating food prices coupled with a decline or loss of family income meant a drastic change in household consumption. Both Aritho (1995) and Kigutha (1995) in Kenya report that meat became a rare commodity in many households and was replaced with maize and beans. Replacing meat with maize and beans intensified the problem of time allocated to women as such foods took longer to cook.

The drastic changes in consumption and dietary patterns made in the household can have severe implications on health and nutrition status of family members. Women and children are the family members most likely to be affected by declining food consumption since preference is most likely to be given to male wage earners. In poor households, this can worsen the nutritional standards, and result in rising malnutrition.
Although some cases of malnutrition in developing countries can be attributed to drought, much can be associated with meagre income among poor households.

When household finances decline and cost of education goes up, parents prefer to educate sons other than daughters (Meena 1988, Lesthaeghe et al 1989, Weekes-Vagliani 1992, Kwesiga 2002). In Kenya of all girls who enrolled in standard one, only 34% completed standard eight as compared to 70% of boys (Chege & Sifuna 2006). With economic hardships in the household, it is only the boy child who continues with his education while the girl child drops out to reduce the financial cost of schooling.

Gender is a crucial factor in defining how money is valued, apportioned and spent in the household. The intra-household distribution of resources and income vary by sex and age (Elson, 1992). The relative power position of husbands and wives is influenced by the comparative resources they bring to marriage, such as education and income and the type of occupational and kinship positions each maintains outside the conjugal family as well as by the prescribed and traditional authority patterns of the cultures to which they belong (Oppong, 1970).

Although patriarchy and culture plays an important part in determining women’s position in the household, their income contribution enhances their autonomy and decision-making power in the household. If women are in long-term employment, they have considerable more influence in decision-making (Dwyer & Bruce 1988, Volger 1998,
Tripp 1989). As women gain access to positions that control economic resources, male dominance comes under threat (Costello, 1995).

Apart from the contribution to the household cash economy, women’s autonomy and decision-making power is determined by her social status in the family, area of decision-making, household’s socio-economic status and her education level (Volger, 1988). Social status includes her marital rank (whether she is the first, second or youngest wife) and the number of children she has.

Though women spend more time and energy managing the household budget, they do not have total control of household finances. In Lusaka Zambia, Munachonga (1986) found that in only a tiny minority of cases was money management a joint responsibility of husband and wife in low-income households.

Retrenchment of the male spouse can have severe implications for the woman in the household who may be forced to intensify her productive activities to supplement family income. Standing (1989) argues that the need to stretch the pay-cheque in order to meet basic needs increased the supply of female labour to compensate for loss of income at household level as male real wages fall and unemployment rises. In some cases, men are replaced by women in certain areas of employment to reduce costs in what is described as the feminization of work.

In Chile, Racznski (1989:82) observes that many women who stopped working outside the house when they got married intensify their efforts to obtain some sort of
supplementary income. Meena (1991) in Tanzania, documents that women are forced to supplement family income in a variety of activities in addition to their already heavy labour burden. Ongile (1992) in Kenya, records a large increase in self-employment amongst women as a result of unemployment in the public sector. Women from households where men have experienced loss of employment are forced out of their ‘domestic domains’ to supplement the household income.

Persons affected by loss of employment can respond positively or negatively depending on how they handle the situation. Even when loss of a job always comes as a harsh blow, reaction to it would vary. Studies have shown that women devise different mechanism in response to loss of or declining family income. Women are not simply victims of economic hardships as they and their families devise innovative strategies for dealing with it (Deerie Safa & Antrobus 1997).

It is women who must cope and devise survival strategies when household incomes fall and prices rise (Elson 1989). For a majority of low-income households survival entails a variety of adaptations in the creation and use of resources and conserving and improving the use of existing resources. Households also engage in multiple activities to earn a living. (Annelet, 1997)

The term coping strategy connotes a continuum of adjustments made by households in response to internal and external factors to survive at the same level or attain upward mobility. It refers to the steps taken in the household to survive at the time of declining
income and a rise in living costs. Household refers to persons or groups related and unrelated persons who live together in the same dwelling unit(s) and acknowledge one adult male or female as a head.

One coping strategy identified in response to declining household income and rising cost of living is a change in food consumption patterns (Boyd 1988, Kanji 1994, Aritho 1995, Kigutha 1995). There is a reduction in the amounts spent on meat, milk, beans and fish among the poor. To compensate for rising food prices, customary foods are replaced by cheaper and less nutritious ones.

Households change their eating patterns and habits with cheap foods being preferred as a measure to cut on the cost of living due to loss of income. Rising food prices, reduction in government subsidies and declining household incomes hit low-income households hardest. Sudden changes in income and prices affect the ability of households to obtain food that is available in the market. Poor households reduce the frequency and content of meals.

Rios (1984) and Jiggins (1989) identify the cultivation of small gardens as a strategy for increasing household resources. Owour (2003) records the same in Nakuru town, Kenya. These writers show that households are very much involved in urban gardening. Though it is true to argue that growing food on arable patches of land in urban areas could effectively increase food reserves in the household, the challenge of scarcity of land for cultivation of food crops in urban areas was a big setback to such strategies.
Local government legislation on the cultivation of some crops such as maize, which was prohibited in urban areas in Kenya, also dealt a great blow to urban farming. Although the intensification of household production may effectively increase food availability, it may also significantly increase women’s workload as their activities are central to these household strategies.

Mupedziswa and Gumbo (1998) trace changes in household composition in Harare. They find unemployed married sons still sharing housing with their mothers who are equally struggling to survive. They argue that one emerging response to the economic crisis was to increase household size as expanding the number of people living in the household potentially increased the number of income earners as well as those available to undertake chores and childcare.

However, in such an arrangement, domestic responsibilities often shifted to older daughters thus reinforcing women’s ‘natural’ responsibility to do domestic activities and increasing their workload. While increasing household size could not automatically reduce the household’s budget, it also meant more mouths to feed. In most cases, the added household members could be old and unproductive adding financial strain to the already struggling household.

Cornia (1987), reports of women solidarity as another survival strategy. Support groups and community development approach are adopted to help the impoverished people cope with severe hardship collectively. Watchel and Watchel (1974) in Nakuru town identify
the mobilization of resources and channeling them into various kinds of endeavors. Nasimiyu (1993) emphasizes the importance of women’s collective efforts as a strategy for coping with change and adjusting to economic challenges.

Women in the same geographical area enjoy same benefits and suffer same problems. By pooling their resources and sharing costs through groups, they can solve common problems and secure collective benefits. Given their meagre resources, collective activity makes sense as they could often pool funds to get a workable capital sum for a particular purpose.

Urban to rural migration has also been observed to be a major strategy that households used to adapt to periods of crisis. There is evidence of ‘reverse migration’ to villages to avoid intolerable urban life conditions (Kanji 1994). In Nakuru town, Owuor (2003) documents that as a result of the escalating trends in urban poverty; low-income households which suffer from food insecurity partly rely on rural activities (mainly farming) for their livelihood.

However, most studies on the impacts of structural adjustments policies in the Third World show that the rural population was hit hardest by these economic policies than was the urban population. Nevertheless, given the circumstances of urban unemployment, deepening social differentiation, decline in real wages, rises in the cost of living, escalating urban poverty, and urban food insecurity, households could occasionally retreat to rural areas to cushion themselves from the hardships in the towns.
Family planning has also been observed as a household survival strategy. In Mexico, Beneria (1992) documents that 46.7% of the families stopped or postpone having children during the 1982-88 periods. She finds women were open to discussing birth control and family planning methods. Since household expenditure directly corresponds to the number of household members, a family with many members most of whom are children is likely to experience difficulties in the provision of food, clothing, shelter, healthcare and education.

Family planning as a strategy of coping with economic hardships can however be disputed as in Africa the period of structural adjustment witnessed a huge population growth. Only economic independence from husbands can enable women to decide the number of children they wish to have, when and under what conditions, which in the context of the economic crisis remained a utopia. Removal of government subsidies in the health sector also made family planning services inaccessible to a majority of women.

1.8 Theoretical Framework
Gender is defined as a socially and culturally constructed variable that men and women play in their daily lives and the social meaning given to biological sex differences. There are several gender approaches that analyze the relationship between men and women. They include:

(i) Gender roles/ Harvard framework,

(ii) Moser/ DPU framework,

(iii) Longwe/ Women’s empowerment approach, and

(iv) Social relations approach.
Developed in 1984, the Gender Roles/Harvard Framework is based on the assumption that women are unable to fully benefit from the development process because planning efforts do not recognize their actual and potential contribution to development. This approach is based on the following principles.

One, that women’s productive contributions provide the rational for allocating resources to women and including them in the development process. Two, gender equity is defined in terms of individual access to and control over resources. Three, there is an emphasis on “intra-household dynamics” — the household is seen as having a gendered system of resource allocation and a gendered division of labour. Finally, it recommends that data on the distribution of roles and resources within the household should be used to overcome the ideologies and stereotypes that render women's work invisible.

This approach has the following weaknesses. First, it is too focused on the household, with little analysis of the institutions that perpetuate gender inequality, including development institutions and the state. Second, the exclusive focus on women ignores gender and other social relations such as the labour, class, racial and other divisions among women themselves. Third, the approach is not participatory. Women are treated as instruments for development, not empowered individuals. Lastly, the approach relies on gender-neutral interventions rather than those that can transform existing gender relations.
The Moser/DPU framework was developed by Caroline Moser (1993) at London University’s Development Planning Unit (DPU). This framework has three main principles. First, there is the recognition that women’s roles in society are differentiated and multiple. Second, there is the consideration of practical gender needs and strategic gender interests. Third, there is the schematization of policy approaches to women (welfare, equity, efficiency, empowerment) – making explicit the extent to which different policy objectives prioritize the elimination of gender hierarchies.

The Moser/DPU approach also has its own weaknesses. It is too focused on the household, incorporating little analysis of the institutions that perpetuate gender inequality, including the state. The approach is also too focused on roles, ignoring social relations and the fact that men also have practical gender needs and strategic gender interests.

The Longwe/women’s empowerment framework was developed by Sara Longwe in (1995). This approach recognizes that gender inequities do not merely arise from differences in gender roles, but from the gendered division of labour and the allocation of benefits and resources. The main principles of this approach are; one that women are the passive recipients of benefits from a “top-down” approach. Two, women improve their own status, relative to men, by increased access to resources. Three, women are motivated by fellow women as they realize and attempt to understand the underlying causes of their problems identifying strategies for action. Four, motivated by their awareness, women come together to analyze problems and formulate solutions. Finally,
women have to take action towards greater gender equality in decision-making over access to resources, and therefore, their socio-economic status.

The approach has the following weaknesses. One, it pays little attention to the complexities of gender relations, which are primarily examined from the perspective of equality alone. Two, women tend to be presented as a homogeneous category, with little focus on other social relations such as class, age, ethnicity and religion. Three, the framework is static, there is no attention paid to how situations change over time.

Owing to the weaknesses of the above three discussed approaches, this study is anchored on the **Social Relations Gender Approach** in its analysis and theoretical explanation of the subordination and exploitation of women. Developed at the Institute for Development Studies (University of Sussex, UK), many of the tenets of the social relations approach came out of the Subordination of Women (SOW) Workshop in 1976.

Its key principles are: one the consideration of the gendered processes of production, reproduction, distribution and consumption, and the broad range of institutions through which they operate including- the household, the community, the market and the state. Two, the consideration of gender with specific reference to the dimensions of social relations that create and reproduce differences between men and women. Three, gender is considered along with other social relations: e.g. class, ethnicity, age, religion, sexuality, etc. Four, the recognition that gender relations are conflictive and collaborative- there is a constant process of bargaining and negotiation between men and women. Finally, this
approach recommends a "bottom-up" approach, focusing on participation and empowerment. Ending women's subordination is not only viewed as a matter of reallocating economic resources as the central focus of this approach is on generating a shift in power relations between the two genders.

As a social construction—gender refers to the differentiation and institutionalization of the expected characteristics, norms and behaviors associated with being female or male in any specific social context. It refers to the rank ordering of this social division, and subsequent statuses, on interlocking societal levels. The distinction between female and male spheres operates in the family, the economy, religion, political systems, educational institutions, and culture. Gender also interacts with other systems of social differentiations such as race, ethnicity, class, and religion.

Gendered patterns and relationships are continually constructed and reconstructed through human interaction (Lorber, 1997). There is the appreciation of the dynamism of gender by constantly creating, recreating, and reinforcing norms and behaviours associated with it. We consistently use these gendered categories as basic assumptions in our analysis of the social world, other people, our relationships, and ourselves (Gerson and Peiss, 1985). There is a process of negotiating in which the boundaries that demarcate the separate ‘genders’ are contested and reinforced.

In our societies, women subordination and exploitation is evident in many aspects. Within the family, for instance, gender inequality in the distribution of resources,
decision-making and the allocation of labour to family members is usually the rule rather than the exception. There exists an unequal division of labour between men and women where men and women do not only perform different kinds of work, but their labour is also differentially valued and remunerated in accordance with the gender of the workforce performing it.

Using the social relations gender theory in explaining subordination of women, this study argues that the absence of gender consideration in the formulation and implementation of civil service retrenchment programme in Kenya resulted in the oppression and subordination of the affected women. This apparent gender-neutrality failed to recognize that at the time of retrenchment there were more men than women in the civil service. These few women were concentrated in the lower echelons of the service due to their low educational status.

The study further argues that because of the unequal gender division of labour that places disproportionate domestic and childbearing responsibilities on women in the household, loss of a regular source of income as a result of civil service retrenchment in Nakuru Town negatively affected them. Since society has given women prime responsibility in the provision of family healthcare, nutrition and education they were negatively affected when circumstances changed.

Loss of household income as a result of civil service retrenchment combined with removal of government subsidies in healthcare, education and foodstuffs, negatively
affected women as principals in reproducing and sustaining families. The gendered division of labour which makes them more dependent on and integrated in community and kinship networks ensured that women had to find ways of coping with loss of household income combined with a rise in the standards of living. Traditional gender roles and family obligations spurred women to devise survival strategies when family income fell and the cost of living went up.

Even when it was the man who suffered loss of income as a result of retrenchment, there were spillover effects on the women in the household, because as wives they had to manage the adjustment of the household budget to the loss of income. The unequal gender division of labour that assigns women prime household domestic responsibilities ensured that women had to look for alternative means of compensating for the loss of their husband’s income through been engaged in income generating activities. Though the intensification of women’s income generating activities increased their financial autonomy in the household, it impacted negatively on their reproductive roles through increased workload.

This study also argues that because gender is a crucial factor in defining how money is valued, apportioned and spent, there exists a dimension of unequal power relations between husbands and wives in their domestic financial relationship and the gender that controls the finances chooses the priorities. This marginalizes women position in matters of decision-making as most of the economic power in the house is vested in the man.
Due to women's subordinate position, loss of a regular source of income as a result of civil service retrenchment eroded their autonomy and decision-making power in the household. Women who were already a subordinated group in the household suffered further subordination in matters of autonomy and decision-making power with the loss of their income.

As a system of social stratification, gender involves the expressions of social inequality and hierarchy associated with women and men in societies. There exist differences in the allocation of resources, autonomy and decision-making power in the household with men at an advantaged position. While the extent of inequality and relative position of women and men varies from household to household, gender hierarchies that privilege men and masculinity over women and femininity can be found in different degrees in all societies.

1.9 Research Methodology

1.9.0 Introduction

This section gives a description of the geographical position, administrative division and economic activities of Nakuru town. In addition, it highlights the strategies that the researcher used to conduct the study which include the target population and sample, sampling procedure employed, sample size, the methods used in data collection and how the data was analyzed and interpreted.
1.9.1 Research Locale
Nakuru town is located in the heart of the Great African Rift Valley, 160 km Northwest of Nairobi. The town came into existence in 1904 as a railway station on the East African Railway (or Kenya-Uganda Railway). The important economic activities of the town are commerce, industry, tourism, agriculture and tertiary services. Beside these economic activities, Nakuru town is also an important transport and administrative centre. It serves as a centre for agro-based industrial and manufacturing activities for its immediate rich agricultural hinterland.

The town’s position along the Kenya-Uganda railway and the Trans-Africa highway, linking the coastal region, Nairobi and Western part of Kenya, has played an important role in its growth. Other factors include the attractive climate (dry sub-humid equatorial climate), and a rich agricultural hinterland. The railway line and highway that passes through the town enhance migration to the town. Nakuru town (also referred to as Nakuru Municipality) is an administrative division within the wider Nakuru District. It has five administrative locations namely Baruti, Kaptembwa, Central, Lanet and Lake Nakuru.

1.9.2 Target Population and Sample
The target research population of this study comprised women who were affected by the civil service retrenchment programme implemented from June 2000. Two categories of women were targeted; those who were retrenched and those whose husbands were retrenched from the civil service. Since women have to be studied in relation to men, small number of men also formed part of the sample population for comparative purposes. The respondents in the sample were limited to those who were affected by
retrenchment and continued to reside in Nakuru town. Government heads of personnel sections and departments were also interviewed.

1.9.3 Sampling Techniques

Owing to the complexity, expansiveness and high population density of the area under study, it was not possible for the researcher to interview all the informants affected by retrenchment; hence a sampling procedure was employed. The researcher purposively selected Kaptembwa, Baruti and Central administrative locations that are densely populated (as per the 1999 population census) and areas with a high concentration of informants as was confirmed in the field. Local administrators who included chiefs, assistant chiefs and village headmen were consulted by the researcher to purposively select persons who were retrenched and those whose spouses were retrenched and are residents in their areas of jurisdiction.

Snowballing was used as a supplementary technique in locating other respondents as the already interviewed informants helped the researcher to contact other relevant informants. The researcher also purposively selected four (4) government ministries which implemented retrenchment. These include the ministries of Planning and National Development, Office of the President, Agriculture and Commerce and Industrial Development.
1.9.4 Sample Size

Due to the limitation of time, the researcher interviewed a total of 100 respondents drawn from the three (3) selected administrative locations of Nakuru town namely Kaptembwa, Baruti and Central. Respondents from four (4) government personnel sections of purposively selected ministries were also interviewed. The respondents were categorized as follows;

(i) 45 women retrenched - 15 from each location.
(ii) 30 women whose spouses were retrenched - 10 from each location.
(iii) 21 men who were retrenched - 7 from each location.
(iv) 4 government officials from four purposively selected ministries.

Women who were retrenched or those whose spouses were retrenched provided information on how retrenchment affected them, how they responded and how they are coping with the situation. Men who were retrenched also provided information on how retrenchment affected them, how they responded and how they are coping with it. Although retrenchment affected all government ministries, the researcher randomly selected four (4) ministries and interviewed the heads of sections to gather information on government recruitment procedures, how retrenchment was implemented, who were targeted and what package was given out as send-off. For ethical reasons, the names of the respondents have been substituted to protect their identity.
1.9.5 Methods of Data Collection
For purposes of data collection, primary and secondary methods of data collection were used.

(i) **Secondary Data**
Data under this category included books, journals, magazines, articles, and unpublished theses, seminar papers, periodical reports and pamphlets among others. Secondary data provided information on what precipitated retrenchment in the civil service by giving background information on the introduction of structural adjustment programmes and subsequent retrenchment in the civil service. General information on how the civil service retrenchment programme was undertaken was also sourced from secondary data.

The Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS), other government publications and World Bank documents on retrenchment were helpful in providing such secondary information. Data from this source were obtained from Moi Library of Kenyatta University, Jomo Kenyatta Memorial Library and the Institute of Development Studies both of the University of Nairobi, Egerton University Library and Macmillan library. The tentative chapters of the study guided secondary sources from the literature review and theoretical framework.

(ii) **Primary Data**
Data under this category were obtained from the informants selected from the sample in the area under study. Research instruments used included question guidelines administered orally by the researcher. The questions asked were open-ended in nature so as to give the respondents an opportunity to express their views without much restriction. The types of questions asked included how retrenchment affected women and other
family members, how women responded and the mechanism that they have adopted in coping with the situation.

For the instruments to provide the necessary validity and reliability needed, it was imperative that the questions developed consistently correlated with the objectives as well as the research questions. The weakness of both primary and secondary sources was taken into consideration especially regarding their reliability, level of bias and subjectivity. Bias was eliminated through corroboration with secondary data achieved through counterchecking oral from written sources.

1.9.6 Methods of Data Analysis and Interpretation
Although this research was qualitative (descriptive) and analytical in nature, for data analysis, interpretation and presentation, both qualitative and quantitative techniques of research were used. Data collected were manually coded and analyzed quantitatively by use of tables and pie charts. For drawing conclusions, (interpretations) qualitative methods of content analysis were used. Documentary analysis of World Bank publications and other related secondary data undertaken as part of data analysis provided the necessary authenticity to the research findings. Data from oral interviews supplemented the questionnaire data.

The notes taken during the interviews were written into memos and graded as emerging themes to form the various thesis chapters and consequently constitute the final write-up. The researcher tried to interrogate the language used and the credibility of the author to arrive at a logical analysis. Theoretical probing as a means of analyzing data was
employed because some preliminary information in the study was induced by the theory, while others were deduced from theory. Reliability and authenticity of the data were sought through constant theoretical probing and the use of primary data to corroborate or strengthen secondary data.

1.10 Organization of the Study
This study is divided into five chapters. The first chapter gives a general introduction to the study. Chapter two traces the factors that precipitated civil service retrenchment in Kenya from 1970 and how the programme was implemented in 2000.

Chapter three investigates the effects of civil service retrenchment on women in Nakuru town. It is divided into three sections. The first section examines the effects of civil service retrenchment on women’s provision of family healthcare, nutrition and education. The second section investigates the effects of civil service retrenchment on women’s decision-making power in the household. The third section evaluates the effects of the retrenchment of the male spouse on the woman in the household.

Chapter four analyses the responses of women in Nakuru town to civil service retrenchment and the strategies and mechanisms they devised to cope with it. Chapter five summarizes the entire study.
CHAPTER TWO
FACTORS THAT PRECIPITATED CIVIL SERVICE RETRENCHMENT IN KENYA AND ITS IMPLEMENTATION

2.0 Introduction
The civil service retrenchment programme in Kenya has to be understood from an historical perspective dating back to the economic crisis that befell the country in the mid-1970s and the subsequent introduction of SAP in the early 1980s. This chapter traces Kenya’s economic performance prior to the introduction of SAPs, what led to their adoption and how they were implemented. It also investigates reasons behind the massive growth and the resultant bloating in the Kenya civil service establishment, how the civil service retrenchment programme was implemented, who were targeted, how many people were retrenched and the amount paid out as retirement package. Finally, it questions whether the civil service retrenchment programme was gender sensitive.

2.1 The Civil Service in Kenya, 1970-1990
The Kenya civil service is the operational arm of government charged with the analysis, recommendation and implementation of public policy. Because of its central role, many factors, historical, political and ideological, have shaped its function and structure. For effective administration of the newly acquired colony of Kenya, the colonial government established a civil service modelled along the British system. The colonial civil service in Kenya was mainly composed of expatriates who dominated its senior ranks as very few Africans were educated to handle such positions. However over the years, there was an increase of the number of Africans attending missionary education hence the number of indigenous Kenyans in the civil service increased. Most of those Africans who accessed
missionary education during this early period were men as the education of women was not valued. This meant that there were very few women by then in the colonial civil service and the few who were there had limited education which placed them in the lower echelons of the service. The colonial civil service right from its establishment was gender unbalanced.

Over the years the civil service in Kenya has changed in size, composition, structure and functions. Immediately after the majority of the African countries acceded to independence in the 1960s, their political leaders focused on *Africanization* of the administrative systems inherited from the colonial era, an objective pursued through accelerated training programmes both at home and abroad.

Staffing the public service and related personnel administration improvements were accorded the greatest attention in the administrative reform actions in different countries in Africa during the early years of independence. Because most of the newly independent countries inherited civil services dominated by expatriates, the major challenge concerned the replacement of those expatriates by nationals. By the time of independence, almost all the countries of Africa with the exception of a few were heavily dependent upon expatriates manning their public services.

Whatever ideological path, socialist or capitalist, the different countries chose for development, the size of their civil services increased significantly as the usual practice was automatic recruitment of all those graduating from training institutions. Those not
recruited into government administration were absorbed by the ever more numerous parastatal corporations, also created in the 1960s and 1970s, to handle the industrial and commercial ventures of the state.

In moving towards self-government and full independence, the Kenyan government pursued the *Africanization policy* or to be specific the *Kenyanization policy* which aimed at staffing its public service as far as possible from its own resources and ultimately making the service at all salary levels a reflection of the indigenous section of the population. At independence, the public service in Kenya was originally built on a racial pattern and consisted mainly of Europeans in the administrative, professional and higher executive posts, Asians in the middle and lower executive and senior clerical posts, Africans in a few executive posts, but mostly in the clerical and subordinate grades. Even in the technical departments, there was a corresponding racial pattern.

According to the Kenya manpower survey of 1969, for example, Africans held only 6.2% of the 8,000 posts classified as ‘senior’ in the national civil service. Even in the intermediate grades where more Africans could have been employed, the proportion was equally very low. In Kenya, the proportion of those who held senior positions in the civil service before the attainment of independence was also very low. According to the Pratt Commission of 1963 in Kenya, there was a natural desire on the part of African nationalists to see the imbalance in the racial composition of the public service redressed as quickly as possible (G.O.K, 1963: 11).
The justification given for this growth in the civil service in Kenya was that the government was providing more services to a greater population than it did at independence in 1963. In addition, it had to extract more resources and regulate more activity than it did at the time of independence. Government had to take on more personnel to cope with this expansion in activity.

The expansion in part was also a consequence of pressures on the government to provide employment to its citizens. In achieving the goal of being the major employer of its people, the Kenya Government embarked on an ambitious plan of reducing unemployment through the massive recruitment of its citizens into the civil service without regard to the country’s economic situation. The policy was to employ all school leavers irrespective of whether the economy made progress or not. The attainment of independence in Kenya was therefore subsequently followed by a significant growth in the size of its civil service which persisted even in the face of increasing economic difficulties beginning in the mid-1970s (G.o.K. 1963, 1969).

In examining the trends and developments within the Kenyan economy for the period 1970-1980, it is inevitable to have regard to the events that were prevalent in the international economic scene as they had a bearing on the economy. An analysis of economic developments in Kenya allows for the delineation of two major periods.

The first period that began from independence in 1963 to the early 1970s was characterized by strong economic progress that made it possible to modernize the
economic structures of the newly independent Kenyan state. This period coincided not only with the attainment of independence by most states in Africa, but also with a surge of nation-building and development projects, heady optimism, collective self-confidence, and some economic growth, albeit over a short period (Mkandawire & Soludo, 1999).

Kenya entered independence with high expectations as most people believed that rapid progress would be made in raising income and improving welfare. Indeed in the early years of independence, Kenya’s economy like many other newly independent countries in Africa made steady progress and the country successfully expanded her basic infrastructure and social services. After this initial period of growth, the country’s economy went into decline. This period ended with the first global economic crisis, attributed to the increase in petroleum prices endorsed by the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC).

The second period from the mid 1970s to the early 1980s was marked by poor economic performance attributed to the hostile international economic environment. In this phase, economic crisis was expressed in persistent economic decline and the debt crisis. During this period, there were strong trends towards high levels of inflation in the developing countries aggravated in 1973 by OPEC of increasing drastically the price of crude petroleum. This affected most countries in the developing world as their economic development was dependent on the international economic environment.
According to Mkandawire and Soludo (1999), most African countries inherited from colonialism very fragile and unstable institutions of governance, economic development and social integration, characterized by high levels of underdevelopment and external dependence. They argue that one of the notable initial conditions of African economies was the typically high dependence of economic performance on the external environment (Mkandawire & Soludo, 1999: 4).

The worsening terms of international trade exacerbated Africa’s problems by reducing its ability to initiate and maintain export-led development. There was, therefore, an extremely close relationship between economic performance in the international market and average economic performance in Kenya through the pre-crisis and crisis era.

During this phase, the economy of Kenya moved in line with this general world trend registering a visible decline in the growth of the GDP at constant prices during 1974 and 1975 with visible recovery in 1976. In 1977, however, the growth rate reached 8.6 per cent basically because of the unprecedented levels of prices of coffee in the world market resulting from disastrous frost conditions in Brazil. The worldwide inflation, stimulated since 1973 by successive increases in the prices of crude oil, pushed up the cost of Kenya’s imports, raised the cost of living, except for the years of the coffee boom in 1978 and 1979, reduced the purchasing power of its major exports.

In Kenya, the adverse external environment coincided with unfavourable climatic conditions in 1979/80. The adverse rainfall pattern which continued through 1980 caused
a decline in agricultural output which in turn had a negative effect on other sectors of the economy. During this period, there was a drastic decline in the relative price of agricultural commodities on the international market. The result was a continuing decline in the nation’s international terms of trade and the country found itself saddled with debt of unbelievable proportions, most of which was contracted during the 1970s (Mengisteab and Ikubolajoh, 1995).

Table 2.1: Growth of GDP and inflation in Kenya, 1970-1979

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>GDP Growth Rates%</th>
<th>Rate of Inflation %</th>
<th>Constant GDP Prices 1972</th>
<th>Constant GDP Deflator</th>
<th>GDP Per Capita in Kenya Pounds</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>52.6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>12.2</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>54.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>13.8</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>56.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>16.0</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>57.5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>20.4</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>57.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>11.6</td>
<td>17.8</td>
<td>56.3</td>
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<td>23.1</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>57.5</td>
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<td>12.7</td>
<td>60.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>1978</td>
<td>10.4</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>61.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>****</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>****</td>
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<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>****</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>61.5</td>
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</table>

Source: Central Bureau of Statistics

Since the mid-1970s, African countries have suffered from a litany of woes which include slow economic growth, food shortages and frequent famines, high rates of unemployment, widespread poverty, declining export earnings, burgeoning debts and
growing marginalization from the global economy. Mengisteab and Ikubolajoh (1995) partly attribute the gravity of the African crisis to deep-rooted internal and external structural problems. According to them, African economies were the most disintegrated internally and regionally. The neglect of domestic social needs, the resultant excessive dependency on international markets, and the reliance on a few primary products for capital accumulation made them more vulnerable than other regions to adverse fluctuations in the global economy.

Most of the newly independent African states concentrated on export earnings from one or a few primary commodities that were highly vulnerable to exogenous terms of trade and demand conditions. Kenya, like other African countries, inherited the least diversified economy from the colonial era and relied heavily on non-oil primary commodities for her export earnings with the major export commodities being agricultural products with tea and coffee taking the lion’s share.

Due to its narrow technological, managerial and productive base, Kenya’s economy relied more on foreign technology and capital. While many developing countries faced similar economic problems, the crisis was generally more serious in Sub-Saharan African. The massive imbalances in the global paying situation, continuing economic depression in many industrialized countries, and the inability of world monetary arrangements to recycle the OPEC surpluses in many ways which met the consequential financing gaps of less developed oil-importing developing countries, all created a severe foreign exchange constraint in many of them, Kenya included.
Oyugi (1993) attributes the rapid growth in the civil service of African countries to several causes that include, the need to meet the growing expectations of the masses resulting from the advent of independence and statehood, increased role of government in provision of services and declining economic and social conditions necessitating government to become primary creator of economic opportunities such as employment and provider of social and humanitarian services as well as security;

Civil service employment in Africa increased throughout the 1970s and early 1980s and plummeted after 1986 in response mostly to the introduction of structural adjustment programmes. In Cameroon, civil service employment doubled in the six years between 1970 and 1976. It doubled again by 1984, peaked in 1987 and started to decline thereafter (Ibid 1993:274). At independence in 1966, the Botswana civil service had staff strength of only 6,000. This increased steadily through the years to the level of 67,800 in the central government by 1995 (Modisi, 1997:73).

At independence, the civil servants in Kenya numbered about 60,300 while the corresponding population was eight (8) million people, giving a civil servant/ population ratio of 1: 133 (GoK, 2000). The Ndegwa Commission of 1971 notes that the Kenya civil service had about 84,000 employees out of 267,500 public servants (GoK, 1971). The Waruhiu Commission of June 1980 reports that the figure had risen to over 170,000, while the entire public service numbered about 471,500 (GoK, 1980). By end of 1990, this strength had grown to 274,000 employees raising the civil servant/ population ratio
to 1:85 and the entire public service establishment had risen to a peak of 700,100 (GoK, 2000).

Table 2.2. Growth of the Public Service in Kenya 1971-1990, in 000.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number</th>
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<td>1981</td>
<td>484.1</td>
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<td>1972</td>
<td>287.0</td>
<td>1982</td>
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<tr>
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<td>1974</td>
<td>330.1</td>
<td>1984</td>
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<td>1978</td>
<td>390.0</td>
<td>1988</td>
<td>660.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>424.8</td>
<td>1989</td>
<td>681.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>471.5</td>
<td>1990</td>
<td>700.1</td>
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</tbody>
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Source: Central Bureau of Statistics

An analysis of the structure and composition of the civil service in most African countries reveals that the growth in the size was uneven. Specifically, the growth had been concentrated in a few ministries, especially those employing professionals (e.g. agriculture), social services (education, health), lower technicians (e.g. housing), Local government and lower-level grades made up of unskilled and semi-skilled labour. Accordingly, the typical African civil service remained both understaffed and overstaffed. It was significantly understaffed in the professional and managerial areas, and perhaps overstaffed in the semi-skilled and unskilled areas (Oyugi, 1993).
In Kenya the civil service was seriously overstaffed, especially in the lower echelons contributing significantly to the decline in its efficiency and productivity. Ironically, this over-establishment of the civil service and the acute shortage of labour in such strategic sectors as agriculture existed side by side. While it was possible that the over manning in the civil service resulted from the governments efforts in alleviating unemployment, the large number of under-utilized personnel continued to have a serious effect on the efficiency and productivity of the service unless remedial measures were taken (Oyugi, 1993).

Although the civil service in independent Kenya had grown in size from independence to the early 1980s, gender was not considered in its expansion as more men than women were recruited. The *Africanization policy* pursued by the Kenya government in the early years of independence involved training locals to take over jobs formerly occupied by foreigners or non-indigenous Kenyans (G.o.K, 1971, 2000).

Those locals who possessed the required qualifications at that time were automatically absorbed into the civil service. Subsequently women were disadvantaged because very few of them had the required academic qualifications to guarantee them jobs in the civil service in comparison to their male counterparts. Women in Africa started schooling much later than their male counterparts. A systematic and deliberate colonial policy ensured that African women were not given the same educational opportunities as men. Not only did missionary education disproportionally extend educational opportunities to males, but men’s education was also accorded higher priority than that of women.
A variety of factors including the emphasis on domestic chores, generalized conditions of poverty and the overarching influence of patriarchy also combined to make access to and entrance into academic institutions for women a mirage for much of the colonial period and in the early years of independence (Chege & Sifuna, 2006). With no or little education, women in Kenya qualified to be employed in the subordinate ranks of the civil service while men dominated the professional ranks, a pattern that featured in the civil service from independence to the late 1990s.

The education system at independence in Kenya was modeled on the then British system where girls were educated for domesticity, whilst boys were prepared for employment and the role of the family head and breadwinner. Curriculum for boys and girls differed. Boys were offered a variety of practical, technical and science subjects such as metalwork, woodwork, agriculture, technical drawing, mathematics, chemistry and physics. Girls, on the other hand, were offered domestic science subjects, typing and shorthand, and were encouraged to pursue arts subjects.

Right from its inception, the colonial state concentrated upon men in the institution building process under colonial rule. Male hierarchies were used for direct or indirect forms of colonial rule while female hierarchies were atrophied or were actually suppressed particularly by missionary organizations. The glamour of the colonial empire, in fact, helped to boost the hegemony of men. Extreme domestication continued to be imposed on women whose main responsibility was to look after the household (Jalang’o Ngeda, 1999).
Colonialism did not improve the condition of African women as it is often claimed. It was by itself patriarchal and therefore discriminative. In the British colonies, for example, an order in council was passed in 1921 "to reserve to men any branch of or posts in the civil service in any of His Majesty's possessions overseas or in any foreign country". This followed the 1919 Sex Disqualification (Removal) Act, which ruled that women were to be allowed to assume or carry on any civil profession or vocation. By the time women were officially admitted to overseas civil service in 1946, the Empire was coming to an end and the number of women serving even in the very junior posts was negligible (Ibid 1999). Therefore, at the time of independence, the colonial civil service had very few women most of whom were concentrated in the lower ranks.

Although fewer women than men work in the public service, in most developing countries, the public or state sector has been the major employer of women and other minorities with the exception of the self-employed women in the private sector. The public sector has hitherto provided some of the better urban jobs for women; many of them skilled, professional jobs with a high degree of security than the private sector.

Wage differentiation between men and women are smaller in the public sector (Standing, 1989). In most cases, far more professional and managerial jobs for women are provided by the public sector than by the private sector. Around the world, the trend towards greater participation of women is noticeable in every public service, especially education and health, though at lower skill levels (Van Ginneken, 1990: 446). Often the shorter
working hours in the public sector make it a preferred employer to women with family responsibilities. (Jockes, 1989: 10).

Although the civil service employs the largest number of women in the public sector in Kenya, it falls in the same gender category in management issues as other sectors. Female participation in middle and senior positions is low with the majority being in the lower ranks. Women rarely got appointed to senior levels dealing with policies, planning and finance.

The rapid expansion of the civil service in most African countries from independence to the early 1990s had several adverse consequences on the overall performance of the civil service in Africa. It has been documented that most civil service establishments in majority of African countries had little management capacity and were already difficult to manage services. The expansion in the size of the civil service, further overloaded the capacities of the system (AAPAM, 1984:167).

Second, since the additional employees, have in part been hired without any substantial workload, the tendency was for them to remain relatively unoccupied or to share workloads with existing personnel. But since the additional employees had to be paid salaries at existing rates, there was an increase in the cost of the services without a commensurate increase in the amount of work performed, with adverse consequences on the productivity of the services (Ibid: 168).
In Kenya the rapid growth of the civil service had serious effects on the budget deficit. Hence, the government realized that its revenue could not sustain the public expenditure. As a result, the rapid growth in the civil service, low economic growth and high population growth had a negative impact on service delivery. This affected the overall government’s ability to provide improved standards of living to the citizens. Some of the problems associated with this growth could be; a bloated service, high wage bill, low and depressing levels of service delivery to the public, corruption and lack of transparency and accountability, among others.

Despite of the high growth of the civil service, the delivery and quality of services declined to depressing levels. Furthermore, the imbalance between emoluments and an increasing wage bill made it difficult for the government to sustain its public expenditure. With the growth of the civil service, recurrent expenditure grew steadily over the years. By 1979, salaries accounted for 47% of the ministries/ departments recurrent budgets rising to 60% in 1984/85 and to slightly above 70% in the 1990s (GoK, 2000). By 1990, it became evident that the economy could not sustain the high growth rate in the civil service in terms of salaries.

Omondi (2003) documents that; the operational arm of the government was too paralyzed to play its key role culminating into poor performance. These problems led to the erosion of rules and regulations, obsolete procedures and lack of appropriate systems of management and technical skills; poor public services attitude; and massive bureaucratic red tape (Ibid: 28).
The above problems forced the government of Kenya to introduce the civil service reform programme with the aim of revamping the functioning of the civil service as a precondition for sustainability. The over expansion of the civil service and the decline in economic growth negatively impacted on service delivery greatly compromising the government ability to improve the standard of living of the populous .. This prompted the government to undertake measures to contain the size of its civil service. As a consequence, the government opted for downsizing of its civil service as one of the conditionality of SAPs advocated by the WB and IMF.

In response to the economic crisis in the developing world, the WB and the IMF in the 1980s through the Berg Report designed a set of policies and strategies known as Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) to respond to this crisis. Before the 1980s, structural adjustment had been a task for the developed countries. In this sense, the term 'structural adjustment' referred to the process by which developed nations reshaped their economies to be more free market oriented and acting upon the premises that less government intervention in the economy is better.

From the beginning of the 1980s, the term structural adjustment acquired a new meaning as applied to the countries of the Third World. It was no longer the responsibility of the developed world to adjust their economies but the task of the developing nations. The new meaning given to this old term in the 1980s was a sudden and dramatic reversal of
the locus of responsibility for ensuring successful world development, from the shoulders of the economically strong to those of the economically weak (Toye, 1994: 18-19).

SAPs were designed to improve a country’s foreign exchange earnings by promoting exports and reducing government budget deficits through cuts in spending. Structural adjustment involved abandoning certain notions of development that had not worked in the past and adapting a different approach. The underlying objective of structural adjustment was to restore the conditions for growth and to improve the basis for long-term social and economic development.

The attainment of this objective involved reshaping and directing policies and institutions and eliminating severe macroeconomic imbalances and distortions that pervade the economy. It was believed that economic development could only proceed once these changes took place. Structural adjustment was to correct defects such as inflation, stagnating or deteriorating output, prolonged and unmanaged trade deficits, unsustainable government budget deficits and the inability to attract sufficient development funds.

With the advice of the World Bank and the IMF, developing countries undertook policies that were targeted at the goals of stabilization and adjustment. The immediate trigger for many debtors (Developing countries) to turn to structural adjustment was their inability to service their foreign debt to Western banks and governments as their economies were in crisis. Attempts to implement externally imposed economic recovery programmes became the dominant features of most African countries. From the beginning of the
1980s, structural adjustment policies became the major operation in aid relations in the Third World, changing aid modalities radically and introducing far reaching aid conditionality.

In Kenya, the difficult economic realities faced by the government made social, political and economic reforms imperative. Maxon and Ndege (1995: 160) document that during the period of 1978-88, the Kenyan economy encountered severe difficulties and was presented with formidable challenges as it sought to sustain the impressive record of growth witnessed in the Kenyatta era. They argued that the Kenyan economy was beset during the first years of the Moi presidency, with economic problems of both external and internal origin. The government’s response was the adoption of structural adjustment programs which had become by the 1980s an article of faith with the WB and the IMF as far as Third World economies were concerned.

Subsequently Kenya came under considerable pressure from the WB and IMF to institute structural adjustment programmes by the beginning of the 1990s. The result was a reduction in government expenditure on welfare, education and social programmes which the state hoped would be provided by the private sector. The Government of Kenya specifically undertook the following reforms; decontrol of prices in the economy, removal of subsidies on health, education and other social services, currency devaluation, privatization of government- owned enterprises and retrenchment in the civil service.
In the context of international technical cooperation, the conditionality for granting structural adjustment loans included the reduction of civil service staff by predetermined percentages. This was anticipated to bring improvements in morale and uplift public productivity and effectiveness in the conditions of service for those who were retained. The purpose of the reform was to create a lean and cost-effective civil service that delivered prompt high quality and appropriate service at the least cost to the nation; support national development; and facilitate the growth of the private sector.

Among the countries in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) which opted to reduce their civil service was Zimbabwe. First, those posts that remained vacant in excess of twelve months were abolished. However, some professional and technical posts which remained unfilled for a long period because of shortages of required skills were reinstated. Second, obligatory reductions were effected in the form of giving up certain percentage of their positions in each of the ministries. Third, downsizing the service was done through voluntary retirement. The Zimbabwean civil service, as of 30th June 1994, had been reduced by 12700 with a shortfall of 10,300 to reach the target of 23,000 posts (Kaul, 1997: 28-29).

As Kenya entered a period of significant structural change, it became clear that there was need for flexible and responsive management, and strengthened analytical as well as policy-making capacity. The government of Kenya launched the CSRP in August 1993 whose essence was to revamp the functioning of the civil service as a precondition for sustainability. The basic philosophy of CSRP was to improve and promote the
responsiveness of the public service and its efficiency and effectiveness in achieving Kenya’s Development Objective through a smaller, better paid, result-oriented, well-motivated and disciplined civil service. Essentially, therefore, CSRP was in place to re-engineer institutional capacity and capability of the public services.

The first phase of the CSRP ran from 1993 to 1998 and focused on cost containment through staff reduction initiatives, including the implementation of the Voluntary Early Retirement Scheme (VERS). The proposed terminal benefits which became known as the golden handshake were to provide a viable safety net for civil servants who were to be retired. The Voluntary Early Retirement Scheme (VERS) was one of the priority initiatives under the CSRP. Initially, the scheme was designed to reduce the civil service by 30,000 civil servants in the lower cadre over a period of three years. However, the design of VERS did not initially take into account the staffing needs of ministries/departments at different levels nor did it identify areas of staff surpluses/deficits in the service (Omondi 2003).

The rationale for targeting lower cadre staff was based on the assumption that these levels, constituting about 84% of the service were overstaffed compared to the number of staff in the higher job groups. All officers in the lower cadres were eligible to apply and retire under the scheme. Since the inception of the VERS in 1994, a total of 35,632 civil servants were allowed to retire under the scheme as at 30th June 1997 (Ibid, 2003). Consequently, all the 35,632 posts vacated under the scheme were frozen. The scheme cost the government, in terms of safety net payments, a total of Ksh. 68 billion
(approximately US $106.3 million) while the annual savings accruing as a result of foregone salaries and allowances was Kenya shillings. 1.7 billion -approximately US $26.6 million (GOK, 1993).

While staff reduction initiatives were able to reduce the size of the civil service by about 64,155 persons by the end of 1999, this reduction did not have the required impact or downward push on the wage bill. The government, therefore, reformulated the civil service reform program II as a Medium Term Strategy (1998-2001). This involved the compulsory retirement of civil servants without giving them the option to retire voluntarily or retrenchment.

Retrenchment refers to the deliberate process of terminating the services of employees for any reason whatsoever other than a punishment inflicted by way of a disciplinary action in the hope of obtaining an optimal staffing level (Dubai and Parthasarathy 1996:285). It was seen as the key solution to the problems of bloated size and mismanagement which among others, led to inefficiency, ineffectiveness, ill motivation and poor staff performance in the civil service (Mbaguta, 1996).

2.4 Implementation of the Kenya Civil Service Retrenchment Program in 2000
To spearhead implementation of staff reduction in the civil service, the Kenya Government beginning June 2000 launched a comprehensive Ministerial Rationalization and Staff Rightsizing Exercise in all its ministries / departments. To achieve the optimal staff levels, it was important that staff rightsizing be undertaken to facilitate off-loading
of excess staff from the civil service. The ministries/ departments identified the number of staff by cadre and job group to be retrenched. Having completed their rationalization reports, the ministries/ departments submitted them to the Directorate of Personnel Management which in turn developed a framework for the implementation of the Kenya Civil Service Retrenchment Programme.

The plan proposed three strategies for achieving staff rightsizing in the civil service. These were natural attrition, staff re-deployment and staff retrenchment. Natural attrition entailed personnel leaving the service as a result of death, resignation, dismissal and retirement age grounds on attaining 55 years, medical grounds and retirement in public interest.

Redeployment involved placing an officer in an appropriate position to utilize his skills, knowledge and aptitude. This was to be undertaken because certain ministries were understaffed while others were overstaffed meaning that tasks were not adequately performed. Where overstaffing existed, there was a mismatch of people and tasks to the detriment of efficiency and productivity.

Staff retrenchment involved the dismissal of excess staff through involuntary retirement from the civil service. The ministerial rationalization exercise identified a large number of posts which it termed as idle capacity in terms of the functions that they were to abolish and those considered overmanned. A targeted retrenchment exercise was to be implemented focusing on areas that were non-core and/or over-manned.
The Government developed two processes for off-loading staff targeted for retrenchment, which were front-loading and normal off-loading. Front-loading entailed releasing an officer from duty but continued payment of salaries, house and medical allowances, until separation from the service is finalized and the officer is paid the safety net benefits. It was a way of decongesting the service to create space while the separation was being finalized. This applied to officers holding posts under functions which had been declared for abolition and were overmanned.

Front-loading was aimed at pushing the implementation of the retrenchment programme forward to facilitate prompt off-loading of the identified idle capacity in the service and thus cutting cost on operational expenses such as transport, telephone, stationery, etc. It was also to provide the officers with time to sort out any pending and clearance issues with the ministry/department, Income Tax Department, Co-operative Societies, Pensions Department or the National Social Security Fund (GoK, 2000).

Normal off-loading meant releasing an officer from duties to go home after separation decision had been reached. The officer was to be paid the safety net benefits and subsequently deleted from the payroll on the day he/she leaves duty. Normal off-loading applied to those staff holding the posts identified for contracting out and privatization since they could not be described as idle capacity as they were still performing the functions as modalities were made to divest them.
Since the exit plans for contracting out and privatization took time to develop, normal off-loading gave the government time to identify the staff holding such posts. There was also adequate time to avail them any leave balances, process and conclude separation from the service, supervise handing over, clearance and pay the safety net benefits (Ibid, 2000).

To ensure that the service did not lose skilled personnel, 'ring-fencing' of critical staff to core function areas was carried out as was the case of the disciplined forces who were not subjected to staff retrenchment. Non-inclusion of the disciplined forces in the retrenchment list was attributed to the influx of refugees from neighboring countries and the high poverty levels within the country which had adverse effects on the internal security, requiring the government to maintain well-equipped and adequately staffed disciplined forces to control the security situation. Further, the disciplined forces were required to provide conducive environment for development and be able to guarantee security against external threats to life, property and human rights (Ibid, 2000).

The retrenchment programme was to be implemented over a two-year period in three phases. The first phase was expected to commence in June 2000, starting with a total number of 25,783 officers to be front-loaded. A total of 6,565 staff identified from posts in the functions to be privatized was to be normally off-loaded in the second phase with effect from 1st July, 2001. The third and final phase involving 9,981 staff was to be implemented from 1st January, 2002. In the three phases the government committed itself to reducing its civil service strength by 48,829.
Although the government was committed in achieving optimal staff size in the civil service, the proposed retrenchment plan did not proceed as expected. Records confirm that only the first phase of the exercise took off in which only about 25,783 employees were front-loaded out of the targeted 48,829 (GoK, 2000). The second and third phases of the retrenchment programme were not implemented.

The failure of the government to implement the other phases of the retrenchment exercise can be attributed to the outcry that followed the implementation of the first phase. The government was heavily criticized by labour organizations with the Central Organization of Trade Unions (COTU) terming the dismissals as contravening the laid down labour laws in the country. Human rights organizations also condemned the Government for being inhuman in retrenching its civil servants.

In the first phase of the retrenchment programme where 25,783 employees were sent home the government through the Directorate of Personnel Management (DPM) came up with the following retirement package. The retrenchees were given a golden handshake of forty thousand (40,000) as retirement package which according to the government was ‘generous’ compensation for dismissal. All pensionable and non-pensionable civil servants received three (3) months basic salary in lieu of notice. In addition, non-pensionable staff received three (3) months basic salary for every year of service, while their pensionable colleagues with less than ten (10) years of service were awarded immediate regular pension, three (3) months basic salary per year worked and additional pension.
Those who had worked for more than ten years were given immediate regular pension and additional pension. This retirement package was very little considering that salaries in the civil service were very low as compared to those in the private sector. An employee earning five thousands (5,000) Kenya shillings and having worked for the government for nine (9) years took home only 190,000 as retirement package despite having been in service for that long.

To ensure that only the targeted staff was retrenched, the government formulated an eligibility criterion that it used to identify staff that were to leave the service. This included, staff who had attained 53 years of age as at 1st July 2000; officers with pending disciplinary cases, chronic medical cases and non-performers. Under regulations G, 45-47 of the civil service code of regulations, civil servants who have attained the age of 50 and above may opt to retire or be retired by the government without assigning any cause. Those who attain the age of 55 years are retired compulsorily.

This criterion was based on the principal of First In First Out (FIFO) meaning that the most recently recruited persons should be the last ones to be retired. FIFO as a criterion was consistent with the principal of good succession planning, survival and revitalization of an organization. It was also humane and fair, given that those who had been in the service longer qualified for terminal benefits.
Although this eligibility criterion was prudent in that it helped the government in off-loading old staff while leaving the service with young and energetic staff, it had its own shortcomings as it failed to recognize experience gained by older staff. An unfocussed targeting of this group was likely to disrupt the smooth running of government and successions planning since some of the civil servants with critical skills were in this age bracket.

To guard against this problem, the implementation of this eligibility criterion as a function of retrenchment programme targeted posts within job groups A to H in non-core functional areas. It was also to apply to those above that category who did not possess critical skills or were not deployed in core functional areas or if in core functional areas, such positions had been identified as overmanned. Cadres whose tasks were manual in nature and required young and energetic persons such subordinate staff, security guards, forest guards, e.t.c, were included in this category.

Data from the field however indicate that a majority of the persons interviewed were below 50 years of age at the time of retrenchment creating doubts as to whether the principal of FIFO was actually applied in the retrenchment exercise. This brings to the fore the principal of Last In First Out (LIFO) based on the principle that the most recently recruited persons be the first ones to be retrenched. From the findings, there is no doubt that the Government applied the principle of LIFO as opposed to FIFO in downsizing the civil service.
Although LIFO recognized experience of employees as an important attribute and favoured the retention of old staff who had served for longer periods with work experience, it failed to recognize the issues of succession and planning. The government could have opted for this principle in an attempt to retain cadres whose experience added value to their performance and therefore, an asset to the civil service, such as those in the technical and professional cadres like architects, doctors, engineers and legal officers, etc.

The second category of those eligible for retrenchment was those employees with pending disciplinary cases. All ministries were asked to submit a list of officers with pending disciplinary cases and reasons why they had not been finalized. The high number of pending disciplinary cases contributed significantly to the poor performance in the service; hence officers with pending disciplinary cases were eligible for retrenchment. The positions in non-core functions or overmanned areas from which the officers were removed were to be subsequently abolished.

The third category of employees to be retrenched was those with chronic medical cases. Although retirement on medical grounds is stipulated under section 6 (1) of the Pensions Act, it became problematic for the government to execute it. Ministries/ departments were required to initiate and finalize all cases of ill-health requiring retirement on medical grounds and the positions not core to the civil service functions were to be abolished thereafter. The process of retiring an officer on medical grounds proved lengthy and cumbersome partly because it was not always possible to convene a medical
board as and when required and ministries/ departments did not submit such cases for consideration.

Non-performers formed the fourth group of employees targeted for retrenchment. Identification of non-performers for retrenchment proved problematic because most officers at that time did not have performance standards and targets against which performance could be measured. To make non-performance an objective eligibility criterion, the government applied certain parameters which included: record of past service; appraisal reports and an officer’s scheme of service. Past performance records were used to determine the staff to be retrenched.

Academic and professional qualifications were also used a guideline to identify staff eligible for retrenchment. This selection criterion was applied to help the Government retain officers with the necessary skills and qualifications to carry out the core functions and policy priorities of the ministry/ department. In this criterion women were disadvantaged because most of them entered the civil service with lower education levels compared to their male counterparts, hence being concentrated in the lower cadres which made them vulnerable in the retrenchment exercise. (Musyoki & Aluko, 1993, Manuh, 1994, Tocoli, 2002). Female workers are particularly vulnerable to dismissal in times of economic downturn as they are often the first to lose their jobs due to their less secure employment conditions.
2.5 Implementation of the Civil Service Retrenchment Programme in Nakuru Town

Having identified the employees it was going to retrench from the civil service, the Directorate of Personnel Management (DPM) through the provincial labour offices in all the eight provinces of Kenya came up with a list of those who were to be sent home. The provincial labour office communicated the information to the district labour offices which in turn relayed the same information to the various ministries in the district.

Having received the list of the retrenches, the heads of government ministries in the respective district were to see the smooth running of the process in their respective departments. Record from the District Labour office in Nakuru town indicated that 13 ministries undertook retrenchment with 950 employees being sent home. Out of the 13 ministries that undertook retrenchment, the Ministry of Roads and Public Works was found to have retrenched the highest number of employees while the lowest number of retrenches were from the Ministry of Local Government.

Out of the 950 persons who were retrenched, 603 or 64% were men whereas 347 or 36% were women. These findings contradict studies by Musyoki and Aluko (1993), Manuh (1994) and Tacoli (2002), who argue that women were more vulnerable than their male counterparts in many of the retrenchment exercises in most African countries. Based on these results it might be argued that more men than women were retrenched from the civil service. The reason why the number of men who were retrenched from the civil service in Nakuru town was higher than that of women was that there were more men than women in the civil service at the time of retrenchment.
### Table 2.3 Employees Retrenched in Nakuru Town by Ministry and Gender

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<thead>
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In Kenya, more public sector employees are men than are women (Nzomo 1995). Of all employees in the public sector in Kenya, women form only 21%. In the public sector, the majority of female employees, up to 75% are clustered in low ranking, low paying and gender stereotyped jobs. On the other hand, only 15% and about 9-10% of women
employees are to be found in middle and senior management positions respectively (Ibid).

Women are under represented at all job groups and the situation worsens as you move from the lowest job group ‘A’ to the highest, ‘T’. At all levels, the number of men employed exceeded that of women. The highest representation of women is in job group ‘D’ with 29.6%. Although this is the job group in which the female representation is highest, the males are still dominant, with 70.4% (GoK, 1993).

Although the situation has been changing over the years with more women joining the higher cadres of the civil service, there are still more men than women in civil service especially at the decision-making levels. At the time of retrenchment there were more men than women in the civil service meaning that women as a group got a raw deal in the retrenchment exercise. First women were fewer in the civil service and second they were concentrated in lower cadres. The participation of women in the civil service in Kenya is consistent with their inferior position in the rest of society. Most women are concentrated in the lower ranks while men occupy the higher levels.

2.6 Summary
The study attributed the massive growth in civil service size in Kenya to lack of stringent recruitment procedures which persisted even in the face of poor economic performance. In an attempt to reduce unemployment the Kenya government embarked on a policy of employing all school leavers irrespective as to whether the economy could sustain them or not. Beginning the mid-1970s, a hostile international economic environment resulting
from the oil crisis severely affected Kenya's economic performance recording negative growth in the GDP.

On the advice of the WB and IMF, beginning in the early 1990s, the government was forced to take remedial measures to reverse the poor economic performance. Structural Adjustment Programmes were therefore adopted as remedial measures. Reducing government spending on civil servants wages was one of the measures advocated by SAPs. To achieve optimal staff levels, the government opted for retrenchment aimed at reducing the number of civil servants by 48,000.

The retrenchment programme was to be implemented over a two-year period beginning June 2000 in three phases. The first phase targeted 25,783 employees; the second phase was to retrench 6,565 whereas the third phase targeted 9,981. However, only the first phase of the exercise took off in which only about 25,783 employees were front-loaded out of the targeted 48,829 in June 2000. The second and third phases of the retrenchment programme were not implemented.

To ensure that only the targeted staff was retrenched, the government formulated an eligibility criterion that it used to identify staff that was to leave the service. This included; staff who had attained 53 years of age as at 1st July 2000; officers with pending disciplinary cases, chronic medical cases and non-performers. Academic qualification was also used as a criterion in determining who was to be retrenched. Gender was not a consideration in determining who was to be retrenched.
Employees who were to be retrenched were given a golden handshake of forty thousand Kenya shillings (Ksh 40,000) as retirement package. All pensionable and non-pensionable employees received three (3) months basic salary in lieu of notice. In addition non-pensionable staff received three (3) months basic salary for every year of service, while their pensionable colleagues with less than ten (10) years of service were awarded immediate regular pension, three (3) months basic salary per year worked and additional pension. Those who had worked for more than ten years were given immediate regular pension and additional pension.

Having traced the factors that precipitated civil service retrenchment and examined how the programme was implemented in Kenya, the next chapter investigates the effects of civil service retrenchment on women in Nakuru town.
CHAPTER THREE
EFFECTS OF CIVIL SERVICE RETRENCHMENT ON WOMEN IN NAKURU TOWN

3.0 Introduction
This chapter is divided into three sections. The first section examines the effects of civil service retrenchment on women’s provision of family healthcare, nutrition and education. The second section investigates the effects of civil service retrenchment on women’s decision-making power in the household. Finally, the third section evaluates the effects of the retrenchment of the male spouse on the woman in the household.

3.1 Effects of Civil Service Retrenchment on Women’s Provision of Family Healthcare, Nutrition and Education

To analyze the effects of retrenchment on women’s provision of family healthcare nutrition and education, it is significant to examine the roles played by women in the provision of these services to their families from the pre-colonial to post-independent period in Africa. In most pre-colonial African communities each gender had a role to play for the maintenance and smooth running of the whole community. This division of labour by gender was determined by culture rather than by biology and was strongly affected by wider cultural, economic and political circumstances.

It was not a rigid division of labour as the lines of demarcation showed infinite variations. Such roles were also identified, defined and executed according to the unique circumstances that characterize each and every society and there was little physical
determinism about which gender performed which role. Some societies had more strictly defined areas of 'female' and 'male' activity than others (Mead, 1962).

While there were specific duties performed by women and others by men, at times depending on the task and the circumstances, the roles could shift. Sometimes the division of labour was merely preferential and very little anxiety was shown by either gender over temporary reversal of the guidelines (Ibid 1962).

The establishment of colonial rule transformed the existing patterns of gender division of labour in African societies. The emergence of urban centres, Christianity, Western education and values, money economy and labour migration changed the household division of labour in favour of men at the expense of women. There emerged an unequal gender division of labour which unnecessarily overburdened the woman (Jalang’o-Ndeda, 1991).

In the contemporary household division of labour women perform both productive and reproductive roles. As producers, women contribute to the household economy through income-generating activities both in formal and non-formal employment. Their reproductive role extends to nurturing and taking care of children, organizing household consumption and providing other basic needs in the household. Contemporary household division of labour gives women prime responsibilities for the provision of family healthcare, nutrition and education. Cocytax (1984) estimates that 75% of healthcare takes place at the family level and that a large proportion of education is household-based.
It is argued in this section that because society has given women prime responsibility in the provision of family healthcare, nutrition and education they are particularly affected when circumstances change. Loss of household income as a result of civil service retrenchment combined with removal of government subsidies in healthcare, education and foodstuffs, negatively affected women as principals in reproducing and sustaining families.

3.1.1 Effects of Retrenchment on Women’s Provision of Family Healthcare
At independence in 1963, the Kenya government instituted a free public healthcare system in government-run health centres. The government provided a huge subsidy for health and, in addition, the Ministry of Health was one of the most highly donor-supported ministries in Kenya. Attempts were made to expand health centers more widely in urban and rural areas where healthcare was historically quite limited.

The primary healthcare services provided to women centered on their reproductive role and pre-and post-natal care was the key preoccupation of the maternity and infant care centres, existing throughout the country in both rural and urban areas. The main aim of the provision of free medical treatment was to check on child mortality rates among pregnant women (Rogo, 1995).

This situation changed with the implementation of SAPs beginning in the late 1980s. Cuts in government expenditure on healthcare services formed an important element of the structural adjustment package. There were significant falls in real expenditure per head in the healthcare sector in most of the countries of sub-Saharan Africa. In Zambia
for example, the real value of the drugs budget in 1986 was only a quarter of the 1983 level, while only 10% of that budget was actually not released because of shortage of funds (Boyd, 1988). In Kenya, government expenditure in the health sector declined from 9.26% in 1979/80 to 7.6% in 1995/96 fiscal year (GoK, 1993).

The cutbacks in healthcare expenditure necessitated a search for alternative financing through privatization of services and introduction of user fees. Out-patients in government run health centres were required to pay for consultation fees in addition to meeting the cost of medicines, bandages and syringes. In-patients were required to meet the cost of bedding, food, drugs and also consultation fees.

This had negative effects on people who depended on the government for provision of healthcare services. The only alternative to health services provided by the state were those that had been traditionally available in the community and the household. The result of health expenditure cutbacks was to shift more of the burden of healthcare to the community and household - which in practice meant women. The decline in healthcare provision had a direct effect on services which were particularly important to women and children, such as immunization and mother and child health clinics.

All these changes adversely affected women in their role as family healthcare providers. The quality of family healthcare women could provide worsened as new demands were imposed on them to try to provide some domestic substitutes for the declining government expenditure in healthcare services. This hit women harder than men, since it
is women who have to spend more time making up for the shortfall, and it is women and children who are more likely to be deprived of health services when these are in short supply (Rogo, 1995).

Loss of regular household income as a result of civil service retrenchment worsened the already deteriorating family healthcare situation in Nakuru town. It was established that loss of family income through civil service retrenchment negatively affected a majority of women in the provision of family healthcare services in Nakuru town. Out of the 45 women who were retrenched (W1) from the civil service, 41 (91%) were of the opinion that the loss of family income negatively affected their provision of family healthcare services whereas 4 (9%) were not negatively affected.

Out of the 30 women whose spouses were retrenched (W2), 27 (90%) were negatively affected whereas 3 (10%) were not. In comparisons, out of the 21 men who were retrenched (M), 16 (76%) were negatively affected in their provision of healthcare services to their families whereas 5 or 24% were not.

Table 3.1: Effects of Retrenchment on Provision of Family HealthCare

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents</th>
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<th>Negatively Affected</th>
<th>No Change</th>
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</thead>
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<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>W1</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>41</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>W2</td>
<td>30</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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</table>
With the loss of household income, women are negatively affected in provision of family healthcare services as society gives them prime responsibilities for family healthcare needs. This complicated matters for women who had to provide health care services to their families in the context of reduced earnings and increased cost of medication. Reduction in health and child care services meant that women had to assume even greater responsibilities in these areas.

Women had to go an extra mile to ensure that all members of the family received 'adequate' healthcare. While even during normal times, the burden on women of stretching their energies in the provision of family healthcare is substantial; in times of declining household income it becomes more crucial. A majority of the respondents interviewed were of the agreement that the cost of healthcare had shot up beyond their reach as most of them were not medically covered.

Affording health care is very challenging. The cost of treatment in Public hospitals is far beyond our reach. Private medication is even worse. The only medical cover left for us is NHIF, which although cheaper, is still a challenge for many of us to subscribe the monthly contributions with no regular income. I don’t know if my family is the only one suffering the same predicament or its even in other families. We get healed through the grace of God and we have resorted to prayers to get healed (Lucy Karimi Oral Information, 5th August 2007).

Reduced funding by governments in the health sector resulted in a shortage of drugs and other basic medical equipment in hospitals. A survey of rural health centers in Zambia report that most critical drugs had been out of stock for 17 weeks over the previous year, and in some areas for 31 week; chloroquine had been out of stock for 4 weeks, on average, and in the worst area for 10 weeks (Clark and Keen, 1988).
In Kenya, government hospitals were under-funded and under-staffed as a consequence of the massive retrenchment of health care workers. Medical personnel in public hospitals were demoralized and frustrated due to lack of adequate equipment and medicine in these hospitals. Moreover, they were poorly paid compared to those working in private hospitals (Mghanga 2003). The exodus of doctors from public hospitals to the private sector (or private practice) due to poor pay worsened the already inequitable distribution of healthcare services.

Poor economic growth in Kenya made it impossible for the government to allocate adequate resources for basic health services. These constraints led to a contraction of health services in a situation where effective coverage was already poor and health status low. Those services available functioned below capacity, incapable of tackling major health problems such as communicable diseases, environmental problems, and maternal and child health including nutrition (Ibid, 2003).

Most government hospitals in Nakuru town could not meet the increasing medical needs of the residents. The four health centers run by the Nakuru Municipal Council were shut down making healthcare services out of reach for a number of patients in Nakuru town. A majority of the respondents interviewed stated that basic drugs such as chloroquine and aspirin and consumables such as bandages, needles and syringes were in desperate short supply in government-run hospitals as was the case with the Rift-Valley General Hospital where old equipment could be neither repaired, due to lack of spare parts, nor replaced. This was true of other government-run hospitals and clinics in the town.
Studies indicate that the level of public health facility attendance dropped significantly due to rising cost of medication and non availability of drugs. The likely causes of these reversals derive from declines in incomes and reductions in health sector spending, which led to the imposition of user charges for health care, cutbacks in preventive programmes' budgets and interruptions in supply of pharmaceuticals to public health care facilities (Rogo, 1995).

The high costs of ante- and per-natal care led to reduced or delayed attendance at clinics. A survey by the Ministry of Health and Child Welfare in Zimbabwe revealed that 25% of pregnant women attended ante-natal clinics for the first time in the third trimester pregnancy (UNICEF, 1994). In Kenya 88% of women receive antenatal care from a medical professional, either from doctors (18%) or nurses or mid-wives (70%). A small fraction (2%) receives antenatal care from traditional birth attendants, while 10% do not receive any antenatal care (GoK 2003).

The introduction of user charges for ante-natal and maternity care in government hospitals in Kenya is associated with deliveries conducted at home, as well as those occurring in hospital without previous antenatal care. In Kenya two out of five births (40%) are delivered in a health facility while 59% are delivered at home. Births to older women and births of higher order are more likely to occur at home. Children whose mothers had more antenatal care visits during pregnancy are less likely to deliver at home (Ibid 2003)
In Nakuru town most of the women interviewed admitted not attending ante-natal clinics until the late stages of pregnancy. Introduction of user fees in government hospitals prevented them from early attendance to ante-natal clinics. This negatively affected women's reproductive health and contributed to sharp rises in maternal mortality. Decline in family income coupled with the rising cost of healthcare meant that many women who could not afford hospital delivery opted for home delivery under traditional mid-wives. Although it was cheaper to deliver at home, it was also risky in that traditional mid-wives could not deal with complications associated with pregnancies. This could put the life of the mother and the new-born baby at risk as lack of a skilled attendant at the time of childbirth is a serious risk factor for maternal death.

The direct consequence of the increased cost of medication in the context of reduced household income was that the poor could not afford medical treatment and some succumbed to curable diseases. A majority of patients with diseases such as tuberculosis, high blood pressure, diabetes, typhoid, malaria, etc could not afford medical treatment and drugs for the diseases. Most sick people could not afford the cost of admission to hospitals and had to be taken care of at home.

Since social arrangements give them more responsibility for the care of the young, the elderly and the sick, it is the women who bear the burden of taking care of the sick at home. A majority of the women interviewed reported having to spend more time caring for other household members when they fell sick. Even when husbands or children...
attended hospitals for treatment, shortages of equipment and personnel meant that women are expected to go with them to provide meals and care for the duration of the treatment.

It is us women who have the biggest problem in times of economic hardships; we have to take the responsibility of seeking treatment when our children and also our husbands fall ill. Last month I had to spend a lot of time in hospital when my daughter was admitted to hospital. I had to be there all the time to bath her, feed her and take care of all her needs. I was shuttling from home to hospital to take care of the other children and my husband. It was not an essay job. When she was discharged we had an even bigger problem of raising the hospital bill for her to be released as even the public hospitals have become expensive for the ordinary people (Margaret Mabeya, O. I, 15th August 2007).

Families unable to afford privatized health care introduced in government hospitals resorted to other mean of seeking medication. Some opted to visit ‘cheap’ private clinics and quacks or over the counter medicines in their neighborhoods. Private hospitals, clinics and chemists, some of which sold sub-standard medicines and were run by quacks mushroomed everywhere in most parts of Nakuru town endangering the lives of many patients.

In desperation, others resorted to divine intervention in churches and traditional herbs. It was established that cases such as epilepsy which could be cured in hospitals were either taken to churches or treated by the traditional herbal medicines which were cheaper options. The mushrooming of indigenous churches in Nakuru town during this period can be attributed to declining household income and the escalating poverty. Several households resorted to God’s intervention in circumstances that were purely economic.
Loss of a job or a means of earning a living can have negative psychological implications on the victims. Jahoda (1982) documents that jobs perform valuable ‘latent functions’ meaning that they provide satisfactions over and above the monetary rewards that people might offer as their reason for working. Jobs impose a time structure on the day, provide contact with other people, and confer status and identity. A job gives people some sort of status in society.

Loss of a job can therefore inflict anxiety and frustration on a majority of people at some stage and also imposes anguish and despair especially on those who are not equipped to cope with extreme misfortune. Victims of downsizing and retrenchment bear costs that go beyond salary loss to include such problems associated with frustrations as loss of self esteem, alcoholism and divorce (Ibid 1982).

In Nakuru town, it was established that persons affected by civil service retrenchment were psychologically affected. Most respondents stated that they were not psychologically prepared for retrenchment and neither expected it. Some people reported to work in the morning as usual only to find retrenchment letters on their desks. There was cases of employees who reported on duty after their annual leave only to get information that they had been retrenched.

Since most respondents were not adequately prepared for retrenchment, it had devastating psychological results. Loss of a regular source of income particularly without adequate notice can cause a lot of psychological problems which a majority of people
were not ready for. Some felt that they should have been given at least a two year notice in order to be mentally and psychologically prepared for retrenchment. They stated that workshops could have been conducted to prepare them psychologically. Some reports indicate that other people collapsed and died on receiving news that they had been retrenched (Daily Nation, September, 16, 2000: 19).

Alcoholism and marital violence were reported as among the psychological consequences associated with loss of regular household income. Out of 45 women who were retrenched, 4 (9%) became alcoholics. An interview with women whose husbands were retrenched established that 13 (43%) out of 30 respondent’s husbands became alcoholics. Out of the 21 men who were retrenched, 6 (29%) admitted having turned to alcoholism.

The percentage of retrenched men who became alcoholics as a result of retrenchment could be higher than the reported 29% as few men were brave enough to admit that they were alcoholics, even when evidence is there to show that. This negatively affected the family socially and financially.

It was established that more men than women turned to alcoholism after losing their jobs. This could be attributed to the fact that women are able to persevere hardships than their male counterparts. The societal responsibilities given to women on the basis of their feminine bodies have taught them to endure hardships.
Men on the other hand cannot persevere when hardships become extreme. Men will find it difficult to undergo the embarrassment of losing a job which the male ego cannot take as the head of the family. This makes it difficult for them to cope with loss of a job hence most of them turn to alcoholism. Alcoholism may eventually lead to verbal and physical violence of the wife and children.

3.1.2 Effects of Retrenchment on Women’s Provision of Family Nutrition
Prior to the implementation of SAPs, the government controlled food prices through the price control department. This ensured that consumers of foodstuffs were not exploited by unscrupulous traders. Essential foodstuffs such as maize, rice, beans among others were subsidized and Industrial firms that processed food products were given tax incentives to make their products affordable. This came to an end with the implementation of SAPS.

SAPs affected food prices through the reduction/ abolition of subsidies and price decontrol. In most countries that implemented SAPs, food price indices rose significantly faster than the overall consumer price index. The increase in the relative price of foodstuffs negatively affected most families as they had to spend more on food than they previously did. Sharp increases in relative prices of food had devastating effects on households which were food buyers with women and children suffering most (Vickers, 1991).
Loss of regular household income as a consequence of civil service retrenchment exacerbated the already poor nutritional condition in most households in Nakuru town. Rising food prices combined with declining family income negatively affected food provision in most families affected by civil service retrenchment. Households had to spend more money on foods in the context of reduced income. The study investigated the effects of loss of family income on provision of family nutrition with the following results.

It was established that out of the 45 women who were retrenched, 43 (96%) were negatively affected in their quest to provide food stuffs to their families while 2 (4%) were not. It was also established that 28 (93%) out of 30 women whose husbands were retrenched were negatively affected whereas 2 (7%) were not. In comparison, 19 (90%) out of the 21 men interviewed were negatively while 2 (10%) were not.

Table 3.2: Effects of Retrenchment on Respondent’s Provision of Family Nutrition

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</tr>
<tr>
<td>W1</td>
<td>45</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>90</td>
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</table>

Although loss of family income as a result of civil service retrenchment negatively affected both men and women in their provision of family nutrition, women were disproportionately affected as social arrangements give them primary responsibilities for...
the provision of foodstuffs. As managers of household food consumption, rising food prices combined with loss of regular family income negatively affected women's spending power and their ability to provide foodstuffs to their families.

Women had to spend more time in organizing consumption— for example, shopping more frequently and buying less at a time, buying less convenience food and spending more time on food preparation.

As women we have the prime responsibility of feeding the family with or without money. The children need food on the table everyday whether you have the money or not. We have to work extra hard to ensure that everybody is fed; when family income falls we are severely affected. In some cases, we rely on borrowed money from relatives, friends and even high interest money lenders in order to feed our families. In most cases paying back this borrowed money proves impossible. (Millicent Adhiambo Oloo, O.I, 2nd August 2007).

Working women allocate a substantial amount of their earnings in providing food to their families than on personal spending. In households where both couples work for a wage, the situation does not change much as the man might allocate his salary in meeting major payments as house rent, school fees, buying household goods such as furniture and electronics whereas budgeting for food is in the woman's domain.

Even in households where the man is the sole income earner, budgeting for food still lies in the woman's domain. The husband would in most cases allocate his wife a house-keeping allowance which she is expected to budget for family food. Whenever there is a shortfall in the family budget, it is upon the woman to find ways of how to squeeze the house-keeping allowance to make ends meet (Jackson, 1993). Whether it is the man or
the woman who is retrenched, it is the woman who suffers most because of the social arrangements that gives her prime responsibilities for household food management.

To cope with declining family income and the high prices of food stuffs, families reduce the content and frequency of meals. Studies by Whiteford (1988), Kanji (1994) and Mupedziswa and Gumbo (1998) record changes in household consumption pattern. Changes in prices of foodstuffs combined with loss of family income affect the ability of households to obtain food that is available in the market. There is consumption of cheap sources of calories and the avoidance of meat and milk, which were seen as expensive (Aritho 1995, Kigutha 1995).

In Nakuru town, most households affected by civil service retrenchment changed the content and frequency of meals in order to survive. They resorted to buying cheap, starchy and difficult to process food in place of meat, chicken and fish were considered luxurious. Foods such as bread, rice, margarine and butter, which most households acquired with ease before retrenchment, were a thing of the past although they could still be found in the menus of the rich.

The changes in the content and frequency of meals had negative implications on the nutritional health status of most family members with women and children suffering most. There is substantial evidence from a number of countries that child nutritional status deteriorated after the introduction of SAPs. Vickers (1991) in a study of Sri Lanka
and Chile records that reduction in food subsidies led to an increase in malnutrition among children from poor families.

Safa and Antrobus (1997:21) correlate the change in family diet in Jamaica after currency devaluation increased food prices with the high percentage of women suffering protein deficiency and anaemia. When women are pregnant or lactating, any decline in their health may have spill-over effects on children. In Gambia, child malnutrition increased when a WB supported adjustment programme led to an increase in food prices without accompanying buffering measures (Stewart, 1992).

The drastic changes in household consumption and dietary patterns had severe implications on health and nutritional status of most family members in Nakuru town. It was also established that women and young children were the most affected family members by declining food consumption since preference was most likely to be given to male wage earners. Changes in food prices combined with reductions in incomes for many poor households, often below the minimum subsistence level, worsened their nutritional standards.

Most of the women interviewed stated that when foodstuffs are scarce, they and their children are the ones suffering more than their husbands. Of the 75 women interviewed, 72 (96%) admitted that they and their children were negatively affected nutritionally by the drastic changes in household consumption patterns. Only 3 or 4% were not. As a
result of these changes, young children suffered from nutritional related diseases such as marasmus, kwashoikor and malnutrition.

There is a clear link between household income and food intake and enough evidence exists that when purchasing power is limited, food quality and intake of the vulnerable suffers. The evidence pointing to the association between increasing poverty with maternal and childhood malnutrition is well documented. (Scandizzo & Tsakok, 1985).

Although some cases of malnutrition in developing countries can be attributed to drought, much can be associated with increasing poverty as a result of falling real income among poor households.

The nutritional problems reported among women and children affected by retrenchment in Nakuru town were not simply of food unavailability (as the town boasts of plenty of food stuffs) but of declining levels of real household incomes as a result of unemployment. An increase in real household income is essential for an improved household diet. The bulk of the impact of retrenchment on family nutrition in Nakuru town was largely felt by the women because of the significant increase in the cost of utilities, higher fuel costs and withdrawal of food subsidies which resulted in price hikes for food-stuffs.

The poor purchasing power at the household level was exacerbated by cultural norms which encouraged unequal food distribution. In some communities, the best food is prepared or reserved for the husband or father with the children coming second and the
woman left to consume whatever remains (Cornia et al 1987). Often they have nothing nutritious left for them. Pregnant women are also prohibited from eating certain foods. This has serious implications for their health considering that they have the longest working hours.

There is a relationship between women’s (and children by extension) poor nutritional status and their access to resources such as land and income. The nutritional foods women need have to be grown on land which is inaccessible to them. Women’s access to land is limited because, traditionally and to a large extent even to date, land is allocated to married men who are expected to take care of their wives and children. Without access to her own land, a woman cannot grow food such as vegetables, and other staple foods, and her nutrition is at a disadvantage (Kwesiga, 2002).

Women’s income has also been shown to be vital to the nutritional well-being of children. Child nutrition has also been shown to correlate with the size of the mother’s income as opposed to the father’s income. Dwyer and Bruce (1988) show that in Guatemala, the children of income earning mothers had more adequate diets at 18 and 30 months than children of the same age of non-earning mothers. Children of mothers who earn their own income are less likely to suffer nutritional deficiencies.
3.1.3 Effects of Retrenchment on Women’s Provision of Children’s Education

Before the introduction of SAPs in the early 1980s, public education in Kenya was highly subsidized by government and this enabled many parents to send their children to school. Government provided free books, built schools and even sustained a school feeding programme in form of free school milk to children. However, these achievements were reversed courtesy of the implementation of SAPs.

Under SAPs, the government introduced cost-sharing in the education sector beginning 1986. Government expenditure in the education sector declined from 18.1% to 6.8% between the fiscal years of 1988/89 and 1991/92 (GoK, 1998). Cost-sharing meant that parents had to build schools, buy equipment, textbooks and school uniforms and also pay increased school fees. As a result of this, many poor parents could not afford education for their children and school enrolment rates fell sharply, rolling back the achievements the country had made since independence.

School enrolment dropped from 95% in 1989 to 75% in 1996 and by 2000, dropped to 73%. Completion rates also declined over the years. For example, 43% of girls and 45.1% of boys enrolled in class one in 1989 completed class eight in 1996 (GoK, 1998:25-26). Most families in Kenya could not afford to pay for education as they previously depended heavily on the state in the provision of education. The introduction of cost-sharing in the education sector had profound effects on women as society assigns them prime responsibilities for provision of education in the family.
Loss of regular family income through civil service retrenchment complicated matters for most households in Nakuru town. Meeting the increased cost of children schooling as a result of the introduction of cost-sharing with reduced earnings negatively impacted on the provision of children’s education. Extra fees set by individual schools head-teachers together with the school councils (which varied according to the status of schools) tremendously increased the cost of schooling. When additional costs such as uniform, school books and transportation were included, the annual cost of schooling per year became unaffordable for most parents.

Out of the 45 female retrenched from the civil service, 40 (89%) were negatively affected in providing educations to their children by loss of regular household income, whereas 5 (11%) were not. Of the 30 women whose husbands were retrenched, 26 (87%) were negatively affected while 4 (13%) were not. In comparison, out of the 21 men interviewed, 18 (86%) were negatively affected while 3 (14%) recorded no changes. Lack of school fees was cited most by most respondents as the cause for children dropping out as parent’s ability to pay school fees and meet other educational expenses was an important factor in children’s schooling.

Table 3.3. Effects of Retrenchment on Provision of Children’s Education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>Number Interviewed</th>
<th>Negatively Affected</th>
<th>No Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W1</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
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<td>W2</td>
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<td>26</td>
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<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>21</td>
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<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The following sentiments were expressed concerning the high cost of education,

Prior to the introduction of cost sharing in schools we could manage to pay the little fees charged by schools. When the government introduced charges in schools, education of children has been an uphill task for us especially those with many children, we can’t afford to educate all our children. This has been worsened by the loss of family income as a result of retrenchment. We count ourselves lucky if our children go past secondary school (Ruth Apindi Okello, 0.1, 23\textsuperscript{rd} August 2007).

Social arrangements in the family give women more responsibility in the provision of education to children in the family. Most of early childhood education in the family is provided by mothers who are in most cases the primary educators in the family. Such responsibilities given to women demand that they prepare children to go to school. It was stated that:

As mothers we are the ones who bath, cloth and ensure that children go to school, we also make sure that they have something to eat at break-time and during lunch break, although our husbands pay school fees, we do most of the work. Even when it comes to school meetings it is us and not the men who attend. When our children are sent home because of not paying school fees, we are the ones who take the trouble of pleading with the head teachers to allow them back as we look for money. Our husbands rarely do this as they say they are busy elsewhere (Millicent Nekesa Wafula, O.I, 4\textsuperscript{th} August 2007).

Women also allocate a sizeable amount of their income towards the provision of basic needs in the family, which include food, clothing and education. When their employment status is affected, the provision of such basic needs, education included is negatively affected. Their contribution involves not only paying school fees, but also purchasing or mending school uniforms, preparing breakfast and lunch for the children and attending school meetings.
Men’s responsibilities in the provision of children’s education may be limited to payment of school fees and buying books, leaving the remaining responsibilities to women. With the high cost of schooling in terms of increased school fees, uniforms, books and food, women are most likely to suffer than men in ensuring that children attend school.

Loss of family income combined with increased cost of schooling negatively impacted on children’s education with the girl child suffering disproportionately. When household finances decline and cost of education goes up, parents are likely to prefer to educate sons other than daughters. It is only the male child who continues with his education while the female child drops out to substitute work for schooling, or to reduce the financial cost of schooling within the household unit.

Deteriorating female enrolment appears to be closely linked with periods of economic hardships. Weekes-Vagliani (1992), finds fewer women completing secondary schooling in Cote d’ Ivoire in the 1980s during the period of adjustment than before. Meena (1988), reports that in Tanzania people began to educate only the male children at the expense of females. In Uganda, gender discrimination in education between children widened in step with the introduction of cost-sharing in the education sector in many African countries (Kwesiga, 2002). In Kenya of all girls who enrolled in standard one, only 34% completed standard eight as compared to 70% of boys (Chege & Sifuna 2006).

In Nakuru town, out of the 75 women interviewed, 38 (51%) admitted that when resources were scarce they would give preference to the male children at the expense of
the female ones. Thirty seven (49%) stated that they could not discriminate their children in the provision of education even when resources were scarce. Out of the 21 men interviewed, 13 (62%) asserted that when family finances were on the decline they would give preference to sons as opposed to daughters. Only 8 (38%) would not discriminate among their children in providing education. The following sentiments were expressed by two different respondents.

A child is a child whether male or female and they should be treated equally in terms of educational opportunities (Mercy Cherotich, O.I, 12th September, 2007).

When resources are scarce, I would prefer to educate my son as opposed to my daughter as boys will remain in the family while girls will get married” (Leah Ochiel, O.I, 6th August, 2007).

Apart from lack of finances to pay for children’s school fees, several other factors influence the schooling of the girl children. These include parental attitude towards education of girls, parental level of education, and socio-economic status of the family and the existence of family labour.

Parental attitude is a very important determinant in the education of female children. A report to Malawi’s Ministry of Education and Culture in 1990, quoted in Kwesiga (2002: 52), indicates that although 85% of the girls dropped out of school due to lack of school fees, it was their parent’s method of prioritizing their finances that contributed to their dropping out. Faced with financial constraints, 31% of parents chose to send their sons to school, and 10% opted for girls while 59% indicated they would try to send both (Ibid 2002).
In Nakuru town, the attitudes and perceptions of parents about education were found to be a strong factor in deciding whether girls were to be sent to school. Decisions to enroll a child and to keep her or him in school are made at the family level by parents and are guided by their perception of the costs and benefits of education. While finances and the availability of a suitable school are clearly important, too are parental aspirations, inclinations and prioritization. Parents prefer to invest in their son’s education to higher levels because of the anticipated returns. Being the prime beneficiaries of family assets in the patrilineal inheritance system, boys are favored in educational investment decisions. There was a strong belief that once married, girls become part of another family and parental investment is lost.

Parental level of education influences the education of girls. There is evidence that a mother’s lack of education has adverse effect on girl’s access to schooling. In Uganda, Kwesiga (2002) finds girls’ enrolment to be higher in households with more educated mothers. In Nakuru town, it was established that children of educated and professional parents, particularly girls, are more likely to attend school regularly up to higher education, than children of uneducated parents. Educated parents are less likely to discriminate among their children when giving them education.

Biraimah (1987) identifies the family’s socio-economic status as an important factor determining girl’s access to education. In a study of the University of Ife in Nigeria, he finds that while male students’ backgrounds reflected fairly well and full socio-economic spectrum, female students appeared to be a more elite group, coming overwhelmingly
from the urban upper and middle classes (Ibid, 1987). Families from relatively higher socio-economic status have been found to give equal access to education opportunities to both male and female children.

In Nakuru town, socio-economic status was found to influence the enrolment of girl children in schools. Considering that most of the workers who were retrenched belonged to the lower cadres of the civil service, a majority of them were poor and their families were of low socio-economic status. Poorer parents may often be able to afford to educate only some of their children, who in most cases are boys. Family poverty worked against the girl child access to education as Heyzer (1989:56) points out that access to schooling in low-income families is sex-specific.

The existence of family labor is also a factor that influences girls’ enrolment in schools in the Third World. Most girls in the developing world enter school at a late age because of the demand for their labor in their homes such as assisting in looking after their young siblings. Girls are also expected to perform more tasks and at an earlier age than boys. Work at home is known to be an obstacle to girls’ schooling in Kenya, where girls may not be enrolled at all, or if enrolled, their schooling may be interrupted from time to time, or they may be withdrawn from school permanently (Chege and Sifuna 2006).

In Nakuru town, it was established that the allocation of domestic labor to young girls affected their enrolment in schooling. Family labour which include collecting fire-wood fetching water and other household chores such as cooking, looking after younger
siblings to enable the mother to do more work, etc were found to fall more on girls than boys. As women’s unpaid work burden becomes heavier, they enlist more help from girls, thus reducing the girls’ time and attention for their homework.

Having looked at the effects of loss regular household income on provision of family healthcare, nutrition and education, the next section examines effects of retrenchment on women’s autonomy and decision-making power in the household.

3.2 Effects of Retrenchment on Women’s autonomy and Decision-Making Power in the Household in Nakuru Town

This section investigates the effects civil service retrenchment and the resultant loss of income on women’s decision-making power in the household in Nakuru town. It argues that women’s autonomy and decision-making power in the household in Nakuru town was eroded by loss of a regular income as a result of civil service retrenchment. It further argues that although a woman’s level of autonomy and decision making power is enhanced by the amount of cash income she contributes to the family budget, culture and the patriarchal nature of the African family still gives greater autonomy and decision-making power to the man over the woman.

The subordinate position of women’s participation in decision-making in the household can be traced to pre-colonial African society which gave men more powers within and outside the home than women. Prevailing customs and social attitudes enforced the inferior position and status of women. In most patrilineal African households, women were confined to the home and were not allowed to participate in the traditional public
decision-making meetings. Where women made major decisions, it had to be approved by their husbands and in their absence by some other senior male members of the family.

Despite arrogating the man complete authority and responsibility for running the homestead, pre-colonial African social organization gave the woman considerable authority for she was regarded as the owner of the house. In relation to the house, the man ceased to feature since it was the woman who had full control of the house and the activities therein, be they economic or social (Ayot, 1990). The woman managed the house, guided the children and also fostered relationships with community and kin. In the polygamous African setting, there was a distinction between the homestead and the house. The homestead was made up of several houses belonging to the respective wives. Whereas the man was the head of the homestead, the individual wives headed their respective houses (Ibid, 1990: 84).

With the establishment of colonial rule, some of the African cultural values that gave women considerable authority in the house were lost. Spread of Christianity, Western education and values and the emergence of the modern nuclear family further perpetuated the subordinate and inferior position of women in matters of autonomy and decision-making in the household. Colonialism worsened the position of women within the African family.

In Africa, colonialism marginalized women in autonomy and decision-making through a process that begun in infancy. Girls, in contrast to boys, were socialized to play passive
roles and given little opportunity to make decisions or develop leadership skills outside the family context. They were kept largely within the confines of the household and family and taught to accept the decisions that others' parents, teachers, brothers make on their behalf. As a result of this, girls tend to lack self-confidence and skills needed to function effectively in public decision-making. An added handicap for many is their lack of capacity due to discrimination in access to education and training.

In the modern nuclear family, men enjoy higher levels of autonomy and decision-making power than women. The relative power position of husbands and wives is influenced by the comparative resources they bring to marriage, such as education and income and the type of occupational and kinship positions each maintains outside the conjugal family as well as by the prescribed and traditional authority patterns of the cultures to which they belong (Oppong, 1970).

The process of decision making in the home is an admittedly complex sequence of events taking place between spouses and between them and their kin and colleagues. It depends upon the relative power position of the spouses in the household. Herbst (1954) broadly categorizes a couples' power relationships as *syncratic*, couples sharing their major decision-making; *autonomic*, spouses each making their own decisions separately, with a minimum of consultation, and husband-dominated or *autocratic*, in which the husband makes the majority of decisions affecting both his own and his wife's use of resources.
Women's subordinate position in the family is sustained by men's economic domination achieved through paid employment and control of household cash. Although patriarchy and culture plays an important part in determining women's position in the household, their income contribution enhances their autonomy and decision-making power in the household. Women's contribution to the household cash is a powerful tool towards increasing their autonomy and decision-making power in the household.

Loss of regular income due to civil service retrenchment had negative implications on women's autonomy and decision-making power in the household in Nakuru town. Of the 45 women who were retrenched 22 experienced erosion in their autonomy and decision-making power whereas 23 did not experience any erosion. Out of the 23 retrenched who did not experience erosion in their autonomy and decision making power, 12 were single, through widowhood, divorce or by choice. This means that 22 (67%) out of the 33 married retrenched experienced an erosion in their decision making power, whereas 11 (33%) did not record any change. The loss of regular income was subsequently followed by the loss of authority and controls over major decisions in the house especially those touching on family financial resources.

In comparison, 4 (19%) out of the 21 men retrenched experienced an erosion in their autonomy and decision-making powers in the house. This was the case in households where the man had been retrenched while the woman remained in waged or self employment. Income-generating women in such households experienced an enhancement in their autonomy and decision-making power as the sole breadwinners in the house.
Being the primary financial contributors in the household, these women had more authority to decide on children education, housing and the allocation of income. This, however, did not mean that such women were necessarily the household heads as they still had to consult their husbands in matters that required huge financial spending. As women gain access to positions that control economic resources, male dominance may come under threat (Costello, 1995). Seventeen (81%) of retrenched men did not record any erosion in their autonomy and decision-making power.

Table 3.4: Effects of Retrenchment on Respondent’s Decision-Making Power

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>Number Interviewed</th>
<th>Eroded</th>
<th>Not Eroded</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W1</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Access to economic resources is an important factor in determining the level of women’s autonomy and decision making in the household. Those women who do not have access to economic resources of their own have minimal contribution to family finances and as such are almost completely dependent on their husbands. When a woman looses regular income due to dismissal from employment, her autonomy and decision-making power is eroded.

The study established that women who enjoyed greater autonomy and decision-making powers in matters of finance, welfare of children and the general running of the

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household prior to retrenchment were no longer in that position as stated by one respondent:

As a married woman in the house it is very difficult for you to make critical decisions in the house if you do not contribute any money in the family. Before I lost my job through retrenchment I had more power in terms of making financial decisions in the family. Men tend to respect women who contribute money towards family budget. Decisions such as what food should be cooked in the house or the type of school children should attend remains the man’s domain (Salome Ndinda, O.I, 23rd August 2007).

Studies have shown that if women were in long-term employment, they had considerable more influence in decision-making (Dwyer & Bruce 1988, Volger 1998). Married women increase economic independence through paid work as they do not wholly depend upon their husbands. Urban women’s involvement in small projects enhanced their decision-making powers with respect to household finances in Tanzania (Tripp, 1989).

Women who earn an income from employment enjoy more authority in the family in comparison to those who do not earn anything. Such women are less dependent on their husbands hence their autonomy and decision-making power is enhanced. However, this does not mean that these women enjoy greater autonomy in the household than their husbands who might be earning less. As revealed in the study, there were cases where men who were retrenched did not experience any erosion in there level of autonomy and decision-making power. The loss of regular income did not undermine their authority as they remained the undisputed heads of their households with or without an income.
Since access and control of vital economic resources determine the level of autonomy and decision-making power in the household, some men may attempt to prevent any activity which they believe might undermine their authority over women (Smith & Sender, 1990). This is particularly true when women are working and their husbands are unemployed or when both are employed but the wife earns more than the husband. Husband’s opposition to wives working is generally less strong when the wife’s position is lower than that of her husband, when she earns only a portion of the family income, and when she does not claim control over her income (Chigumba, 1985). When men feel threatened by the woman’s economic position, they may oppose or discourage them from working (Little, 1973).

In spite of access to and control over resources being an important determinant on the level of autonomy and decision-making in the family, the patriarchal African family system is a strong barrier in the case of women. It determines the inheritance system, property ownership and control over resources derived from economic activities. This marginalizes their position in matters of decision-making as most of the economic power in the house is vested in the man. The socio-legal position of married women which deny them ownership and control of resources such as land and livestock has a direct impact on their access to income generated from the land.

Women’s opportunities in the cash economy are also lower than men’s. In the Third World, women constitute the majority of the unemployed and when they are employed, they earn less than men hence their control over distribution of income in the family is
limited. The situation is worse for the unemployed woman who virtually has no control over her husband’s income (Potash, 1989). One of the major attractions to paid work for married women is that it provides them with money over which they have direct control over.

Gender is a crucial factor in defining how money is valued, apportioned and spent in the household. Evidence suggests that intra-household distribution of resources and income vary by sex and age. (Elson, 1992) There exists a dimension of unequal power relations between husband and wives in their domestic financial relationship and the gender that controls the finances chooses the priorities. The structure of control over resources within the household constrains the extent to which income can be allocated equally to all members.

Men have potentially greater power in determining how family income is allocated because they generally earn more than their wives. Among married couples, the degree to which men exercise direct control over domestic expenditure exceeds that of the woman. Whether women control the bulk of domestic finances, have a housekeeping allowance, draw from a common pool, or cover certain costs from their own wages, they generally spend little on themselves. Men on the other hand, have greater access to personal spending (Jackson, 1993). A couple may talk of the husband’s wage as ‘ours’ rather than ‘his’, but in practice, wives do not have an equal right to spend it, especially on themselves.
It was established that there exist neither joint decision-making in financial matters nor equal sharing of resources in most households affected by civil service retrenchment in Nakuru town. Out of the 96 households interviewed, only 24 made joint financial decisions and budgeting. Twelve of the 96 respondents were single women. This means that 24 (29%) out of the 84 respondents who were married made joint family decisions. The remaining 71% did not make joint family decisions. In most households, men monopolized household decision-making process. In some cases, women were given fixed housekeeping allowances by their husbands, who generally were reluctant to reveal how much they earned.

Women interviewed stated although they had responsibility for household budgeting and ensuring that sufficient food is provided daily, their control over the allocation of total household income was very limited. Though they spend more time and energy managing the household budget, they did not have total control of household finances. These findings reinforce Munachonga's (1986) study of one hundred households in low-income areas of Lusaka, Zambia, which found that in only a tiny minority of cases was money management a joint responsibility of husband and wife.

It is common for men to deceive their wives, or refuse to tell them how much money they earn in order to reserve a sizeable proportion of their income for their leisure activity. Some men believe that the only thing a woman needed to worry about was whether she got her regular housekeeping allowances or not. Others fear that if their wives knew the full amount of their income, it would make them extravagant.
In most cases, women deny themselves personal needs and wants for the sake of the family and are often reluctant to regard their own income as theirs and accessible to them for personal spending. Men on the other hand tend to view what they earn as belonging to them and not belonging to the family. Though husbands will not divulge what they earn, they will in most cases demand to know what their wives earn (Munachonga, 1986).

In Nakuru town, most women who were retrenched admitted making joint investment of their retirement benefits with their husbands. Out of the 45 women who were retrenched, 28 admitted having jointly invested their retirement benefits with their husbands while only 7 did not. Twelve out of the 17 women who did not make joint investments with their husbands were single. This means that only 5 out of 33 (45 – 12) women who were retrenched and married did not jointly invest their benefits with their husbands. From the above, 85% of married female retrenchees made joint investment decisions with their husbands whereas 15% did not.

These women stated that their husbands convinced them to jointly invest their terminal benefits, a venture that collapsed immediately they had parted with the money. They complained that after such joint ventures, they were not in a position to know how much such businesses generated as their husbands tended to keep it secret. Some men convinced their wives to deposit their benefits in a joint bank account for which they kept the documents.
Women who were unhappy with such arrangement sometimes hid funds or deceived their husbands about their real income which was likely to lead to quarrels. A married female respondent stated that:

When I got my terminal benefits, my husband convinced me that we should jointly invest the money, a request which I agreed upon, only to realize that he was using the proceeds on his personal spending. He convinced me to deposit the money in his account so that we could run a joint business. After that I had no control over how the money was to be spend (Leah Opondo Gonda, O.I, 12th September 2007).

Out of the 30 female respondents whose husbands were retrenched, 25 (83%) stated that there was no joint decision-making in financial matters between them and their husbands, while only 5 or 17% jointly made decisions with their husbands. Some complained that they did not know how much money their husbands earned or even what was paid to them as terminal benefits. One respondent that:

I did not know the amount my husband got upon retrenchment, what I heard him say was that the money was not enough. Further more when it came to investing the money I was not consulted and only came to know that he had wasted the money when it was too late. Had I been given the opportunity to invest his retrenchment benefits my family could not have been in search a predicament even if the amount was small. (Mercy Awiri Arunga, O.I, 6th August 2007).

Whatever the man got as terminal benefits was not even disclosed to the woman as most men took it upon themselves to make decisions on how to spend and invest the money. The only way women come to know about their husbands' earnings was when they accidentally stumbled over their pay slips, payment vouchers or bank statements when doing the laundry. To support this, 17 (81%) of the 21 men who were retrenched stated
that they did not consult their wives on how to invest their terminal benefits. Only 4 (19%) jointly invested their terminal benefits with their wives.

Table 3.5: Respondent’s Investment of Retirement Benefits

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>Number Interviewed</th>
<th>Joint Investment</th>
<th>Solo Investment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W1</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W2</td>
<td>30</td>
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<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Apart from eroding women’s autonomy and decision-making power in financial matters, civil service retrenchment had negative implications on women’s fertility decisions. Out of the 33 married women who were retrenched, 22 (67%) indicated that the loss of employment negatively impacted on their ability to make fertility decisions. They indicated that they had to get consent of their husbands to attend a family planning clinic to get contraceptives which in many instances was opposed. Some used contraceptives without the consent and knowledge of their husbands at the risk of discovery which resulted in violence. One respondent stated that:

As married women, to attend a family planning clinic, our husbands must be consulted. He is the one who decides when we should have a child or not. He controls the number of children he wants. If he is against his wife using contraceptives there is nothing she can do and the situation is worse for women who don’t have a means of income or a job. Some of us might decide to use family planning secretly, but if our husbands discover then we are in real trouble (Margret Awiti Oluoch, O.I, 2nd August 2007).

In Africa, women do not have full control over issues that affect their reproductive life, such as birth control and abortion (Letuka, et al, 1997:22). By virtue of being married,
she has consented to sharing her body and her reproductive capacity with her husband - thus married women cannot be sterilized without their husbands consent, although men can be vasectomized without their wives consent. To support these sentiments, most of the men interviewed concurred that their wives have to consult them before using any form of contraception. Out of the 21 men interviewed 18 representing 85% were of such opinion.

Women’s lack of bargaining power in sexual relations derives from fact that in marriage it is the husband who assumes the dominant role and controls the sexuality of the wife. A married woman cannot refuse her husbands sexual advances even if she knows that he has extra-marital affairs which could expose her to the risk of HIV. Women’s lack of control over their own sexuality and fertility is increasingly detrimental to their health. Apart from the contribution to the household cash economy, women’s autonomy and decision-making power is determined by her social status in the family, area of decision-making, household’s socio-economic status and her education level (Volger, 1988).

Social status includes her marital rank (whether she is the first, second or youngest wife) and the number of children she has. In Nakuru town, women with older children (especially sons) who contributed to the family budget were advantaged in making family decisions than those with small children. Women were responsible for making decisions on welfare of children and on small household finances while the husband ultimately made big financial decisions.
In poor households, women take more responsibility, but as households become wealthier, men become more closely involved in the management of money. Poorer households are more likely to maintain conventional gendered practices because both men and women have a more concrete or rigid adherence to the traditional roles of breadwinner and homemaker (Ibid 1988: 692). In Nakuru town no evidence was adduced to support this as most women were subordinated in matters of household finances irrespective of the families’ socio-economic class. Nevertheless, women with higher educational qualifications were found to enjoy relatively higher levels of autonomy and decision-making in comparison to those who had less education.

Despite constituting more than half the population of different countries in the Third World, women are visibly absent in decision-making positions of governments as they are concentrated in the so-called ‘female professions’ and at the very best are in the middle-management positions. They predominate in society only in numerical terms while positions of power and control are held by men because women elect them.

Woman in Africa remain a vulnerable marginalized group that is yet to enjoy equality in status, and access to services and resources with male counterparts. The gender division of labour that reinforces women’s domestication and limited participation in activities outside the home undermines their critical participation in public decision-making. In the next section, the study investigates the effects of the man’s retrenchment on the woman in the household in Nakuru town.
3.3 Effects of Loss of Male Income on the Woman in the Household in Nakuru Town

This section argues that the loss of the husband’s income through civil service retrenchment in Nakuru town, impacted negatively on the woman in the household who responded by intensifying their income generating activities through waged or self-employment. It further argues that though the intensification of women’s income generating activities increased their financial autonomy and decision-making power in the household, it impacted negatively on their reproductive roles through increased workload.

Based on gender roles and culture, different societies prescribe separate spheres for men and women. In the modern Western society, the man provides the principal income through paid work while the woman runs the house and cares for the children. The process of confining women to the domestic sphere was applauded by many ‘progressive’ social thinkers of the industrial revolution period.

Augusta Comte, justified the process of domestication of women by the supposed need for men ‘to assure (woman’s) emotional destiny’ by making her life ‘more and more domestic’ and above all detach her from all outside work’ (Compte, quoted in Barbara 1979). It is thought that a woman’s place is in the home and that she has very specific set of tasks which are thought to be universal because they are based on the biological imperatives of sex. The most important role for women, defining their entire life, is portrayed as the bearing and bringing up children (Ibid 1979)
Although society assigns separate spheres for men and women, declining male income and the rising cost of living has forced many married women to take up breadwinner roles in addition to their domestic responsibilities to supplement family income. To compensate for a husband’s job loss, less steady income, and or a fall in the purchasing power of the family, more women have intensified their productive activities to obtain some sort of supplementary income (Raczynski 1989, Standing, 1989). The effect is particularly strong among low-income families.


In Tanzania, Meena (1991) documents that price decontrols, freeze on wages and job cuts negatively affected women who were forced to supplement family income in a variety of activities in addition to their already heavy labor burden. In Kenya, Ongile (1992) records an increase in self-employment amongst women.

It was established that loss of the husband regular income through civil service retrenchment negatively affected most women in Nakuru town. Out of the 30 women respondents, 26 (87%) stated that loss of the husband’s job negatively impacted on them.
by reducing the family’s purchasing power whereas 4 (13%) did not experience any negative implications.

Chart 3.1 Effects of male retrenchment on Women

Skyrocketing food prices, declining re-employment opportunities, removal of subsidies and rising inflation stretched many households to intolerable economic difficulties. Men’s difficulty in holding on to, or finding alternative jobs increased the pressures on women to contribute to household income. Maintaining the home with less money, fewer public services and reduced social benefits places an extra burden on women who had to intensify their income generating activities in order to make ends meet. According to a female respondent:

Paying house rent, buying food, school fees for children, cloths, medication and meeting other family financial obligations with reduced income and an increased cost of living was already difficult. The situation became worse when my husband lost his job through retrenchment. This has had negative implications on the entire family (Elizabeth Atieno Okello, O.I , 6th August 2007).}

Out of the 30 women whose husbands were retrenched in Nakuru town, 24 (80%) were found to have intensified their income generating activities whereas 6 (20%) did not. Most women stated that they started working because household income could not
adequately cover family needs and in particular, the inflationary food prices. Most women who did not previously contribute to household income challenged the myth of men as the sole breadwinners in the house by looking for waged or self-employment.

Chart 3.2 Intensification of Women’s Income-Generating Activities

Out of the 24 women (80%) who intensified their income generating activities, 13 (54%) were engaged in self-employment, whereas, 6 (25%) were engaged in waged employment in the private sector. The remaining 5 (21%) combined waged work with small scale trade.

Table 3.6.Women’s Type of Employment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Employment</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-Employment</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waged Employment</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combination of the Two</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Most of the women engaged in income-generation were those with many dependants most of whom were small children. Out of the 24 women who were involved in income generation, 19 (79%) had more than five children. The remaining 5 (21%) had less than
five children. Most stated that the main reason of engaging in income generation was to supplement family income. It was established that the bigger the number of children a woman has the higher the probability of her being engaged in income generation.

However, disagreements emerge over this correlation between women’s participation in income generation and the number of children they have. Women with young children are not be in a position to be engaged in income generation due to child-care responsibilities and have to rely on domestic servants to free them which is only possible if they can afford to pay them. The higher the number of children a woman has, the heavier the domestic responsibilities she bears meaning less chances of her involvement in income-generation outside the house. Child-care negatively affects women mobility and their ability to work for earnings.

As unemployment increases in the formal sector, affected households are forced to source incomes from informal sectors. Beginning one’s own business in the informal sector is an alternative to seeking employment. Racynski (1989) finds the curtailment of opportunities in paid employment for men, and the opening up of self-employment activities among women one of the effects of the economic crises of the 1970s and 1980s in developing countries.

In Africa, women constitute the principal labour force in the informal sector (UN, 1996). Food and beverages, textiles, retail trade, pottery and cross-border trade are areas of female dominance (ILO, 1993). In Kenya, Parker and Torres (1984) estimate that women
make up 46% of the sector's entrepreneurs, and outnumber men in the commercial agriculture-based, forest-based and textile sub-sectors. Such employment expanded rapidly with the economic downturn stimulated by an increase in oil prices in the mid-1970s, the economic crisis of the 1980s and the introduction of SAPs in the early 1990s and subsequent retrenchment of government employment (Macharia, 1997).

To compensate for loss of regular household income as a result of the husband's retrenchment from the civil service in Nakuru town, a number of women tried their hand in small-scale businesses most of which were concentrated in their neighbourhoods. Most of those interviewed invested in the food industry where they sold foodstuff, vegetables and fruits while others sold second hand clothes. Those with bigger capital operated retail shops or retailed paraffin. Such small-scale businesses barely generated enough income for subsistence and for financing children's school expenses. Moreover, the businesses operated by women could not compete with those of men on equal terms so long as women carry the double burden of unpaid work in bearing and rearing children.

Trade is the main occupation of urban women in the informal sectors of developing countries and its popularity rests on the fact it can be combined with domestic duties (Wipper 1995). Women perform tasks that are traditionally restricted to, and which represent an extension of their activities as housewives (Parker and Torres, 1984). Most women participate at the lower levels of trade where profits are small, while the higher and more profitable levels are dominated by men and large firms. Lack of funds limits the ability of women to enter businesses demanding high start-up capital.
Standing 1989 notes that to compensate for the loss or decline of male income many women enter waged labour force in increasing numbers, though the kinds of jobs they may take are fairly limited Oppenheimer (1968) documents that ‘cheapness plus availability’ and cheapness plus skills are two characteristics of women’s jobs. Jobs that pay less and combine low wages with a need for a ready supply of workers are female dominated. Women’s jobs are those requiring cheap skilled work force.

In Nakuru town, most respondents who had no capital to start up businesses took up jobs that were less paying, readily available and less skilled in the surrounding factories. They worked an average 10 hours a day to earn 100 Kenya shillings. Many lacked the skills and connections needed to secure permanent jobs with decent pay. One woman stated that:

I have to wake very early in the morning to try my luck in the factories, if am lucky I get a one days job where am paid 100 shillings in the evening. One is usually not lucky in some days meaning no pay. With these casual jobs one cannot make a family budget because the money is unreliable and not steady. You only budget for the day (Sheila Mbati, O.I, 17th August 2007).

Of the 11 women (6 who took up waged employment, plus the 5 who combined waged employment and small-scale trade) 8 or 73 % worked in low skilled, low paying and insecure jobs. Only 3 or 27% were found to be employed in higher skilled, higher paying and secure jobs.
Most of the contracts were on an insecure basis, temporary, casual and often contingent on productivity quotas. Employers deliberately employed women on temporary basis because they avoided giving them benefits such as maternity leave, medical benefits among others. Although women were in some cases the main income earners for their households, some employers chose to pay them low wages because of the ideological assumption was that as women, they are secondary earners and dependent on their husbands.

Intensification of women's income-generating activities to supplement family income has both negative and positive effects on her. The positive effects of working on women are well documented. Studies have also shown that if women were in long-term employment, they had considerable more influence in decision making by virtue of contributing to household income (Dwyer & Bruce 1988, Volger 1998). Having an independent financial base gives women more power within the marriage. Their contribution to household cash is a powerful tool towards increasing their autonomy and authority in the household.
This study established that women who contributed to household income had greater autonomy and higher decision-making power. Out of the 24 women who intensified their income generating activities, 17 (71%) stated that earning an income enhanced their autonomy and decision-making power in the household. The financial independence associated with working increased their confidence and made them more assertive in making family decisions.

Chart 3.4 Effects of Income-Generation on Women’s Autonomy

Intensification of women’s income generating activities has negative implications. Moser (1992) finds the time spent by women on reproductive activities is slipping as they have to allocate more time to income generation at the expense of reproductive work. This negatively impacts on their domestic roles through increased workload. Studies show that women consistently work longer hours than men, with daily working hours ranging from six to sixteen (Elson 1989, Meena 1992, Elabor-Idemudia 1994, Kwesiga 2002).

Most of the women interviewed concurred that although engaging in income activities increased their autonomy and decision-making power, it negatively impacted on them through increased workload. Of the 24 women who intensified their income-generating
activities, 22 (92%) were of the opinion that working outside the house negatively impacted on them through increased workload. Only 2 (8%) were not negatively affected. Whatever other heavy responsibilities women carry, they have to take full charge of their domestic roles. One respondent stated that:

In addition to being away from home all day selling in the market, I still have to cook for the family, make sure that the children have been bathed among other household duties. If I don’t do this then I will be failing in my duty as a wife and mother in the house. I rarely have time to rest (Jane Apondo, O.I, 18th August 2007).

The increase in women’s time for productive activities and a reduction in their time for reproductive activities were found to have a number of implications for their children. Young children were receiving less care than before, when locked up unattended, or attended by housemaids or elder siblings as their mothers went out to work or attend to their small businesses.

Such children were likely to suffer nutritional problems as food left for division amongst children could often be unfairly divided, and there could also be nutritional problems in food cooked by elder siblings. Where a shorter period of breastfeeding is adopted because a woman’s labour force participation makes it difficult to do otherwise, the consequences might be serious if there are no sufficient resources to ensure good nutrition for the child.

As women’s unpaid work burden becomes heavier, they may enlist help from their daughters who have been socialized to assist their mothers with domestic tasks. With a greater number of women both working, and working longer hours, daughters are forced
to dovetail their schooling to their mother’s working hours. As a result, girls are often disadvantaged in terms of academic achievement, making them perform poorly in school. The increase in time spent working is experienced by the daughters, who spend less time on schoolwork and more in domestic activities.

3.5 Summary
From this study it has been established that loss of regular household income as a consequence of civil service retrenchment combined with the reduction in government expenditure in health, education and the removal of subsidies and decontrol of food prices negatively affected the provision of family healthcare, nutrition and education in Nakuru town.

Since society has given women prime responsibility in the provision of family healthcare, nutrition and education they were disproportionately affected in the provision of these service in comparison to their male counterparts. This directly affected women’s roles as principals in reproducing and sustaining families. Women and children were the most negatively affected as they depended heavily on government provision of basic services such as health, education and subsidies on essential food stuffs.

It has further been revealed that loss of regular income as a result of civil service retrenchment in Nakuru town eroded women’s autonomy and decision-making power in the household. Women’s cash contribution to the household budget was found to be a powerful tool towards increasing her autonomy and decision-making power in the house. Retrenchment and the resultant loss of income did not only affect women in making
financial decisions, but also negatively affected their ability to make other major family decisions concerning the welfare of children and fertility decisions. It was found that in most households, joint financial decision-making rarely existed.

It was noted that loss of the men's regular income through civil service retrenchment in Nakuru town acted as a spur for many women to intensify their income generating activities through waged or self-employment as compensatory measures. Although, the intensification of women's income-generating activities enhanced their autonomy and decision-making power in the household, it negatively affected them through increased workload. This negatively impacted on women's reproductive roles.

This chapter has examined the effects of civil service retrenchment on women's provision of family healthcare, nutrition and education, and on women's decision-making power. Impacts of the man's retrenchment on the woman in the household have also been examined. The next chapter will investigate how women in Nakuru town responded to loss of income and the strategies they employed in dealing with it.
CHAPTER FOUR

MECHANISMS ADOPTED BY WOMEN IN COPING WITH
EFFECTS OF CIVIL SERVICE RETRENCHMENT IN NAKURU TOWN

4.0 Introduction
This chapter forms a suitable climax for this study. Whatever strategies women employed after retrenchment from the civil service and how they coped with lost regular household income in Nakuru town is the tenet of this chapter. It is argued here that the unequal gender division of labour that assigns women prime responsibility for household management ensured that women were responsible in devising household survival strategies when household incomes fell and the cost of living went up.

4.1 Strategies Adopted by Women in Coping with the Effects of Civil Service Retrenchment in Nakuru Town

In examining the changes made by households in order to survive in the period of retrenchment, the first fundamental indicator identified is change in income and real resources in cash or kind at the household level. These resources are needed in the area of food, housing, clothing and transport and to an extent health, water sanitation, education and childcare (Cornia et al 1987: 37). In the urban context, changes in household level income are most directly affected by changes in real wage levels and self-employment.

Women are not simply victims of economic hardships; they and their families devise innovative strategies for dealing with it (Annelete 1997, Safa & Antrobus 1997). It is
women who usually cope and devise survival strategies when household incomes fall and prices rise (Elson 1989).

For most households, survival entails a variety of adaptations in the creation, use of resources, conserving and improving the use of existing resources. The term strategy connotes a continuum of adjustments made by households in response to internal and external factors to survive at the same level or attain upward mobility. It refers to the steps taken in the household to survive at a time of declining income and a rise in living costs. This study identified several strategies employed by women in Nakuru town in response to loss or decline in household income as outlined below.

4.1.0 Changing Household Food Consumption Pattern and Adjusting Household Budget

In response to declining household income and rising cost of living, households change their food consumption patterns. There is a reduction in the amounts spent on meat, milk, beans and fish among the poor. To compensate for rising food prices, customary foods are replaced by cheaper and less nutritious ones. (Mupedziswa & Gumbo 1998, Boyd 1988, Kanji 1994, Aritho 1995, Kigutha 1995).

It was established that several households in Nakuru town changed their food consumption patterns in response to declining household income and rising food prices. Out of the 45 women who were retrenched from the civil service 36 (80%) responded to decline in household income by changing family food consumption patterns, whereas 9 (20%) did not. Of the 30 women whose spouses were retrenched, 25 (83%) changed
family food consumption patterns whereas 5 (17%) did not. In comparison, 14 (67%) out of the 21 men who were retrenched changed their food consumption patterns while 7 (33%) did not.

Table 4.1 Changing Household Food Consumption Patterns as a Coping Strategy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>Number Interviewed</th>
<th>Changed patterns of Consumption</th>
<th>No Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W1</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W2</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Rising food prices, reduction in government subsidies and declining household incomes hit low-income households hardest in Nakuru town. Sudden changes in income and prices affect the ability of households to obtain food that is available in the market. Households change their eating patterns and habits with cheap food being preferred as a measure to cut on the cost of living. Cheap and less nutritious foods were preferred as a measure aimed towards cutting cost on food consumption. Meat, milk and eggs and fish were found to be rare in the menu of most families. Some families had to reduce the number of times they ate meat from five times a week to about once in a week. This had negative implications on family members with women and children suffering most.

In some households, there existed no planned menu as the family could feed on whatever they came across, which in most cases consisted of cheap foods whose nutritional value was low. One retrenched stated that:
We have to change the kind of foods we eat, as you can see, meat, milk, eggs has become very expensive, only few people can afford them. We depend on vegetables and 'ugali' for our survival. After all it is what we can afford. Although these foods do not provide a balanced diet for the children, they make them survive (Salome Wendo, O.I, 25th August 2007).

Some households went to the extent of reducing the frequency and content of meals. Breakfast for instance became a thing of the past for some families. Those who maintained breakfast complained of the high price of bread which in most cases they could not afford. They did away with lunch and survived on one meal in a day. Lunch was only provided for the young ones while grown-ups would survive on one meal. When the situation became worse they could go for even two days without food.

To converse on the available food, the amount of food eaten by family members was reduced to ensure that food supplies were available for the family for a longer period. There was a tendency to eat less per meal and thereby stretch the food previously eaten at one meal to cover both mid-day and evening meals. The following was one of the responses from the field:

Breakfast and lunch are things of the past for us. We survive on only one meal a day. When finances do not allow we go for days without food. But when money is available we manage to provide lunch for the young ones (Elizabeth Owich, O.I, 12th August 2007).

Falling household income combined with high food prices resulted in the necessity for women to buy smaller quantities of food and ever cheaper varieties. The decline in stable household income resulted in a reduction in monthly or weekly bulk purchases. Non-
perishable food items such as cooking oil, spaghetti and sugar were more likely to be bought in small quantities at higher prices in local shops.

This in turn meant both greater input of time for repeated trips to markets, longer time spent on processing food and fewer and fewer meals for the family and of course a rise in the burden of work for women and a fall in the levels of nutrition for the entire household. Many of the local small shops which used to give credit were unable to because of losses incurred by bad debts.

Apart from changing household food consumption patterns, adjusting general household budget was found to be a very effective strategy in times of declining family income and rising cost of living. This involved concentrating on basic commodities and reducing household expenditure on non-essential items.

Out of the 45 women who were retrenched, 38 (84%) adjusted their household budget in response to the decline in household income. Only 7 or 16% did not adjust their family budget. Of the 30 women whose husbands were retrenched, 26 (87%) reduced family budgetary allocation whereas 4 (13%) did not make any changes. In comparison, out of the 21 men who were retrenched, 15 (71%) adjusted their family budgets while 6 (29%) did not.
Table 4.2 Adjusting Household Budget as a Coping Strategy

| Respondents | Number Interviewed | Adjusted Family Budget | No Change | |
|-------------|--------------------|------------------------|----------||
|             |                    | No. | %  | No. | %  | |
| W1          | 45                 | 38  | 84 | 7   | 16 | |
| W2          | 30                 | 26  | 87 | 4   | 13 | |
| M           | 21                 | 15  | 71 | 6   | 29 | |
| Total       | 96                 | 79  | 82 | 17  | 18 | |

The rising cost of social service such as health, education and transport resulted in changes in household expenditure and, in turn, placed a considerable drain on households with low and limited incomes. With a majority of family members being of primary school age for which school fees, uniforms and other school needs had to be paid, the responsibility fell on the shoulders of women.

With declining income, a majority of the affected families moved from their previous rented dwellings to cheaper houses which they could afford. Some respondents argued that upon being retrenched, they moved from the spacious government houses and sought shelter somewhere else at market rates. Many ended up in congested dwellings as a way of cutting down living costs. This had negative implications on small children in terms of where to sleep and also reduced privacy on the part of the parents.

Some households went to the extent of reducing spending on some basic needs such as clothing. Children who were previously better clothed were found to be putting on torn clothes as their mothers would in most cases debate on whether to buy them food or clothes.
4.1.1 Increasing Household Size and Composition

Changing household composition has been identified as a coping strategy employed by households in response to declining income. Mupedziswa and Gumbo (1998) find unemployed married sons still sharing housing with their mothers who are equally struggling to survive. Efforts by households to increase their incomes earning potential or change the ratio between their needs and resources include the sharing of living costs by several families in one household for economies of scale and pooling of services so that more members can become economically active under conditions of severe deprivation.

To conserve expenditure on housing, there was evidence of expanded households with the continuation of unemployed grown up children in parental families in Nakuru town. In most cases older sons and daughters would eat in their parents’ house only to retreat to their rented dwellings which were also being catered for by their parents.

Out of the 45 women who were retrenched, 15 (33%) lived with their older sons and daughters as a measure of cutting down on food and shelter expenses. Twelve (40%) of the 30 women whose husbands were retrenched were reported to be doing the same. A similar trend was also reported of men who were retrenched where out of the 21 interviewed 8 (38%) continued living with their older sons and daughters.
Table 4.3 Increasing Family Size as a Coping Strategy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>Number Interviewed</th>
<th>Increased Family Size</th>
<th>No Change in Family Size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W1</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W2</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Parents living with their older children were doing so not out of their free will, but because the economic situation at that time was bad making it impossible for their sons and daughters to find jobs from where they could support themselves. Apart from older sons and daughters living with their parents another feature observed in Nakuru town were families living with relatives. Although unemployment and the resultant poverty impacted negatively on the urban dwellers, its impacts were worse in the rural areas. It was common for urban families to share households with their kin from the rural areas who had migrated to the town in search of jobs which were non existent.

Expanding the number of people living in one household potentially increased the number of income earners as well as those available to undertake household chores and child care. Extended household’s also provided support in terms of other female family members sharing domestic work and childcare. However, in such an arrangement, women’s domestic work tended to increase.

While increasing household size could reduce the household’s budget in terms of shelter, it meant more mouths to feed. In most cases, the added household members were
unproductive and only added strain to the already struggling household. This raises questions as to whether increasing household size was an effective and deliberate strategy of coping with falling household income and rising cost of living.

6.1.2 Decreasing Family Size through Family Planning
Decreasing family size through family planning has been identified as a survival strategy in times of economic hardships. Beneria (1992) reports that 46.7% of families decided to stop or postpone having children during the 1982-88 periods in Mexico. In Chile poor women had fewer births during the market liberalization period (Waylen, 1992). When women need to boost their income-generating activities, they have a greater need to control their fertility (Moser, 1992). In the Western world, well to do families usually give birth to fewer children- one or two.

Evidence of family planning among couples was reported in Nakuru town as a means of reducing family expenditure. Of the 45 women who were retrenched, 4 (9%) opted for family planning as a coping strategy. Out of the 30 women whose husbands were retrenched, 2 (7%) planned their families. In comparison, out of the 21 men who were retrenched only 1 (5%) admitted having planned their families.

Table 4.4 Family Planning as a Coping Strategy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>Number Interviewed</th>
<th>Planned their Families</th>
<th>Did not their Families</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>W1</strong></td>
<td>45</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>W2</strong></td>
<td>30</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>M</strong></td>
<td>21</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>96</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Decreasing family size through reducing the number of children is an effective means of cutting down on living costs as the bigger the family, the higher the cost of food, healthcare, shelter, clothing and education. Since household expenditure corresponds directly to the number of family members, a family with many members most of whom are children is likely to experience strains in the provision of food, clothing, shelter, health care and education. One respondent stated that:

With the high cost of urban living, it is important to have fewer children who one can comfortably take care of. The cost of food, shelter, clothing and education has gone up (Susana Yatich Rop, O.I, 4th August 2007).

Family planning as strategy of coping with escalating urban poverty and declining household incomes can be disputed and its effectiveness questioned. Women cannot make independent decisions on matters touching on their sexuality or fertility as they have to consult their husbands before using any family planning method. Only economic independence from husbands and of course, relatives can enable women to decide the number of children they wish to have, when and under what conditions. Removal of government subsidies in the health sector also made family planning services inaccessible to most women.

In most of the countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, the period of the economic crisis witnessed a huge increase in the population of that region. The high rate of infant mortality led people to have many children so that at least some will survive to adulthood. In the absence of any national system of social security, children comprise the best form of old-age insurance. Africa’s high ‘fertility rates’ were a ‘survival strategy or
'defense mechanism' adopted by people to enable them cope with the conditions created by underdevelopment. African families have a large number of children because they must reproduce workers for both waged and unwaged sectors (Gregory and Piche, 1981).

In the Third World, most women spend their lives locked into an endless cycle of childbearing that undermines their health and severely circumscribes their ability to undertake any activities outside the home. Repeated pregnancies in physically weakened and frequently malnourished women give rise to a variety of medical problems for women during their childbearing years (Smock, 1977:113).

6.1.3 Joining Women Groups

Women cope with economic hardships through joining self-help groups. Traditionally African women came together to promote their common economic, political and social interests. From the traditional work groups and the spirit of helping each other evolved many of today's independent cooperatives where the members carry out projects and business ventures. One main difference between traditional and present day women's groups is that in the former membership was largely ascribed; women automatically became members of particular group because of birth, age sex, or adoption into kin territorial unit. In contrast, membership in today's associations is largely voluntary as women choose to be members of a particular group.

Women solidarity as a survival strategy is widely documented. Women in Africa are known to form mutual aid associations which help in particular purposes (Little 1973).
Women join associations that help with occasions requiring money. If a trader had a
daughter of marriageable age, she would join a marriage association to cover the costs of
the wedding. If a baby was expected, she might join a birth association to help defray the
financial obligations.

In Uganda, the Association of Uganda Women Retrenched Civil Servants (AUWRCS)
was formed in response to that predicament, and provided technical support and
information on ways of coping (Kwesiga 2002). In Kenya, Nasimiyu (1993) emphasizes
the importance of women organizations as the strategies for coping with change and
adjusting to economic challenges. Watchel and Watchel (1974) in a study of women
groups and co-operatives in Nakuru town, identify the mobilization of resources and
channeling them into various kinds of endeavors.

Women solidarity as a coping mechanism in an urban context was examined in the case
of women affected by civil service retrenchment in Nakuru town with the following
results. Out of the 45 women who were retrenched, 38 (84%) joined women groups as a
coping strategy. Of women whose husbands were retrenched, 26 (87%) out of 30 did the
same.
Table 4.5 Women Solidarity as a Coping Strategy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>Number Interviewed</th>
<th>Joined Women’s Groups</th>
<th>Did not Join Women Groups</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>W1</strong></td>
<td>45</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>W2</strong></td>
<td>30</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>75</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Women in the same geographical location enjoy same benefits and suffer same problems. By pooling their resources and sharing costs through groups, they can solve common problems and secure collective benefits. Apart from falling back on the extended family support structures for support, care, and physical and financially help, women in Nakuru town formed solidarity groups to deal with economic hardships as a result of civil service retrenchment.

In Nakuru town, women formed mutual aid associations inform of rotating credit groups whose function was to provide its members with capital. They made regular contributions to a fund which became the property of each contributor in turn. The fund provided each member with a lump sum, more than she could save on her own, given the constant demands for money. The system was fairly flexible, and if one member urgently needed some money, she could be permitted to jump the queue and receive the collection before she is entitled to do so. One respondent stated that:
Every week we contribute 500 Kenya shillings which is then given to one of the members. Since we are 10 members, every week one member is entitled to get 5,000 Kenya shillings. This money helps the members purchase household utensils. Some invest it in their small businesses (Ruth Sithole, O.I, 17th August 2007).

One common feature of such women groups was that they were not registered making it difficult to identify them. Some of these groups had no official names and were only known to their members. Membership criteria in most of this organizations varied by ethnicity, religion, neighbourhood and place of work or occupation of the members. Members of one ethnic community would come together and form a women group through which they could help each other.

Likewise female members of a particular church, or women in the same neighborhood or occupation would form a group. Women traders in Nakuru town established associations that performed a variety of functions. They assisted their members in starting or expanding their businesses by lending them capital. They trained women new in business methods, and put traders in contact with potential customers.

The high percentage of women who joined women groups in Nakuru town is an indication of the importance of women solidarity in times of economic hardships. Women as a group are disadvantaged in comparison to men in terms of economic opportunities. Their ability to earn a reasonable livelihood independently is restricted and this relative disadvantage doesn’t lessen in the urban context. Given their meagre resources, collective activity makes sense as they often pool funds for a particular purpose.
These co-operative endeavors permitted women to engage in undertakings far larger than their own limited resources would permit. They regulated and promoted trade, extended credit, taught new social and occupational skills, and provided monetary and psychological support. Since the cost of urban living is very high for the average family, there is never enough money to meet all the demands; hence group ventures if properly managed could be a satisfactory solution.

4.1.4 Looking for Other Means of Income through Engaging in Self or Waged Employment.

Declining household income may force affected households to look for incomes from other sources. Self-employment in the informal sector as an alternative to waged employment may constitute one of the options for many. Raczynski (1989) documents the opening up of more self-employment activities for women with the curtailment of opportunities in paid employment for men in the Third World.

Trade is the main occupation of urban women in the Third World in the informal sector. Its popularity rests on the fact that women can combine trade with domestic duties. They participate at the lower levels of trade where profits are small, while the higher and more profitable levels are dominated by men and large firms (Wipper, 1995). In Kenya, the participation of women in the informal sector increased in growth as the economic pressures continued to bite and more and more people are being displaced from the formal sector employment (Parker & Torres, 1984).
With the loss of regular household income as a result of civil service retrenchment many women in Nakuru town tried their hand in business in the informal sector to compensate for loss of regular income provided by waged employment. Women could only afford to invest in small businesses because their retirement benefits were small- they lacked enough capital to invest in big business ventures.

Out of the 45 women who were retrenched, 30 (67%) were engaged in self-employment in the informal sector with 13 (54%) out of the 30 women whose husbands were retrenched doing the same. In comparison, 4 (19%) out of the 21 men who were retrenched were self-employed.

Most of respondents invested in the food industry where they sold foodstuff, vegetables and fruits in the various markets in the town. In Kwa-Rhonda and Ponda Mali markets of Nakuru town, most of the women trading there were found to be selling vegetables and fish. Others were found to be selling second hand clothes. Those with bigger capital were found to be operating retail shops or retailing paraffin. Such small businesses barely generated enough income for subsistence and for financing children’s school expenses. Moreover, the businesses operated by women could not compete with those of men on equal terms so long as women carry the double burden of unpaid work in bearing and rearing children.

Other than being engaged in trade, looking for alternative waged-employment in the informal sector has been identified as a survival strategy employed by women in coping
with declining household income and rising cost of living. To compensate for the loss or decline of household income women are likely to enter waged labor force in increasing numbers (Waylen 1992, Standing 1989, UNICEF 1989)

Out of the 45 women who were retrenched from the civil service, 8 (18%) were able to be get alternative waged employment in the informal sector, though not in the same line they previously worked. Most of these women worked in factories around Nakuru town where they were paid lower salaries than they used to get in the civil service. They were clustered in a limited range of occupations and concentrated in insecure casual manual work. In comparison, out of the 21 men who were retrenched, 6 (29%) were able to get alternative waged-employment which in most cases was on casual basis. On losing a job, men are more likely to get alternative employment than women due to their relatively higher levels of education (Nzomo, 1995).

Table 4.6 Alternative Employment as a Coping Strategy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>Number Interviewed</th>
<th>Got Alternative Wage Employment</th>
<th>Did not get Alternative Wage Employment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W1</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.1.5 Occasional Urban to Rural Migration

Migration has been identified as a means of escaping poverty in the Third World. People or even whole families migrate from one area to another in search of greener pastures. Although migration of whole families normally takes place from rural to urban areas, it can occasionally take reverse direction. Urban to rural migration has been observed to be a major strategy that households use to adapt to periods of financial crisis.

Evidence of 'reverse migration' to villages to avoid intolerable urban life conditions was studied by Potts (1995) who argues that the rate of urban growth had actually slowed down in Zambia, Uganda and Tanzania. The sharp fall in urban earnings provoked a return flow of migration to rural areas. Kanji (1994) in Harare, Zimbabwe records seasonal reverse migration to rural areas to contribute labour to family members' farms.

In the same vein, Owuor (2003) in a study of urban farmers of Nakuru town, Kenya, argues that as a result of the escalating trends in urban poverty, many households especially those in the low-income bracket suffer from food insecurity. Risk spreading or income diversification is increasingly becoming an important feature in many urban households, which rely partly on rural activities (mainly farming) for their livelihood, particularly the urban poor. Risk spreading or income diversification often implies a permanent or temporary split within the households with one or more household members living in town and the other(s) in the rural home (Ibid 2003).

In Nakuru town, this study identified occasional reverse urban to rural migration as a coping strategy. Out of the 45 women who were retrenched, 5 (11%) admitted
occasionally retreating to their rural homes to escape urban poverty. Twenty two (49%) of these women established a link with their rural extended families from where they could get food supplies especially maize and beans to cushion themselves from the escalating food prices in the urban areas.

Of the women whose husbands were retrenched, 4 (13%) out of the 30 interviewed seasonally migrated to their rural areas when times were hard. On instructions from their husbands, these women would migrate to the rural areas caring with them small children while the husband would remain in the urban area with the grown up children. Fourteen (47%) were found to be maintaining farms in their rural areas where they could occasionally retreat to attend to. Such women would travel to their rural homes in the planting, weeding and harvesting seasons. Food produced from these farms contributed to their survival in the urban areas.

In comparison, out of the 21 men retrenched, 3 (14%) were found to be occasionally sending their wives and children back to their rural homes with themselves remaining in the urban areas. Ten (48%) maintained rural farms which they occasionally retreated to, whereas 8 or 38% did not at any moment retreat to their rural areas when finances were bad.

These men could then remit money for upkeep to their families while they looked for casual jobs in the urban areas. There families could occasionally join them in the urban areas especially when the children were on school holidays. However, with long periods
of separation, family fragmentation often results especially in societies where males take 'minor wives'. When this happens, remittance to the rural household becomes irregular and there is a greater economic burden on the woman left behind. To prevent this situation from occurring, some women would visit their husbands regularly in the urban areas and may eventually join them when the husband’s economic position improved.

Table 4.7 Occasional Urban to Rural Migration as a Coping Strategy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Number Interviewed</th>
<th>Seasonal Migration</th>
<th>Maintaining Rural Farms</th>
<th>None</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W1</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W2</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Though true to some extent, urban to rural migration can be disputed as a strategy of coping with economic recession. Most studies on the impacts of SAPs in the Third World show that the rural population was hit hardest by these economic policies than was the urban population thus raising questions as to whether rural areas could provide a refuge to the urban dwellers in times of economic crisis.

However, given the circumstances of urban unemployment, deepening social differentiation, decline in real wages, rises in the cost of living, escalating urban poverty,
and urban food insecurity, households could occasionally retreat to rural areas to cushion themselves from the hardships in the towns. Lack of employment opportunities in both the formal and informal sectors in the urban areas to maintain a minimum family income and with inflation driving up the price of food and social services can make people to retreat to their rural areas in search of survival.

4.1.6 Urban Gardening:

Urban families are known to maintain small gardens around their dwellings where they cultivate vegetables such as kales and cabbages in an attempt to subsidize the amount of money they spend on food. Rios (1984) identifies the cultivation of small gardens as a strategy for increasing household resources in Sao Paulo, while Jiggins (1989) observes the same pattern in many African towns. Heyzer and Wijaya, (1994) found that after devaluation, more Javanese women villagers cultivate home vegetable gardens to cope with food cost escalation. Owour (2003) also records the same in Nakuru town, Kenya.

Results from the field indicate that a sizable proportion of town dwellers in Nakuru town maintained small farms within their residential areas from where they could obtain food such as vegetables. This subsidized the household food requirements. Of the 45 women who were retrenched, 32 (71%) maintained small gardens while 13 (29%) did not. Of the 30 women whose husbands were retrenched, 20 (67%) practice farming on small farms within their localities while 10 (33%) did not. In comparison of the 21 men who were interviewed, 13 (62%) practice urban farming with their wives actually doing the
farming, while 8 (38%) did not farm in the urban areas. In most cases, women produce food for household consumption through vegetable gardening or poultry rising.

Table 4.8 Urban Gardening as a Coping Strategy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>Number. Interviewed</th>
<th>Practiced Urban Gardening</th>
<th>Did not Practice Urban Gardening</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W1</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W2</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Though it is true to argue that growing food on arable patches of land in urban areas could effectively increase food reserves in the household, the challenge of scarcity of land for cultivation of food crops in urban areas was a big setback to such strategies. The scarcity of land in the urban areas meant that families could only benefit from the cultivation of vegetables such as kales, cabbages, tomatoes, onions and carrots which took a short period to mature. Staple foods such as maize and beans were rarely planted. Local government legislation on the cultivation of some crops such as maize, which was prohibited in urban areas in Kenya, also dealt a great blow to urban farming.
6.1.7 Borrowing Money from Friends:

When household finances are not enough for a particular purpose, women may be forced to borrow money from relatives, friends, and shylocks or from money lending organizations. In a situation of personal debt, loans from wealthier kin are increasingly sought after while the sale or pawning of jewellery or other valuables occurs more commonly, as well as borrowing smaller amounts from neighbouring women.

Heyzer and Wijaya (1994) in Java found that after devaluation, villagers felt a repayment crunch and borrowed more. Bautista (1986) observes that in times of cash shortages, the burden of finding supplementary sources of income or credit for the family subsistence falls on the women. As households go into debt, it is the women who have to carry the burden, shame and harassment by the money lenders being the one usually at home or the one who has to visit the village store regularly. In situations of extreme indebtedness, women are forced to sell some of their assets.

Borrowing money from friends and relatives was identified as a means of survival for many women affected by civil service retrenchment in Nakuru town. A majority of women interviewed admitted having to borrow money to make ends meet. Out of the 45 women who were retrenched, 42 (93%) borrowed money in times of hardships which they repaid when their financial position improved. Of the 30 women whose husbands were retrenched, 27 (90%) borrowed money to make ends meet. In comparison, 13 out of the 21 men (62%) who were retrenched admitted borrowing money.
Table 4.9 Borrowing Money as a Coping Strategy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>Number Interviewed</th>
<th>Borrowed Money</th>
<th>Did not Borrow Money</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W1</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W2</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In times of financial crises in the house, women are more likely than men to borrow money as supported by the above findings. Whenever there is no food in the house it is likely for the man to send the wife to the neighbourhood shop to take goods on credit than him facing the shopkeeper. Women could also borrow money from women organizations or financial groups which they could use for a particular purpose.

The main barrier to women procuring credit is their lack of ownership of land or other property to offer as collateral. Also, the majority of women live in rural areas, where there are no credit institutions. Even where the opportunities exist, illiteracy limits their negotiating powers and their chances to know what is available and women may also find the idea of approaching such institutions intimidating.
4.2 Summary
Civil service retrenchment and the resultant loss or decline of family income had negative implications on a majority of families in Nakuru town. Owing to the responsibilities assigned to women by society based on their sexual characteristics, women were the ones to devise ways of coping with the effects of loss or decline of family income. Women have traditionally been responsible for household management. Therefore, in periods of recession, it is women who carry much of the burden of 'making ends met', in other words trying to maximize household consumption in the face of high levels of unemployment, falling real wages and rising prices.

Women have to make ends meet in the face of reductions in the contributions to household subsistence coming from public programmes and health benefits. It is women who must cope and devise survival strategies when household incomes fall and prices rise. To cushion themselves against the economic hardships brought about by the loss of income, women had to devise ways of reducing family spending and at the same time increase family income.

Women in Nakuru town were resourceful in devising survival strategies and activities that formed the basis for sustained family expenditure. This involved employing a number of coping strategies mentioned in this chapter. Most of the coping mechanisms reported, though ensured the survival of the family in times of declining income and rising cost of living, significantly increased women’s workload. Maintaining a household on reduced resources takes more time-hunting for bargains, setting up informal exchange networks with neighbors and kin, making and mending at home rather than buying. For
many women coping with the loss of regular income by devising survival mechanisms meant longer hours of work, both paid and unpaid.
CHAPTER FIVE
CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction
Anchored on the Social Relations Gender theory, this study set out to investigate the effects of the civil service retrenchment programme on women in Nakuru town, Kenya. The study traced the factors that precipitated civil service retrenchment from 1970 and how it was implemented beginning June 2000. It specifically investigated the effects of civil service retrenchment on women’s provision of family healthcare, nutrition and education and also examined its effects on women’s decision-making power in the household in Nakuru town.

The extent to which retrenchment of the male spouse affected the woman in the household was evaluated. Finally the study makes an analysis of the mechanisms and coping strategies adopted by women in response to loss of regular household income. A summary of findings on the objectives of the study are outlined, the hypotheses proven and recommendations given to the government on conducting future retrenchment exercises and formulating gender sensitive policies.

5.1 Conclusions
After Kenya attained independence from the British colonial government in 1963, it embarked on an ambitious plan of Africanization of the administrative systems inherited from the colonial era. Those locals who possessed the required qualifications at that time were automatically absorbed in to the civil service irrespective of whether the economy
made progress or not. The attainment of independence in Kenya was therefore followed by a significant growth in the size of its civil service which persisted even in the face of increasing economic difficulties beginning in the mid-1970s.

Women were disadvantaged because at that early period of independence, very few of them had the required academic qualifications to guarantee them jobs in the civil service in comparison to their male counterparts. A systematic and deliberate colonial policy ensured that African women were not given the same educational opportunities as men.

With no or little education, women in Kenya only qualified to be employed in the subordinate ranks of the civil service where pay was low while men dominated the professional ranks, a pattern that featured in the civil service from independence to the late 1990s. The advantage men have over women in terms of educational qualifications placed them in policy making positions of the civil service at the expense of their female counterparts.

The rapid growth of the civil service had serious effects on the budget deficit. The over expansion of the civil service coupled with the decline in economic growth, had negatively impacted on service delivery, which greatly compromised the government’s ability to improve the standards of living of the people. As a consequence, the Kenya government opted for downsizing of its civil service as one of the conditionality of SAPs advocated by the WB and IMF. In implementing the civil service retrenchment programme in Kenya, the government missed on several points.
First, it embraced the WB conditionality on retrenchment from a position of ignorance with very little knowledge regarding its effects on retrenchees, and the wider spillover effects on the populace leading to great suffering to the affected persons. Second, the exercise was conducted in a hurried harshly manner and there was no proper framework to facilitate the process resulting in a mess and a breakdown of the second and third phases of the retrenchment programme.

Third, the package awarded as retirement package was also too little to sustain the retrenchees and their families let alone investing it. Fourth, the government did not conduct workshops and prior training to the persons targeted for retrenchment on how to invest their terminal benefits. Many retrenchees ended up squandering or investing their retirement package on projects that could not pay back.

Finally, gender was not taken into account as what the government looked at were the eligibility criteria it had formulated to decide who was to go leading to the double subordination of women who were already a subordinate group in the civil service. Considering that women constituted a mere 20% of the entire civil service with men taking 80%, women should not have been subjected to the same retrenchment criteria as their male counterparts because there were fewer of them in the service, and the few who were there were concentrated in the lower ranks. Women retrenched from the civil service in Kenya suffered double subordination. They were first subordinated in recruitment and secondly in retrenchment.
Loss of regular household income as a result of civil service retrenchment combined with the reduction in government spending in healthcare, education and other social services and the removal of subsidies and price controls on foodstuffs impacted negatively on most families in Nakuru town. It negatively affected both men and women in their provision of family healthcare, nutrition and education with women suffering most.

The subordination of women through the existence of an unequal household division of labour that gives them primary responsibilities in the provision of these services ensured that women suffered disproportionately in comparison to their male counterparts. When the ability of households to provide healthcare, nutrition and education is reduced as a result of loss of household income combined with the high cost of accessing these services, it was established that women and children suffered most as they depended heavily on these services.

When households had to reduce food consumption because of rising prices and falling incomes, it was found that the consumption of women and children was reduced more than that of men. If charges are introduced for education and health services, there was a strong possibility that the access of women and children to these services will be reduced. When attempts are made to compensate for reductions in purchased resources by increases in unpaid labor (e.g. buying cheaper food that requires more preparation time) it was likely to be women who bear the main burden.
Loss of regular household income subordinated both men and women, but in the case of women it was double subordination as they had to deal with loss of income combined with the unequal division of labor in the household that gives them primary responsibilities for the provision of family healthcare, nutrition and education.

Due the existing subordinate position occupied by women in matters of decision-making in society, the loss her regular income as a result of civil service retrenchment eroded her autonomy and decision-making power in the household in Nakuru town. This subordinate position of women in decision-making can be explained on the basis of the traditional African society which gave men more powers over women within and outside the home.

Although patriarchy and culture played an important part in determining women’s position and autonomy in the household, women’s income contribution to the family budget was found to enhance their decision-making power. In Nakuru town, women who earned an income from employment enjoyed more authority in the family in comparison to those who did not earn anything. Women with an income were also less dependent on their husbands which in most cases increased their autonomy in decision-making matters.

This does not mean that these women enjoyed greater autonomy in the household than their husbands who might be earning less than they do due to the traditionally held notion that the man is the ‘undisputed head’ of the family whether he earns an income or not. It was nevertheless discovered that a man’s status as the ‘undisputed head’ of the family
can come under serious threats with the loss of income as a result of the loss of a job. This was particularly the case where women continued to generate family income after the husband lost his job.

It was revealed that women in Nakuru town intensified their income-generating activities to compensate for the loss of the husband’s income as a result of civil service retrenchment. Necessity forced a number of married women into earning money themselves to help meet the family’s financial costs in the absence of the husband’s income. As women intensified their income-generating activities (productive roles) in the family, they still continued to perform their domestic duties (reproductive roles). An increase in the woman’s time devoted to income-generation, while still performing domestic duties impacted negatively on her through increased workload with negative implications on her health.

It was revealed that due to lack of education and skills to engage in formal waged labour, a number of the affected women tried their hand in the informal sector business. Due to lack of enough capital a majority of the women operated small-scale businesses that dealt mostly with food stuffs. Others traded in second hand clothes but still in small-scale. Although such-small endeavors did not generate enough income they helped a number of women to survive under conditions of reduced family income as result of the husband’s loss of income.
Other women opted for waged-employment in the informal sector though the kinds of jobs they took were fairly limited due to lack of skills and their inferior educational qualifications. In most cases, women took up jobs that were readily available, less skilled, insecure, low paying while working for long hours and in some cases in pathetic and poor working conditions.

The intensification of the woman’s income generating activities through engagement in waged or self-employment in the event of the loss of the husband’s job increased her autonomy and level of decision making power through increased financial independence from the husband. Women who worked for a salary and contributed to the family budget had greater autonomy and higher decision-making power than those who did not earn anything.

From this study, it was established that women in Nakuru town were not simply victims of civil service retrenchment as they devised strategies and mechanisms to cope with the resultant loss of income. The subordination of women through the existence of an unequal gender division of labour in the household that gives women primary responsibility for most of the work in the house meant that women in Nakuru town were primarily responsible for devising coping techniques when household incomes fell and cost of living went up. This had negative implications for many women as coping with the loss of a regular source of household income by devising survival mechanisms meant increased workload, paid and unpaid.
For a majority of households, survival entailed a variety of adaptations in the creation, use of resources, conserving and improving the use of existing resources. More often, women combined a number of strategies in coping with the loss or decline of income. To cushion themselves against the economic hardships brought about by the loss of income, women had to devise ways of reducing family spending and at the same time increase family income. Women in Nakuru Town were resourceful in devising survival strategies and activities that formed the basis for sustained family expenditure.

Several survival mechanisms adapted by women in Nakuru town to cope with civil service retrenchment were identified. These include changing family food consumption pattern and adjusting household budget, changing household size and composition, decreasing family size through family planning, joining women self-help groups, looking for alternative means of income through self or waged employment, occasional urban to rural migration (Reverse migration), urban gardening and borrowing money from friends and relatives.

At times households combined several coping mechanisms in order to survive. Though most of the coping mechanisms reported ensured the survival of the family in times of declining income and rising cost of living, they significantly increased women’s workload.
5.2 Recommendations
Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

(i) For a responsive and effective civil service, the Kenya Government should put in place stringent recruitment procedures so that employees are only hired in accordance with the needs of the service and the ability to pay them a competitive salary. It is of no use to haphazardly hire employees and then retrench them because their wage bill is unsustainable. The government should adopt new employment policies and measures in order to achieve overall gender equality, particularly at the professional level and above. Recruitment and career-development programmes should be restructured to ensure that women have equal access to managerial, entrepreneurial, technical and leadership training, including on-the-job training.

(ii) Government and other actors should promote an active and visible policy of mainstreaming a gender perspective in all policies and programmes so that before decisions are taken, an analysis is made of the effects on women and men, respectively. Review the criteria for recruitment and appointment to advisory and decision-making bodies and promotion to senior positions to ensure that such criteria are relevant and do not discriminate against women and have transparent criteria for decision-making positions and ensure that the selecting bodies have a gender-balanced composition.

(iii) Before embarking on future retrenchment exercise, the government should conduct a study on how it will affect the persons targeted and its spillover effects on the entire population to avoid untold suffering of its people. Such an exercise should be properly planned and a proper framework put in place to facilitate the process.
(iv) The persons targeted for retrenchment should be informed well in advance and counseled. Workshops and prior training should be conducted to guide the affected persons on how to invest their terminal benefits. The package awarded as retirement package should also be improved in line with what is usually awarded as terminal benefits by the private sector for the retrenches to be able to invest in sustainable projects.

(v) In any future retrenchment exercise, gender should be taken into consideration to avoid subordinating women. The interests of minority groups, women included should be taken into consideration.

(vi) Since women are the primary providers and consumers of healthcare, nutrition and education of children in the household, the government should put in place subsidized and affordable healthcare and educational services to avoid suffering of women and children. Essential foodstuffs should also be made affordable to the population through the re-introduction of food subsidies. The government should register a consumer association to fight for low income groups who cannot meet the escalating prices of consumer goods.

(vii) To enhance women’s level of decision-making power in the country in general and in the household in particular, efforts should be made by the government to improve their access to economic resources which include waged or self-employment and ownership of
property (movable and non-movable). The government should embrace affirmative action to ensure that women are well-represented in the employment sector both formal and informal. Laws that discriminate against women in property ownership should be changed.

(viii) The government should provide gender-sensitive training for women and men to promote non-discriminatory working relationships and respect for diversity in work and management styles. Women’s working conditions in both the formal and non-formal sectors should be improved to avoid the discrimination and exploitation of female workers. The government should specifically enact laws that will improve women’s working conditions such as reasonable pay, reasonable working hours and maternity leave.

(ix) Because skills and educational training determine the kind of jobs taken by women, the government should improve women’s access to education and other forms of training to ensure that women’s employment is not limited to insecure, low status and poorly paid jobs.

(x) The social and economic status of women should be improved to ensure that they are well equipped to cope with increased cost of living and declining household income. Poverty eradication programmes should be given priority to improve the position of women and children in the country.
5.3 Epilogue
Although there was no doubt that the civil service was bloated and the wage bill was hefty, there were better ways of downsizing it without necessarily causing as much suffering to the people like it happened. There were many ways of trimming the civil service or other bloated sectors without creating social and economic upheavals in the lives of many Kenyan families. There was natural wastage, attrition and retirement as the government could also slow down on recruitment. Such a move could not have visible effects but it could still have been very effective in reducing the size of the civil service without causing suffering to the affected employees.

Despite the retrenchment exercise, many challenges facing the Kenya civil service in terms of performance improvement and service delivery still persist. The old practice of poor performance characterized by corruption, poor time management, laxity, poor service delivery, lack of transparency and accountability, among other problems, continue to persist contrary to the expected outcome of retrenchment. The issue of retrenchment and how it was implemented in the country was a manifestation of serious lack of vision and planning on the part of government.
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### APPENDIX I

**KAPTEMBWA LOCATION**

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APPENDIX II

Question Guide for Women who were Retrenched (W1)

Section A: Personal Details
1. Age __________

2. Marital Status _______________

3. No. of children _______________

4. Level of Education _______________

5. Previous Employment Details:
   (i) Ministry ______________________
   (ii) Department/ Section _____________
   (iii) Designation _________________
   (iv) Job group _____________________
   (v) Salary Scale ________________

Section B: Effects of Retrenchment on Provision of Family Healthcare, Nutrition and Education

1. How did retrenchment affect you in the provision of health services in the family?

2. How did it affect your physical and psychological health?

3. How did the loss of income affect provision of food and the nutritional health of family members?

4. How did this affect the nutritional status of family members?

5. What were the effects of retrenchment in the provision of education to children in the family?

6. How did this affect the children?

7. What about the female children?
Section C: Effects of Retrenchment on Women’s Decision-Making Power

1. How did your retrenchment affect your decision making power in the house?

2. Do women who have an income have greater decision-making power in the house than those who do not earn anything? Why?

3. Did joint decision making take place between you and your spouse in investing your terminal benefits?

4. Do you still make joint decisions in household financial matters?

5. How did retrenchment affect you in making fertility decisions in the family?

Section D: How Women are Coping with Retrenchment:

1. How are you coping with retrenchment and the resultant loss of family income?

2. What coping strategies have you adapted in response to this loss of income?

3. How successful have you been in coping with loss of income as a result of retrenchment?
APPENDIX III

Question Guide for Women whose Husbands were Retrenched (W2)

Section A: Personal Details

1. Age __________

2. No. of children ________________

3 (i) Level of Education ________________

(ii) Husband's Level of Education ________________

4 Husband’s Previous Employment Details:

(i) Ministry ______________________

(ii) Department/ Section ______________________

(iii) Designation ______________________

(iv) Job group ______________________

(v) Salary Scale ______________________

Section B: Effects of Retrenchment on Provision of Family Healthcare, Nutrition and Education

1. How did retrenchment of your husband affect you in the provision of health services in the family?

2. How did it affect your physical and psychological health?

3. How did this loss of income affect provision of food and the nutritional health of family members?

4. How did this affect the nutritional status of family members?

5. What were the effects of your husband’s retrenchment in the provision of education to children in the family?

6. How did this affect the children?

7. What about the female children?
Section C: Effects of Retrenchment on Women’s Decision Making Power

1. How did the retrenchment of your husband affect his decision making power in the house?

2. Do men who have an income have greater decision-making power in the house than those who do not earn anything? Why?

3. Did joint decision making take place between you and your spouse in investing his terminal benefits?

4. Do you still make joint decisions in household financial matters?

Section D: Effects of Retrenchment of the Male Spouse on Women.

1. How did the retrenchment of your husband affect you in the provision of basic needs in the family?

2. How did you respond this loss of income?

3. Where you engaged in any income generating activity prior to retrenchment of your spouse?

4. How did working outside the house affects your decision making power in the house?

5. What effects did the intensification of income generating activities have on the nutrition and upbringing of the children?

Section E: How Women are Coping with Retrenchment of their Husbands

1. How are you coping with your husband’s retrenchment and the resultant loss of family income?

2. What coping strategies have you adapted in response to this loss of income?

3. How successful have you been in coping with loss of income as a result of retrenchment?
APPENDIX IV

Question Guide for Men who were Retrenched (M)

Section A: Personal Details

1. Age __________
2. Marital Status ______________
3. No. of children ______________
4 Level of Education ______________
5 Previous Employment Details:
   (i) Ministry ____________________
   (ii) Department/ Section __________
   (iii) Designation _______________
   (iv) Job group __________________
   (v) Salary Scale ________________

Section B: Effects of Retrenchment on Provision of Family Healthcare, Nutrition and Education

1. How did retrenchment affect you in the provision of health services in the family?
2. How did it affect your physical and psychological health?
3. How did the loss of income affect provision of food and the nutritional health of family members?
4. How did this affect the nutritional status of family members?
5. What were the effects of retrenchment in the provision of education to children in the family?
6. How did this affect the children?
7. What about the female children?
Section C: Effects of Retrenchment on Men’s Decision Making Power

1. How did your retrenchment affect your decision making power in the house?

2. Do men who have an income have greater decision-making power in the house than those who do not earn anything? Why?

3. Did joint decision making take place between you and your spouse in investing your terminal benefits?

4. Do you still make joint decisions in household financial matters?

Section D: How Men are Coping with Retrenchment:

1. How are you coping with retrenchment and the resultant loss of family income?

2. What coping strategies have you adapted in response to this loss of income?

3. How successful have you been in coping with loss of income as a result of retrenchment?
APPENDIX V

Question Guide for Government Officials (G)

Ministry ______________________________

Department __________________________

Designation __________________________

1. What could have brought about overstaffing in the civil service?

2. Does the government consider gender when recruiting its employees?

3. How was the civil service retrenchment carried out in Kenya?

4. Whom did the government target for retrenchment?

5. Was gender a considered in retrenchment?

6. How successful was retrenchment in tackling overstaffing in the civil service?

7. Did retrenchment in the civil service improve performance?

8. Was retrenchment the best method of achieving an optimal staff level?