CHALLENGES TO WOMEN’S PARTICIPATION IN TRADE UNIONS: THE CASE OF KENYA NATIONAL UNION OF TEACHERS (KNUT) KANGUNDO BRANCH

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C50/CE/11264/2007

PROJECT REPORT SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS IN GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT STUDIES AT KENYATTA UNIVERSITY

OCTOBER 2012
DECLARATION

THIS PROJECT REPORT IS MY ORIGINAL WORK AND HAS NOT BEEN PRESENTED FOR A DEGREE IN ANY OTHER UNIVERSITY.

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This Project Report is dedicated to my late mother and my three lovely daughters. My late mother for her love for education even when she never went to school herself; and daughters Cynthia, Elsie and Mercy for being an inspiration to me. May God bless you girls as you pursue your dreams.
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Thank you all and may God bless you as we pursue a just world.
ABSTRACT

This study sought to find out the challenges of women in participation in trade unions using the Kenya National Union of Teachers (KNUT) Kangundo Branch. The study employed a descriptive research method and collected both qualitative and quantitative data. Data was analyzed using SPSS and presented in themes using tables and figures. Evidence from this study showed that women teachers are not fully involved in formulation and implementation of policies in Kangundo KNUT Branch. They are missing in key decision making organs. Major challenges facing women teachers in relation to participation include domestic duties, cultural barriers, lack of confidence and the view that men are better leaders. It is, therefore, recommended that there is need for change in attitudes and perceptions so as to fully engage women teachers in the Kenya National Union of Teachers.
ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AWC  African Workers Congress
BEC  Branch Executive Council
CEDAW Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
COTU-K Central Organization of Trade Unions-Kenya
GNUT Ghana National Union of Teachers
KFL  Kenya Federation of Labour
KNUT Kenya National Union of Teachers
KUPPET Kenya Union of Post Primary Teachers
MDG's Millennium Development Goals
NEC  National Executive Council
NGOs Non Governmental Organizations
NUT  National Union of Teachers
UN   United Nations
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<tr>
<td>AWC</td>
<td>African Workers Congress</td>
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<td>BEC</td>
<td>Branch Executive Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>CEDAW</td>
<td>Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women</td>
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<td>COTU-K</td>
<td>Central Organization of Trade Unions-Kenya</td>
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<td>GNUT</td>
<td>Ghana National Union of Teachers</td>
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<td>KFL</td>
<td>Kenya Federation of Labour</td>
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<td>KNUT</td>
<td>Kenya National Union of Teachers</td>
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<td>KUPPET</td>
<td>Kenya Union of Post Primary Teachers</td>
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<td>MDG's</td>
<td>Millennium Development Goals</td>
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<td>Chama</td>
<td>Group</td>
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<td>Empowerment</td>
<td>A process through which men and women acquire knowledge, skills and attitudes to critically analyze their situations and take actions of improving their lives.</td>
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<td>Equality</td>
<td>Giving equal and non-biased treatment to both male and women teachers.</td>
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<td>Gender</td>
<td>Socially determined power relations, roles, responsibilities and entitlement of men and women, girls and boys.</td>
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<td>Gender discrimination</td>
<td>Unequal or preferential treatment given to individual or groups based on their gender that leads to reduced access to or control of resources and opportunities.</td>
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<td>Gender disparity</td>
<td>Unequal number of men and women existing in a given organization.</td>
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<td>Gender stereotypes</td>
<td>Assigning of rules and tasks to men and women on the basis of pre-conceived prejudices.</td>
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<td>Masculinity</td>
<td>Characteristics common to men.</td>
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<td>Mobilization</td>
<td>Organizing members to act together for a common goal.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Official</td>
<td>Office bearers of KNUT Kangundo Branch.</td>
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<td>Participation</td>
<td>Involvement of teachers in terms of roles and responsibilities.</td>
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<td>Socialized perceptions</td>
<td>Common held beliefs as a result of socialization.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Union</td>
<td>An organization formed to bargain for workers welfare.</td>
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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Participation of women and men in all sectors of development is a basic human right as enshrined in both international conventions and treaties to which Kenya subscribes. These include the 1984 Convention on Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against women (CEDAW), the Beijing Platform for Action (BPFA) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). In these conventions and treaties, Kenya, among other nations commits itself to gender equality and empowerment as an effective way of stimulating development. Nations which subscribe to the conventions are required to establish tribunals and other public institutions to ensure the effective protection of women against discrimination and elimination of all forms of discrimination against women by persons, organizations or enterprises (Kenya Gender Strategy for Local Authorities Report, 2009).

Development requires participation of both men and women in all spheres including trade unions. The stereotype that one specific gender is best suited for selected positions or appointments has been overtaken by time and events and will not help trade unions achieve their objectives. Cox (2002) observes that equal participation of men and women in trade unions enables officials to negotiate wages and working conditions for all. Gilpin (2000) adds that equal participation of men and women
will further help to regulate relations between workers and the employer and address the needs and concerns of men and women workers.

Trade unions can be traced to the 18th century after the rapid expansion of the industrial revolution in Europe. Kaldor (2000) notes that despite the uneasiness which has lurked at the backdrop of the struggle between capital and labour within liberal democracies, today trade unions are in general, secure and important centres of private power. Emergence of trade unions for workers necessitated an organized system so as to have a common bargaining power. Proponents of workers' rights in the 18th century included Magna Carta who was supported by Pope Leo XIII (Kapstein, 1999).

One of the trade unions which seems to be found in every country in the world is that of teachers. The first teachers' trade union was formed in America and called the National Union of Teachers (NUT) it was in 1870s. By the end of the 19th century, NUT was numerically dominated by women teachers. Though 60% of its members were women, men have always dominated union affairs in its National Executive Council (NEC) and other committees. The situation was serious to a point where NUT officials collaborated with local authorities in barring the employment of married women and in reduction of their salaries (Cunnison, 1995). These days the situation is minimally different since few women are elected as NUT officials.
In Africa, trade unions were adopted after the first and second World War when African soldiers fought in other countries. Ghana was the first African country to form trade unions in 1920 followed by South Africa 1922, Sierra Leone 1926, Kenya 1929, Uganda 1929 and Zambia 1929. Ghana was also the first African country to start organizing a teachers' trade union. It formed its teachers union called Ghana National Teachers Union (GNUT) in 1945. Today, Ghana Teachers Union Council (GTUC) has initiated gender democracy strategies aimed at improving participation in the union. This has been in form of women committees aimed at providing members with an opportunity to build capacity to take up union offices, quotas, reserve seats for women only and 30% women participation in educational and training programmes. This has raised women representation on the Executive Board (EB) of the GTUC from 5.6% in 1996 to 16% in 2003 (Britwum and Martens 2008). Although this is still the case, women office holders had to find their way in uncharted terrain amidst hostility from men. The women committees still lack the power to influence major decisions within the union.

In Kenya, the Central Organization of Trade Unions (COTU - K) is the Umbrella Trade Union. COTU (K) was founded in 1965 upon dissolution of the Kenya Federation of Labour (KFL) and the African Workers Congress (AWC). COTU (K) is registered and operates within the provisions of the Trade Unions Act (Chapter 233 of the Laws of Kenya]. Currently, COTU affiliates 36 registered trade unions in the country, and has a membership of about 1 million workers. However since its formation in 1965, the workers umbrella body has endeavoured to create, develop
and maintain a comprehensive social framework, in terms of conditions of freedom, security and dignity. Since the formation of COTU in 1965, only men have been officials in key positions.

The Kenya National Union of Teachers (KNUT) is the largest trade union in Kenya. It was started on 4th December 1957. Since its formation, the union has been bargaining for better terms of service for teachers. KNUT has its members spread throughout the entire country more than any other trade union because of the nature of the service teachers provide to Kenyans. It is perceived as a confrontational trade union because of its recurrent strikes which in most cases are popularized and organized nationwide. Since its formation, KNUT has had major strikes in 1963, 1966, 1997, 1998 and 2002.

KNUT general secretaries since its formation have been men teachers. Those who have held this prestigious position are Joseph Kinoti-(1958-1969), Kioni (1969), Ambrose Adeya Adongo (1970-2001), Francis Ng’ang’a (2002-2008) and Lawrence Majali (2008-2011), Okuta Osiang (2011). All KNUT branch secretaries are men teachers with only two branches having women as secretaries. KNUT today does not have a gender policy though they have one reserved seat for women.

In Kangundo Branch, the case has not been different. Women are dismally represented in decision making. KNUT members in Kangundo total to 1900. Out of 1900 members 1003 are men while 897 are women. The branch officials which include chairman, secretary, treasurer and their deputies, women representative and
four branch executive council members. Out of these only one is a woman. She occupies the position of women’s representative which is reserved for a woman anyway.

The dismal representation of women teachers in KNUT and in particular Kangundo Branch, contrasts sharply with Kenya’s National Gender Policy for Development and Equality of 2000 and Session Paper Number 2 of 2006 both of which focus on participation of women and men in development and recognize that development initiatives impact differently on men and women. This scenario is contrary to the objectives of Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Development of 2005 whose general objective is to ensure participation of men, women, boys and girls in all sectors of development and the Gender Policy on Education whose emphasis is involvement of men and women, boys and girls at all levels of education. The implication of the above is that women teachers’ needs and concerns are rarely addressed.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Gender equality and participation is highly popularized in the 21st century where both men and women are supposed to be given equal opportunity to participate in every sector. Efforts have been made by governments, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and individuals to encourage both men and women to compete for same opportunities and career choices, including teaching.
Despite the governments and other NGOs sensitization on gender issues, KNUT Kangundo branch members elect their officials with gender biasness. This is contrary to the fact that all teachers are professionally qualified. This affects the representation of women teachers, leading to their needs and concerns being neglected. Women teachers for example have medical needs related to their reproductive roles which means this may not be articulated by men. Women teachers are the only ones who can adequately represent their issues at the union.

This study examined the challenges that face women in participation in trade unions with a special reference to the Kenya National Union of Teachers (KNUT) Kangundo Branch.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

1) To establish the roles and responsibilities of men and women teachers in Kangundo KNUT Branch.

2) To identify challenges that affect women teachers' participation in Kangundo KNUT Branch.

3) To determine ways of enhancing women teachers' participation in Kangundo KNUT Branch.

1.4 Research Questions

1) What roles and responsibilities do men and women have in Kangundo KNUT Branch?
2) Which challenges do women teachers face in their participation in Kangundo KNUT Branch?

3) How can women teachers’ participation in Kangundo KNUT Branch be enhanced?

1.5 Assumptions

1) Men and women teachers have different roles and responsibilities in Kangundo KNUT Branch.

2) Women teachers face challenges different from men in Kangundo KNUT Branch.

3) Women teachers’ participation can be enhanced in Kangundo KNUT Branch.

1.6 Justifications to the Study

The findings of the study have both theoretical and practical implications. Theoretically, they are expected to contribute to the advancement of knowledge in the field of gender studies and in development. In Kenya, they highlight challenges facing participation at various levels and particularly in trade unions. Practically, they should assist in formulation of policies by the Kenya National Union of Teachers ensure more is done to address gender disparities. Finally they will also empower teachers and particularly women teachers to participate fully in KNUT Kangundo Branch.
1.7 Scope and Limitation of the Study

The study investigated challenges facing women participation in KNUT Kangundo Branch. It limited itself to teachers in Kangundo District who are members of KNUT. It excluded members of the Kenya Union of Post Primary Teachers (KUPPET) and others who do not subscribe to any union. The study did not investigate other challenges faced by KNUT members which are not gender related.
CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Literature was reviewed under these sub-titles: Trade Unions, gender stereotypes, dictation to leadership roles, masculinity and gender disparity in trade unions and participation of women in trade union.

2.2 Trade Unions

Card (1995) defines unions or labour unions as organizations of workers who have banded together to achieve common goals such as better working conditions. The trade unions, through their leadership, bargain with the employer on behalf of union members and negotiate labour contracts with employers. This may include the negotiation of wages, work rules, complaint procedures, rules governing hiring, firing and promotion of workers, benefits, workplace safety and policies. Dubofsky (2000) adds that the agreements negotiated by the union leaders are binding on the rank and file members and the employer and in some cases on other non-member workers.

Fink (1983) states that, originating in Europe, trade unions became popular in many countries during the Industrial Revolution, when the lack of skills necessary to perform most jobs shifted employment bargaining power almost completely to the employers' side, causing many workers to be mistreated and underpaid. Trade union organizations maybe composed of individual workers, professionals, retired
workers, or the unemployed. The most common, but by no means the only, purpose of these organizations is maintaining or improving the conditions of their employment.

The origin of trade unions' can be traced to the eighteenth century, when the rapid expansion of industrial society drew women, children, rural workers and immigrants to the work force in numbers and in new roles. This pool of unskilled and semiskilled labour spontaneously organized in fits and starts throughout its beginnings, would later be an important arena for the development of trade unions. Trade unions, such as were endorsed by the Catholic Church towards the end of the 19th Century, Pope Leo XIII in his "Magna Carta" - Rerum Novarum - spoke against the atrocities workers faced and demanded that workers be granted certain rights and safety regulations.

2.3 Gender Stereotype Dictation to Leadership Roles

Nieva and Gutek (1981) indicate that traditionally women are perceived as lacking the necessary attributes for leadership. They are believed to be compliant, submissive, emotional, and to have great difficulty in making choices. However, after extensive review of many studies that examine gender differences in personality traits of leaders, the authors discovered that there are no significant differences between women and men. Therefore, Nieva and Gutek suggest that the reported differences simply reflect socialized perceptions. In other words, we see what we are socialized to see. Men and women's behaviours that are in line with the
gender/role expectations of the culture are evaluated positively. For example, kind, considerate women behaviour is valued more than kind and, considerate men behavior. Men aggressive/assertive behavior is assessed more positively than women aggressive/assertive behavior. It all depends upon who is doing the observing or responding. The authors also propose that the traditional notion of power that evolves from a position or title rather than maleness or femaleness appears to be the critical factor in the response of colleagues or subordinates. Senge (1990) argues that the new style of highly interactive, collaborative leadership being promoted then was the style historically practiced and preferred by women. Despite the popularity of this idea, there was danger inherent in this thinking. Rosener (1990) adds that linking interactive leadership exclusively to women was a mistake. He further asserts that men were also capable of leading interactively. It was generally known that women were capable of making their way through corporations and politics by adhering to the traditional model of top down, authoritarian leadership, and that they could wield power in ways similar to men. Women have learned to do this in order to make their way into positions of power and authority in our very traditional authoritarian organizations and governments. Men and women were fully capable of assuming both authoritarian and interactive leadership styles.

Alder (1994) observes that if we continue to define leadership in terms of gender-specific roles, and argue that men and women have inherently different ways of leading, we are perpetuating the age-old myth that one or the other of the gender is
more suited to assume responsibilities of leadership. Why should women trade one set of stereotype for another and claim that the relational orientation, concern for people, tendency to loosen and supportiveness now make them better leaders than men? Continuing the "tug of war" in an attempt to determine which gender is more suited for leadership will not achieve equality. We should not waste our time elaborating on, or participating in this argument. Styles of leadership are not gender specific.

Okemwa (1993), Getui (1991) and Wamue (1994) indicate that judging each individual – man and woman – on their worth and uniqueness, the strength of their preferred leadership style and the demands of a new century, will make our organizations and communities strong and will achieve peace and success rather than continued war between the genders! Men have a lot to learn from women and women have a lot to learn from men. However, it is important to realistically acknowledge that history, culture, religion and economics have tended to obscure the value of this equality of the genders. They further lament that many countries of the world are at different stages of thought and development on this subject yet none has achieved that coveted goal of equality! People have been brought up in a culture where religion, economics, and socialization have played an important part in our development and thinking. Nasimiyu (1986) insists that humanity carries the burden of dealing with some strongly acculturated stereotypes.

Fedler (2000), Coulton (1938) and Moletsane (2003) insist that men and women can contribute equally to the success of an organization, a community or a nation. If the
preferred leadership style for the next century is being described as a form that has historically been practised by women, and if the new century requires new leaders to empower others, care about people and bring out the best in them, then both women and men should be moving into major leadership positions right now without being forced to assume a style which is uncomfortable to any of them.

Park (2000) and Zapulla (1997) observe that, both women and men have the capacity to alter their leadership styles to suit the demands of the situation at hand. Sometimes unilateral decision-making and authoritative leadership is necessary. At other times, tasks are better suited to team approach or consensus model of leadership and decision-making. Potential leaders of either gender should train themselves to adapt to the needs of the group or organization in which they are working, and then make every effort to teach and model the style of leadership which will most effectively lead the organization or nation into the next level. This is not to say they should be schizophrenic, shifting rapidly from one style to another, but they should be prepared to respond to a variety of demands, contexts and goals. There is no inherent men or women advantage in this concept.

A world wide study by Caspi and Sacha (1999) suggests that although men and women can adapt to either style of leadership, there are structural and psychological barriers to accepting them as leaders and in positions. The structural and psychological factors influencing equal acceptance of women as leaders include cultural, social and historical factors. The major psychological factors influencing
acceptance of women as leaders include: cultural and social attitudes and also socialized perceptions. The authors conclude that these factors are highly dependent upon each country’s development, culture, social policy, access to higher education and organizational context. In addition to these factors the powerful influence of the worldwide perception of the masculine nature of leadership and management, the cultural constraints on women’s roles such as house chores, childcare and other family responsibilities the picture becomes very complex indeed.

Bundesen (1993) and Emswiler (1977) argue that cultures have created gender role stereotypes in most countries. These prevalent attitudes hinder women’s preparation for leadership roles and opportunities for promotion. Cultural stereotypes, which are transmitted through socialization, influence not only the characteristics that they themselves embody but also the attitudes that others hold about them. In some cultures, as Gartner (2000) and Mechan (1998) state, women have been socialized to be shy and unassertive. Such socialization is intimidating; it does not adequately equip women to take up positions of leadership or to take risks necessary for entrepreneurial activities. Women’s self confidence is also often undermined by their own acceptance of these stereotypes. Scholars have noted the pervasiveness of female inferiority complex. Women have internalized that men are more able. Also, when it comes to jobs and positions, although in most countries, today’s policies allow women to have more voice in selecting their vocations, the extent to which their choices are actually accommodated is dependent upon the culture in which they grew up and presently live.
Gartner (2000) and Meehan (1998) indicate that gender role stereotypes that may prevail have a tendency to relegate women to what is believed to be more “natural “for them. For example, because women are believed to be more attentive, patient, dexterous and gentle than men are, they easily attain positions as teachers, nurses, old age home attendants and handicraft artists. In some cultures it’s rare to find women in positions of engineers, scientists, business executives and the military. Mackenzie (1994) and Meehan (1998) further explain that in most cultures men and women receive different signals about what is expected of them. Men have had to appear to be competitive, strong, tough, decisive and in control. A man is expected to be the breadwinner, the warrior, the manager, the leader, the hero and the one who makes decisions for the family. As little boys men have been taught that tears are for sissies and compassion is feminine.

2.4 Masculinity and Gender Disparity in Trade Unions

Hatt (1997) observes that trade unions in the 21st century are characterized by assertiveness, aggressiveness and stubbornness. It is obvious that in most fields of employment most workers are men. This is historical in that most communities in the world are patriarchal hence traditionally the working class people are men. Assertiveness, aggressiveness and stubbornness relate to the men perception of being the heads of families.

Masculinity in trade unions as indicated by Kimmel (1987:26-28) undermines women rights which are also human rights. When masculinity is an important
characteristic in trade unions it makes the union fail to observe the fundamentals of equity among all stakeholders, women included. These characteristics exact power and influence. They undermine feminism and the spirit of trade unions.

Cunnison (1993) argues that trade unions are closely associated with men attributes like mental and physical toughness, competition, aggression and violence. When these elements of human character are practised in trade unions, trade unions lose the objective of being providers of justice which would enhance unity and common focus among workers. This creates enmity and misunderstanding among union members. These cultural dictates come forth when electing officials in trade unions. Women in most cases as Cunnison adds are given subordinate roles to keep them engaged in the unions although their voices operate from the background of men union officials. The culture of masculinity is seen as a form of oppression, capitalism, classicism and racism. Walby (1986) condemns patriarchal relations which perpetuate gender biasness in trade unions leaving woman as subordinates.

Commenting on issues of structures and manipulation of union organs by men, Hyman (1975) observes that decision making organs fail to address human needs for balanced social economic, political and academic needs of union members. Men domination in union official appointments becomes a major obstacle in effective leadership. He suggests that election of union officials should not be based on gender but on capability and humanness of individuals. He further discourages election of women as only subordinate staff and encourages equal participation of
all members of the trade union. Masculinity in trade unions as revealed by Martin (1979: 103) has caused many trade unions to collapse. This is because they are not prepared to put forward what seems to be a feminist idea in the interest of trade unions. The general view of women issues as feminist influence accommodation of their issues within trade unions.

2.5 Women participation in trade unions

Jackson (1982) laments that women have been the most undermined persons in historic and contemporary trade unions. He further asserts that women in all working policies of trade unions in the world are considered equal participants. This however is not reflected in the day to day running of trade unions. Women were first involved in trade unions after the industrial revolution. During that time, women workers and immigrants were canvassed to work in large numbers and in new roles. Their role in trade unions emerged as they begun seeking opportunities outside their homes. It is argued by Bukkit (1979) that women contributed greatly to growth and enhancement of the economy during this period.

Estey (1976) notes that women lacked the voice in trade unions however, much they worked to sustain viabilities of their respective trade unions. They for a long time worked under deplorable conditions while their male counterparts had their human rights observed. Their terms of employment were not respected; their human rights were trampled on an aspect which contradicted the ideals of trade unions.
As earlier noted, the first people to organize trade unions were men and these made them dominate thereby creating a culture of men’s dominance in trade unions. Cunnison (1993) notes that women have taken part in union struggle throughout history. She further argues that they have been involved in defending and promoting working class interest as trade unionists, mothers, wives and nation builders. Musson (1972) comments that women have suffered in trade unions in terms of low pay, gender discriminating, wealth deprivation, poor housing, marginalization and unequal representation among others.

2.6 Theoretical Framework

This study was guided by Karl Marx theory of social conflict. Other proponents are Mills, Coser and Dahrendorf. Eshleman, Cashion and Basirico (1993) states that society is best understood and analyzed in terms of conflict and power. Karl Marx’s simple assumption was that the structure of society is determined by its economic organization, particularly the ownership of property. Conflicts theorists assume that conflict is a permanent feature of social life and that as a result, societies are in a state of constant change. Conflicts are assumed to involve a broad range of groups and interests, young and old, male against female or one social group against another, employer and employees.

These conflicts result because such things as power, wealth, and prestige are not available to everyone. Conflict theory tells us to look for hidden strains and frustrations particularly those between those in power who make decisions and
those who carry out their decisions. Even when those involved do not express dissatisfaction, there may still be conflict. Another sign that there may be an unexpected conflict is low morale. The employees might not openly express their discontent because they may feel that they are powerless to change the situation. In fact, many sociologists and social psychologists have suggested that people fail to express dissatisfaction not because conflict does not exist but because they feel powerless to change things, they may not be aware that things could be better than they are and they are resigned to the situation.

Later proponents of the conflict theory analyzed gender inequalities as yet another form of conflict producing stratification. Most of these theories sought to explain why women have experienced discrimination and how this has placed them in a disadvantaged position in the stratification system. Two of these are Rae Lesser Blumberg and Janet Saltzman Chafet. Social conflict theory has been used in this work to explain the relations between genders in KNUT. It has borrowed the social conflict view that institutions are reflections of economic struggle between classes and in this case, struggles between men and women. It also borrowed the concept of society as being in a constant change which affects those involved. Gender inequalities will exist when either gender controls disproportionate resources or conversely they will decline as the disadvantaged group gains economic, political and ideological resources. This can be conceptualized as shown in figure 2.1.
Institutional interplay

KNUT overall development

Woman teacher

Low productivity

Improved productivity

Lack of economic growth

Economic growth

Powerless
Unaware

Change of attitude
and perspectives

Resigned

Participation

- Leadership position
- Voting
- Meeting Attendance

Low

High

Figure 2.1: Conceptual framework

The above diagram is a summary of the interplay in an institution like KNUT. The teachers’ participation as shown above can be high or low. Women teacher participation
being high is due to change of attitude and perspectives leading to an economic growth and high productivity within the union. On the other hand, lack or low participation which may be due to women feeling powerless, resigned or unaware of their situation leads to low production of the woman teacher and the union as a whole. Participation occurs in terms of voting, mobilizing of members during strikes, attending meetings, involvement in terms of leadership among other things. According to the above diagram, high participation of women teachers will occur only if there is change of attitude and perceptions by both men and women in the union in relation to the above levels of participation. This will happen through sensitization on existing gender gaps. On the other hand, participation is low when members especially women are unaware of their absence in the union and the implication of the same. When individual women are fully involved at all levels of participation, there will be both economical and professional growth. Lack of involvement means the woman teacher does not fully benefit from the union.
CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The chapter discusses the research design, site of study, target population; sampling techniques research instruments, data analysis and presentation, data management and ethical considerations.

3.2 Research Design

The research design for this study was descriptive survey. This design was used as a method of collecting information since it is the most reliable and valid in collecting data about people’s attitudes, opinions, beliefs and habits in relation to challenges of women participation in Kangundo KNUT Branch. The research was both qualitative and quantitative in nature. Through qualitative method, researcher was able to obtain information on opinions, attitude, beliefs and habits. The selection of the case study made it possible to learn in-depth details of the study unit hence it allowed the researcher to fully investigate on possible challenges facing women teachers in Kangundo KNUT Branch. Through qualitative method it was possible to bring out precise number and even percentages of those involved in the unions day to day activities.

3.3 Site of Study

The study was carried out in Kangundo KNUT Branch. Kangundo Branch was carved out of the larger Machakos Branch. The branch covers Kangundo and
Matungulu Administrative Districts of Eastern Province. It has four Divisions namely:- Matungulu, Kangundo, Kyanzavi and Kakuyuni.

3.4 Target Population

The target population for this study was KNUT members in both Primary and Secondary Schools in Kangundo Branch. According to the Branch records membership totals to 1900, 887 women and 1003 men (Kangundo KNUT Branch Records, 2011).

3.5 Sample size and sampling procedure

The research used probability sampling since there was already a specific population from KNUT register (Peters 1996). Teachers who are members of KNUT were stratified according to gender. Systematic sampling method was used to determine the respondents to be interviewed. Every tenth member from both women and men was selected. Purposive Sampling was also applied to have respondents who are key informants and they included; chairman, secretary, treasurer and women representative who were included in the sample size.

The researcher used Cochran’s (1977) formula in determining the survey sample size: 

\[ n = \frac{N}{1+N(\delta)^2} \]

Where;

‘n’ is the desired sample size,

‘N ‘is the target population and
δ is the acceptable margin of error estimated at 0.05 (at 95% CL).

Using this formula the researcher came up with respondents (see Table 3.1 below).

Table 3.1: Target respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TARGET GROUP</td>
<td>887</td>
<td>1003</td>
<td>1900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KNUT Teachers</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>190</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treasurer</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Executive Secretary</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Branch Chairman</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Representative</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>88</strong></td>
<td><strong>106</strong></td>
<td><strong>194</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.6 Research Instruments

The researcher used questionnaires and interviews.

3.6.1 Questionnaires

Questionnaires were used because respondents were all literate and it enabled the researcher to collect data from a large population hence saving time. The questionnaires both closed and open ended questions (Appendix1) were administered face-to-face.
3.6.2 Interviews

The researcher interviewed the Kangundo KNUT Branch Chairman, Treasurer, Secretary and women’s representative. The interview was structured so as to ensure in-depth information is obtained from the respondents. The researcher measured respondents' values, attitudes and preferences towards participation in the union affairs. Facial expressions were also observed and interpreted for further interpretations.

3.7 Data Analysis and Presentation

Since the research was more qualitative, descriptive analysis was done in thematic areas of concern to the study. This was followed by a narrative summary of in accordance to the objectives of study. Quantitative data was coded and entered into SPSS spread sheet where analysis was done and findings presented in frequency tables and bar graphs.

3.8 Data Management and Ethical Consideration

Participants' informed consent was obtained after the nature of the research and its purpose was explained to them. Those not wishing to participate were at liberty not to. Confidentiality was preserved by ensuring that the names of individual participants and schools were not divulged in relation to anyone. The researcher ensured integrity was maintained throughout and that findings and interpretation were presented honestly and objectively.
CHAPTER FOUR

CHALLENGES FACING WOMEN IN KANGUNDO KNUT BRANCH

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the first part of the deals with demographic information, while the second part deals with information on Kangundo Kenya National Union of Teachers (KNUT) Branch composition, women roles and challenges. The data is presented in descriptive and tabular form.

4.2 Instrument Return Rate

The questionnaire response rate is the proportion of the sample that participated in the study as intended in all research procedures. The questionnaire was administered to a sample of 88 women and 106 men who were all KNUT members Kangundo branch. 78.87% of the sampled respondents duly filled and returned the questionnaire (see Table 4.1 below).

Table 4.1: Questionnaire Return Rate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>Sample</th>
<th>Returned</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>95.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>65.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>194</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>78.87</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The researcher visited several schools and administered questionnaires to the sampled members. Out of 88 questionnaires administered to women teachers, 84 were collected back and for the men teachers, 69 questionnaires were collected back out of 106 issued. The results showed that women were more responsive compared to their men counterparts, although it was not statistically significant, the overall questionnaires return rate was 78.87%, thus making the research effective. Therefore the findings below apply to only these respondents.

4.3 Demographic information of respondents

4.3.1 Gender

The respondents were asked to state their gender, and figure 4.1 gives the summary of the findings.

![Figure 4.1: Gender](image)

Figure 4.1: indicates that most of the respondents were women 84(54.9%). This suggests that women were more willing to participate compared to men.
4.3.2 Teaching experience

The respondents were asked to state for how long they had been teaching.

Table 4.1 gives the summary of the findings.

Table 4.2: Respondents' length of teaching

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Over 20</th>
<th>15-20</th>
<th>10-15</th>
<th>5-10</th>
<th>Below 5</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>153</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to Table 4.2 most members 66 or (43.14%) had over 20 years teaching experience, followed by 35 or (22.88%) with between 15-20 years and the trend went down up to the least 9 or (5.88%) with less than 5 years teaching experience. 89.29% of the women teachers had 15 and above years of teaching compared to 76.81% of men. There was statistically no significant difference at 95% confidence level between men and women with regard to the time each had taken as a teacher. According to Table 4.3, most teachers have had long teaching experiences hence their familiarity with teacher affairs including KNUT issues only 9 out of the 153 had less that 5 years hence they were able to comment on challenges facing women in Kangundo KNUT Branch.
4.4 Respondents' membership, roles and responsibilities in the union

4.4.1 Membership

The respondents were asked to indicate the time they had taken as KNUT members and their duties in the union, the findings were summarized in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3: Respondents' membership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents' Gender</th>
<th>Time as KNUT member in years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Over 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.3 shows that most members, 120 (78.43%) had over 15 years membership. Out of these 71 (59.17%) were women. There was statistically no significant difference at 95% confidence level between men and women with regard to time each had taken as a KNUT member.

4.4.2 Meetings attendance and participation level during meetings

The respondents were asked to indicate whether they attended KNUT meetings and their specific duties during such meetings. The findings were summarized in table 4.4.
Table 4.4: Respondents' meeting attendance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents' Gender</th>
<th>Do you attend the KNUT meetings</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Those who attended meetings were 65 (42.48%), out of whom 12 (18.46%) were women. According to Table 4.4 (5.95%) of the women attended the meetings always compared to 23 (39.66%) of men, 5 (5.95%) attended occasionally compared to 26 (44.83%), while 2 (2.38%) of the women rarely attended the KNUT meetings compared to 8 (13.79%) of their men counterparts. The findings reflect low level of commitment by women in KNUT affairs, because of those who attended meetings always men had a higher percentage. Only 24 (15.69%) raised the reasons why they never attended KNUT meetings, out of whom 14 (58.33%) said they were never invited or the information reached them long after the meetings had taken place. Ten of the fourteen who were never communicated to about the KNUT meetings were women. Only 27 (17.65%) of the respondents cited specific duties they performed during the union meetings. The women who specified their specific duties during the meetings were only 3 (2.00%) which included listening and asking questions. Generally, very few women attended the meetings and the few who attended were passive because
they mostly listened. This reflected high degree of gender imbalance regarding active participation in decision making in union affairs. The table above shows clearly that few Women teachers attended unions meetings. “Women teachers prefer to stay at home or even attend other social functions like funerals and weddings instead of KNUT meetings “Echoed one respondent (Mutinda). The chairman of the branch also supported this information for he said that although it has never been the intention of the union to sideline teachers; few showed interest and instead stayed away.

Absence from meetings for women teachers implies that they hardly take part in most decision making processes within the union. Those who attended being passive means that their concerns are never voiced. Absence in meetings and being passive may mean that women are unaware of what their absence from meetings means or simply are resigned to being where they are. This in essence has implications since development affects men and women differently and their needs are also different. The union (KNUT) may also be having structures which do not favour women and they feel ignored.

4.4.3 Respondents participation in KNUT voting and strikes

The respondents were asked to indicate whether they ever voted in the unions elections and if they ever participated in any of the union’s strikes. The findings were summarized in table 4.5.
Table 4.5: Respondents participation in union’s voting and strikes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents Gender</th>
<th>Ever voted in any KNUT elections?</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>84</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>69</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>153</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

|                    | Ever participated in any KNUT strike? |         |         |         |
|                    |                                    |         |         |         |
| Women              | 81                                 | 3       | 84      |         |
| Men                | 65                                 | 4       | 69      |         |
| Totals             | 124                                | 29      | 153     |         |

According to the study 73(86.9%) and 81(96.43%) of the women have ever participated in the union voting and strikes, respectively, as well as 63(91.3%) and 65(94.2%) of men. This shows a very small margin of gender disparity as far as voting and strike participation was concerned. As per how many times a member had voted there were varied responses. However, 17(24.64%) of men had always voted compared to 20(23.81%) of women. The few who never participated in the voting process cited corruption, poor communication and newness in employment as the reasons for their lack of participation. Forty (57.97%) participated in the strikes through demonstrations followed by 14(20.29%) who downed their tools and stayed at home, the rest mobilized others. Twenty-seven
(32.14%) participated by downing their tools and staying at home followed by 9(10.71%) who mobilized the members to take action. The rest of the respondents said that men were most likely to mobilize members during strikes. Out of these, 67(53.6%) were women. Although the Table 4.5 shows that women participate more than men in voting and strikes, this is not the case. The above is due to respondent rate where women responded more than men. Most women stayed away during voting, those who voted had been transported to the venue by men teachers who were vying for posts and others would go because of husbands or relatives who wanted their support. On the other hand, men would go just to practise their democratic right of voting.

The issue of participating in strikes was even more sensitive; according to one Teresia Mukewa she tended to stay away fearing for safety because such meetings could turn out to be violent. On the other hand Muasya said that women were more afraid and easily scared especially when government and head teachers threatened to sack them.

Most women according to the respondents would rather stay at home and adopt a wait and see attitude. “The reason I never participate in strikes is because my husband who is also a teacher would ask me to stay away from trouble. This is because more often than not strikes are associated with yelling, shouting and street demonstrations which are not lady like” (Mutungwa). Both men and women also were in agreement that men were more likely to mobilize members to
participate in elections and even strikes. They gave various reasons. Top among them was that men are naturally leaders, women are too busy with domestic chores and men have other meeting points like clubs and social places. This information was affirmed by Mrs. Otieno who said that when women tend to speak too much they are not taken seriously. Those go out like to clubs, social places and even public rallies are frowned upon and called names like prostitutes hence the above scenario.

The respondents saying that they never voted because it was not communicated means that their union does not have structures which ensure information reaches all. Women teachers missing information implies that they are communicated in the public sphere more where women seem to be missing.

The union culture of masculinity, that is, aggressiveness, may also be a contributing factor to absence of women. The fact that those who attend are not visible means that women do not own the union and would rather be in places where they feel comfortable like in weddings and funerals.

Women are faced by myriad of challenges in relation to voting and participations in strikes. The union has structures designed by men and for men. Women see strikes as an opportunity to concentrate on domestic chores and so stayed at home. The fact that men were more likely to mobilize members to participate in strikes means that while women lack skills, men have experience in union affairs and in time acquire the right skills. Unions have structures which seem to make men and
women have stereotypes about leadership and see men as the only ones who can lead. Women, on the other hand, seem to be unaware that men teachers cannot represent them effectively. Being few means they do not count in decision-making. Women teachers are discriminated even in allocation of duties, because men believe women are subordinate and cannot make major decisions. The women themselves also do not see anything wrong with such duties. Women’s acceptance to fit in traditional roles implies that even when they are elected they still do not make an impact in decision making.

4.4.4 KNUT officials and women representation

The respondents were asked to indicate whether they hold KNUT elective posts and who was likely to be elected. The findings were summarized in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6: Union officials voting and women representation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents' Gender</th>
<th>Do you hold any KNUT post?</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>147</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Who is likely to be elected?</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Although 140 (91.5%) of the respondents said that women were represented in Kangundo KNUT Branch, the study showed a big gender disparity whereby the ratio of women to men in the office was 1:5 and the only woman official was the women’s representative while the powerful posts like executive secretary and chairman were all men. There was statistically significant difference at 95% confidence level between men and women in regard to office bearers. The question on who was likely to be elected revealed that the trend was yet to continue since 136 (88.89%) were of the opinion that men were most likely to be elected and this was cited by both men and women. There was no significant difference on the opinion of who was likely to be elected between men and women. The only elected women representative tried to explain why the issue of representation was a problem. According to her, men were more likely to be elected than women because most ended to shy away from union affairs, hence rarely present themselves to compete with men.

The few who come out for such posts also face many barriers. According to her, the Kamba culture sees a woman as one to be led and one to listen. In addition, women teachers tend to have a lot of other responsibilities apart from the ones in school such as chores at home, as well as attending to children, the sick and the elderly. They also participate more in social activities such as weddings, funerals and chamas (groups). While men have special clubs where they can sit and strategize, women rarely have the same. Most men also used a lot of money to
campaign and sell their policies as opposed to women few of whom had such resources.

When women like her are elected they also suffer loneliness due to the fact that they find themselves all alone and with no one to learn from. The union according to her does not make things easier due to the fact that there has not been any deliberate move to sensitive members on gender issues. The officials are comfortable with the status quo. The representative hardly has a voice even within the union. In election of officials the graph is tilted towards men teachers due to cultural reasons where men are believed to be superior and women inferior and stereotypes about men being better leaders. Men teachers also tend to have more resources at their disposal hence easily campaign during elections. Women, on the other hand, only have access to family resources which they do not control and cannot therefore use the same for campaigns. Women teachers also are not empowered on gender issues to understand what their presence or absence means in the union. Absence of women in leadership means their needs and concerns are given a back seat.

4.4.5 Women representatives involvement in Kangundo KNUT branch

The respondents were asked to indicate how involved the women representatives in Kangundo KNUT Branch were. The findings are summarized in Table 4.7.
Table 4.7: Women representatives involvement in Kangundo KNUT Branch

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How involved are representative in KNUT?</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Very involved</th>
<th>Fairly involved</th>
<th>Not involved</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Men</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Women</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The highest number of respondents 63(41.18%) said that women were fairly involved followed by 44(28.76%) who said they were just involved, then 36(23.53%) who said they were very involved while 10(6.5%) said they were not involved at all. There was no statistically significant difference between men and women at 95% CL on rating how active were women representatives in KNUT branch at Kangundo Branch. The researcher talked especially to the women representative (Muoki) and BECS and found out that even when women teachers are elected their participation in issues within the unions are not noticeable considering their numbers. Even within the union, decisions could still be made without them. Due to the low representation the voices of women teachers are hardly heard. They are allocated duties such as arranging tables, serving sodas during meetings and are involved in social issues such as welfare and the more serious issue are left to the men.

Being few means they do not count in decision making. Women teachers being discriminated even in allocation of duties, this happens because men believe women are subordinate and cannot make major decisions. The women themselves
also do not see anything wrong with such duties. Women being relegated to traditional roles mean that even when they are elected they still do not make an impact on decision making.

4.5 Challenges to women's participation in Kangundo KNUT Branch

Respondents were asked to give some of the challenges to women participation in Kangundo KNUT Branch. Figure 4.2 below show the findings.

![Factor Frequency Chart](image)

**Figure 4.2:** Factors hindering women participation in Kangundo KNUT Branch.

Top in the list of hindrances was domestic chores as cited by 49(58.33%) and 19(27.54%) of women and men, respectively. It was said that women are more attached to their children than men hence little time to socialize and campaign. Second in the list was the cultural barrier as mentioned by 31(36.9%) and 17(24.64%) of women and men respectively. There was a significant difference
on domestic and cultural barriers between men and women as to whether they were hindrances. Others included women’s fear and lack of confidence, men being suggested as better leaders and men being bullies at different percentages as shown in figure 4.2. The above was supported Mrs. Maingi who said that although she has harbored interest in union office this has not possible for her. At 40 years of age and having been a member of KNUT for the last 15 years she was bitter since she had been busy giving birth and taking care of her five children. Although a teacher, most chores at her home still had to be done by her hence leaving her little time. Her husband who is also a teacher was not faced by the same problem since he had climbed the ranks to be a secondary school principal.

Culture, as explained by Mueke, was also an issue since people were still slaves of culture. The Kamba culture expects women to be subordinate to men. Women teachers mentioned culture as a barrier because, while men could decide and act without consultations, the same was not applicable to women. This is so due to the fact that men are considered the automatic heads of families.

Figure 4.2 also shows that women lack confidence. This was elaborated by Musyoki who was of the opinion that women consider men better leaders than themselves and since they have never tried due to ignorance (lack of information). In this area like many others, men tend to be more informed. They are more likely to go out and interact with peers, have more time to read newspapers and watch television hence they tend to be more aware of union issues. He also said that
since time immemorial men have always led compared to women teachers some of who are even told who to vote for by their husbands and other male relatives.

This is what the social conflict theory calls being unaware, resigned and powerless. The women are happy with the status quo since they are not aware there is a problem and even those who know there is a problem feel powerless or are resigned to their fate. Because of lack of change of attitude the participation level of women in leadership, voting, strikes and meeting attendance. Therefore the overall growth of the woman teacher is slow economically and even intellectually compared to the men counterparts. As we know development has to be all inclusive therefore KNUT Kangundo branch has not achieved optimum growth due to exclusion of women teachers.

The situation in Kangundo KNUT branch is a reflection of many institutions where men and women are in contact. Marx’s theory sees that as social conflicts and gives characteristics of those who are underrepresented as unaware, resigned or powerless. Teachers in Kangundo KNUT Branch can be said to be unaware especially because many just choose not to be involved. They are also resigned to their fate when they do not make any deliberate efforts to change their attitude and perception about the union to see it as their union and not men only club. They might also feel powerless due to the fact that they see historically things have been like that, lack of education and skills on gender in relationship to development may make them leave things as they are.
4.6 Ways of enhancing women’s participation in trade unions

4.6.1 Union efforts to solve women challenges

The respondents were asked to state whether the union had made any effort in solving challenges facing women teachers in Kangundo area, the findings were summarized in Table 4.8.

Table 4.8: Union efforts to solve women challenges

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Any union efforts to solve teachers challenges</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to the study, 88(57.52%) agreed there were some union efforts to address the challenges facing women teachers in Kangundo while 37(24.18%) declined, with 28(18.3%) unaware if there were any efforts being made. There was no significant difference at 95% confidence level on the opinion of union efforts to address women teachers’ challenges between the two genders. Whereas members affirmed that the union was making efforts to address the challenges, no one mentioned any specific efforts.

The women’s representative talked strongly about the need for intensive training and sensitization of women rights and need to participate. The chairman also supported the view and promised to initiate such programmes at the branch level.
The other suggestion was reservation of more seats for women teachers to improve their representation. Most of the women teachers interviewed accepted that they initially did not see their absence from the union as a problem. They were more empowered when the researcher talked to them and a majority felt they needed to do something to make their presence felt at the union level.

The lack of gender sensitivity for both men and women has led to issues of union being left to men teachers. Many, both men and women, may not see why women should be more involved in union affairs. The women themselves have not come up to claim their positions and on the other hand men are happy with the status quo. Men consider women as intruders hence their issues of gender representation are minor issues in KNUT.

4.6.2 Suggestions on how to enhance women participation in union activities

The respondents were asked to give suggestions on how to enhance women teachers’ participation in union activities in Kangundo Branch. The findings are summarized in figure 4.3.
Figure 4.3 Enhancing suggestions

Most of the respondents 70(45.75%) suggested intensive training and sensitization on women rights and the need to participate in union activities as the most effective way to enhance women participation. Preservation of more seats for women was suggested by 49(32.03%) of the respondents as a good affirmative action that will correct the current male dominance menace in trade unions. Other suggestions included practising transparency during elections and in running the union affairs as well as, motivating and encouraging women participation in union activities.

For the union to achieve economic growth and prosperity for all there is need for gender sensitization at all levels. Officials need education so that they can be gender responsive according to need. Teachers need education at all level both in school and in the branches. It is only when men and women teachers change their
attitudes and perceptions in relationship to participation that they will eradicate barriers which hinder women’s involvement in trade unions.
CHAPTER FIVE
SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction
This chapter presents summary of the findings, conclusion after interpreting the results and recommendations.

5.2 Summary of findings
The study sought to examine the roles and responsibilities of men and women teachers in Kangundo Kenya National Union of Teachers (KNUT) Branch, challenges to women’s participation to find out ways of enhancing women participation in Kangundo KNUT Branch. The study involved 84(54.9%) women and 69(45.1%) men.

From this it is important to point out that more men attend meetings compared to women and that a higher number of women seemed not to attend meetings citing reasons ranging from lack of communication to not being interested and other personal commitments.

On the issue of specific duties done during meetings the women had listening, serving sodas and arranging seats as the most. This implies that the few women who attended meetings were majorly passive listeners who rarely talked during meetings. Men on the other hand had duties such as chairing meetings and contributing to debates.
In terms of participation in voting both men and seemed to participate, while men tended to be involved in demonstrations, more women stayed away especially at home during such demonstrations more men also were involved in mobilization of members during strikes than women.

Most responded positively to whether they were represented in the union. This implies that women either are unaware or do not simply care about equal representation. As mentioned earlier, the ratio of women to men in Kangundo KNUT branch leadership was 1:5

Despite the fact that there is only one woman representative, both men and women talked of being well represented. The questions of whose is more likely to be elected majorly men are to be elected hence the gender gap. Though responses showed that women were fairly active, the same is not reflected at the decision making organ. Both men and women teachers had reasons why women were are missing especially at decision making level. Top on the list was domestic chores which confirm that and even teachers still are entirely responsible for domestic chores although employed on permanent basis.

This information was collaborated by one of the BECS and women representative that even where both man and wife are teachers, the woman seems to be responsible for all the domestic chores while the man is seen as just a professional teacher. Other reasons included cultural barriers which included the stereotypes that women should never be seen in public especially shouting slogans as is done
during strikes. The Kamba culture also views women as subordinate to men. Women were also said to lack courage hence fearful to participate in union affairs. Other reasons given included; being ignorance of their rights, men considered better leaders and men being bullies. This last reason may imply that women felt threatened by the presence of men in the union affairs. Both men and women talked of the union as making efforts towards improving women participation. They were however not specific on any measures. Both men and women felt something needs to done to improve the situation. Majority felt there is need for training and sensitization especially on women needs and concerns. Most women felt the union was not doing a lot to make them part of the system. Empowerment would ensure more fight it out with their male counterparts. Others suggested that more seats should be preserved for women hence affirmative action. Others felt women needed more encouragement and motivation probably implying the union needs to make the environment more women friendly by ensuring that issues of women are addressed more. Others also were of the opinion that the union needed to be more transparent implying that members felt omitted or it was only a reserve of a few.

5.3 Conclusion

i. The objectives of the study were to examine the roles and responsibilities of men and women teachers, identify challenges to women’s participation and to determine ways of enhancing their participation in Kangundo KNUT Branch
in Eastern Province Kenya. The conclusions of the study have been made within the framework of its scope as follows.

ii. The study established that women and men were equally active as far as meeting attendance, voting and participating in union (KNUT) strikes.

iii. According to the study, there exists a big gender disparity in regard to office bearers whereby in every five men there was only one woman voted as office bearer.

iv. There was need for some affirmative action to correct the gender bias in the office bearers in KNUT, Kangundo branch as suggested by the respondents.

5.4 Recommendations

The study recommends that in order to increase the voice and improve the quality of life of the women teachers in Kangundo District, Eastern Province. The following measures should be put in place by KNUT Kenya and Kangundo Branch.

i. Intensify the public gender sensitization and training.

ii. Introduce a new union structure with more seats preserved for women.

iii. Make the union more friendly to women teachers by initiating programs targeting their needs and concerns.

5.5 Suggestions for further study

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher makes the following suggestions for further research;

1. Study on the gender based challenges facing the office bearers in trade unions.
2. Relocate the study to other areas within the republic of Kenya to ascertain the validity and the reliability of the findings.

3. Study on masculinity culture in public offices.
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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS

Please fill the following questionnaire to the best of your knowledge and honestly as possible. If in doubt of an aspect, seek clarification.

1. Gender
   a. Male □ Female □

2. Indicate your age bracket.
   Over 40 Years □
   35 – 40 □
   30 – 35 □
   25 – 30 □
   20 – 25 □
   below 20 □

3. How long have been a teacher
   Over 20 years □
   15 – 20 □
   10 – 15 □
   5 – 10 □
   Below 5 □

4. How long have been a member of KNUT
   Over 20 years □
   15 – 20 □
   10 – 15 □
   5 – 10 □
   Below 5 □
5. Who recruited you as a member of Kangundo KNUT Branch?
   Woman
   Man

6. Do you attend Union meetings?
   Yes
   NO

   (b) If yes above how often?
       All the time
       Occasionally
       Rarely

   (c) If no above Why?

   (d) What specific duties do you perform during meetings?

7. Have you ever voted in the unions elections
   Yes
   NO

   If yes above how many times?

   (b) If No above why?

8. Do you hold any elective post in Kangundo KNUT Branch?
   Yes
   NO
9. (a) Who are likely to be elected for positions in Kangundo KNUT Branch?
   Men [ ] wom[ ]

10. (a) Have you ever participated in any of the KNUT’s strikes
    Yes [ ] NO [ ]
    (b) If Yes above, what specific role did you play?
    (c) If No above why?
    (d) Who is more likely to mobilize members during strikes?
       Men [ ] Women [ ]

11. (a) Are there representatives in KNUT Kangundo Branch?
     Yes [ ] No [ ] I don’t know [ ]
     (b) How active are the women representatives in the Kangundo KNUT Branch?
        Very Active [ ]
        Active [ ]
        Fairly Active [ ]
        Not active [ ]

12. What do you think is the reason for the above situation?
13. Do you think there are any efforts made to solve challenges facing women teachers?
    Yes [ ] No [ ] I don’t know [ ]
(ii) If yes, what are some of the ways which the union uses to solve the above mentioned challenges?


14. What reasons do you think hinder from active participation in Kangundo KNUT Branch?

15. What do you think can be improved to ensure and men teachers fully participate in union issues?
INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

1. How long have you been a teacher?

2. For how long have you been a member of KNUT?

3. What are your reasons for joining KNUT?

4. How often do you attend union meetings?

5. How is voting done in the union?

6. How does the branch mobilize members during strikes?

7. Do you think women teachers are well represented?

8. Are you actively involved in any union activities? If yes, how? If no, Why?

9. What makes women teachers shy away from union activities?

10. In your opinion what can be done to ensure women are actively involved?

11. What challenges do you think women teachers face within KNUT?

12. During KNUT elections who are you most likely to elect?
   i. Men representative
   ii. Women representative
   iii. Any of the above

Give reasons for your choice
Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH STUDY IN YOUR SCHOOL

I hereby write to request for permission to carry out research study in your school. I am a Master of Arts Student at Kenyatta University. The study is aimed at investigating the challenges faced by women teachers in their union (KNUT).

The study is important as it will unearth some of the challenges which women teachers faced and the findings will help improve their lives and their productivity within the school. The study will comprise of a questionnaire and will take 45 minutes. There will be confidentiality on the results findings.

Thank you in advance for your assistance.

Yours faithfully,

Dorcas Munuve
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