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**CONSTRAINTS TO WOMEN PARTICIPATION IN LEADERSHIP IN
THE CO-OPERATIVE SUB SECTOR:
THE CASE OF CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETIES IN LAIKIPIA EAST
DISTRICT**

By

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DECLARATION

Declaration by the Student

This research project is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other University or any other award

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Date: 29-11-2013

Declaration by the Supervisor

I confirm that this research project was carried out by the candidate under my supervision.

Name: Prof. David Minja

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my lovely family who gave me the moral and spiritual support to undertake this work.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to acknowledge the assistance offered to me by various persons during the preparation of this research proposal. Special thanks to my supervisor who have consistently and objectively offered his guidance.

Thank you and God bless you.

Ogallo Wycliffe Odiwuor

ABSTRACT

In many developing countries, under-representation of women in top cooperative management and leadership positions has had negative implications on government policies and general socio-economic development which has lacked gender mainstreaming (Ministry of Education Kenya, 2007). Women's participation in leadership positions in the cooperative subsector has been consistently discriminated against which adversely affects economic performance together with community economic stability resulting in high incidence of poverty and a low level of development. The role of women in leadership position(s) has neither been given adequate attention nor translated into significantly improved access to decision-making powers. The conditions under which most women live and work continue to deteriorate and refusal to accept that women are also capable to manage and make informed business decisions. The study was restricted to all registered and active cooperative societies in Laikipia East District in Kenya. The target population of 79 cooperative societies was considered for the study. A sample population of 26 senior managers of active cooperative societies within the districts was drawn randomly for the purpose of the study. This study focused on the factors that influence women's participation in cooperative leadership and development programs. Quantitative and qualitative data was collected where the data collected was analyzed, presented and inferences made. The findings of this study are significant as the existing cooperative societies will use them as a reference text since the study aimed at exposing the factors that influence women participation in leadership in the cooperative subsector; Other research scholars will use the study as a reference text for future research; The women have also been made aware of their leadership potential and be able to influence decision making in cooperative societies. Recommendations have also been provided on how to fill the gaps identified by the study.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Cooperative Society: It is an autonomous association united voluntarily to meet the members' common economic, social and cultural needs and aspirations through a jointly owned and democratically controlled enterprise.

Attitude: Refers to a general and enduring positive or negative feeling about some person, object, or issue

Governance: The way cooperative societies are run, organized, planned, staffed, directed in an open/efficient/accountable manner

Institutional capacity: Human resources skills, abilities and structures

Performance: It is an operational objective which has to be achieved through the expected processes to attain the set goals by management.

Saving culture: Away of life that treasures in saving for development and future consumption (High marginal propensity to save)

Members: Share holders and those who have completed membership fees payment into the cooperative society.

Glass Ceiling: Refers to many barriers that can exist to thwart a qualified woman's rise to the top management of an organization, these barriers are artificial and invisible, providing a view to the top, but also providing a ceiling on how far a woman can go.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background Information of the Study

For at least a quarter of a century women have been entering the professional and managerial ranks of U.S corporations at about the same rate as men, yet they remain dramatically underrepresented at senior levels. Women currently constitute only 2.2 percent of Fortune 500 CEOs and about 15 percent of these companies board seats and corporate officer positions (Catalyst, U.S. Women in Management, 2011).The gap widens for women of color, who account for about twelve percent of the managerial and professional labor force but a scant of three percent of Fortune 500 directors; only three of the 500 CEOs are women of color. Even among recent graduates from leading business schools worldwide, women's career progress lags relative to comparable men's (Carta & Silva 2010).

According to Sincoff, et al. (2006), despite organizational barriers such as entrenched cultures and norms, the way power is defined and exercised has led to men occupying a disproportionately high percentage of the higher ranks in the career field, while women tend to be overrepresented in its lower ranks. Cotter et al (2001) further notes that there are many barriers that exist to thwart a qualified woman's rise to the top management of an organization. These barriers are artificial and invisible, providing a view to the top, but also providing a ceiling on how far a woman can go. Therefore women, are

Cotter et al (2001) further notes that there are many barriers that exist to thwart a qualified woman's rise to the top management of an organization. These barriers are artificial and invisible, providing a view to the top, but also providing a ceiling on how far a woman can go. Therefore women, are confronted by formidable constraints with limited and almost nonexistent active participation in leadership positions.

Rao (1999) observed that in many developing countries, under-representation of women in top cooperative management and leadership positions has had negative implications on government policies and general socio-economic development which has lacked gender mainstreaming. Women participation in leadership positions, articulate their concerns and make their voices heard. They are also pressing for an expansion of women's economic and social opportunities, and the advancement of women's rights. By improving their leadership positions, they are simultaneously strengthening African society as a whole, as well as enhancing the continent's broader development prospects.

Global advances have been made towards the recognition of women's participation in political, economic and social leadership positions. Despite the progress made in various developing countries, serious and persistent obstacles still hinder the advancement of women and their participation in cooperative leadership and decision making processes. In Kenya, however, women continue to be marginalized in many areas of society, especially in the sphere

of leadership and decision making. According to Ministry of Gender survey (2009), only 30.9 per cent of those employed in Kenya's public service are women, 72 per cent of who are in the lower cadres. This same inequity exists in the judiciary, in the leadership of political parties, and in political representation. (Wanjiku and Axel, 2010)¹

According to Mwaniki (2006), most women in developing countries do not have access to education, productive resources and other services hindering them to actively participate in socio-economic and political leadership positions. He further views women empowerment as process of women being able to organize themselves to increase their own self-reliance and to acquire independent right to make choices and to take control over the organizational resources. Lack of women's representation and participation in cooperative leadership has been attributed to several factors and constraints. Some of the constraints include political structures that inhibit women's leadership, negative attitudes towards women's leadership and the existing expectations of traditional and cultural roles for women. Furthermore, women's capacity to participate at leadership levels is restricted due to family responsibilities, cultural expectations and stereotyping that 'a woman's place is in the home.

¹ Wanjiku Wakogi was the Gender Programme Coordinator at Heinrich Boll Foundation, Nairobi, in 2010, while Dr Axel Harneit-Sievers was the director. Both of them wrote the preface for Nyokabi Kamau's study on Women and political Leadership in Kenya, 2010, published by Heinrich Boll Foundation

A general analysis of Kenya government policy documents shows that involving women in leadership positions remains a major challenge and strategies towards alleviating gender related discriminations in both socio-economic and political leadership position. In the 2007, policies pursued by the Kenya government were based on the premise that involving women in community socio-economic activities would translate into poverty alleviation and eradicate socio-economic discrimination. The assumption was that once the economy prospered, benefits would trickle down to all Kenyans and rid them of poverty, ignorance and disease (Republic of Kenya, Ministry of Education 2007).

The Kenya National Federation of Cooperatives (KNFC) Board (2007), observed that even though cooperatives societies have made remarkable progress in agriculture, banking, credit, agro-processing, storage, marketing, dairy, fishing and housing women in cooperative societies still continue to miss opportunities in leadership and decision making positions.

The exclusion of women in cooperative leadership has been identified as a major constraint in poverty reduction in Africa as a whole. As recommended in the Republic of Kenya, (2003), Economic Growth and Measures to Reduce Poverty and Inequality, eradication of poverty cannot be accomplished through anti-poverty programmes alone, but require democratic participation and changes in economic structures in order to ensure access for all women to resources, opportunities and public services. In many developing countries,

economic stability resulting in high incidence of poverty and low level of development.

Mulwa (1994) observes that women have long been the mainstay of communities and are heavily involved in community initiatives in various forms. They have established themselves as leaders in community development that have brought positive change to their communities and organizational success. While women comprehensive approach to leadership and development has influenced the evolution and nature of community development, women's contributions have neither been widely acknowledged nor explicitly credited. Their involvement in leadership positions and equal participation in decision making is therefore not only a demand for justice or democracy, but is also a necessary condition for development and peace.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Women's underrepresentation and participation in leadership positions has a direct adverse effect on economic performance and community economic stability resulting in high incidence of poverty and low level of development. Although women participation in leadership positions is intended to serve as a basis and a platform for bringing together the economically weak members of the society and thereby enhance their individual capacities, the role of women in leadership position(s) has neither been given adequate attention nor translated into significantly improved access to decision-making powers. The role of women in relation to leadership positions has over the years not been given adequate attention nor translated into significantly improved access to

decision making power despite the fact that some women have acquired same level of education as men. Professor Maria Nzomo (2010) notes that Kenya as a country remains greatly challenged in relation to having women ascendancy to leadership positions. Where, over the past decade, all the countries in the East African region have overtaken Kenya on all measures of gender equality indices. Nyokabi Kamau (2010) infers that there exist serious and persistent obstacles that hinder the advancement of women and their participation in political decision making processes. These theses among others therefore present a gap in relation to promotion of gender equity as well as promotion of women's individual talents and capacities thus limitation of their potential. This study will examine the constraints women face in taking cooperative leadership position, including the barriers related to socio-cultural expectations, the balance between work and family as experienced differently by men and women in Laikipia East District.

1.3 Research Questions

- (i) Does education influence women participation in cooperative leadership positions in Laikipia East District?
- (ii) Does socio-cultural belief affect women participation in cooperative leadership in Laikipia East District?
- (iii) Do government policies influence women participation in cooperative leadership position?

1.4 Objectives of the Study

- (i) To assess the influence of education on women participation in cooperative leadership positions
- (ii) To establish how socio-cultural beliefs affects the level of women participation in cooperative leadership position(s)
- (iii) To examine how government policies influence women participation in leadership position(s)

1.5 Research Assumptions

- (i) Education level of women influences their level of participation in cooperative leadership.
- (ii) Socio-cultural beliefs affects the level of women participation in cooperative leadership position(s)
- (iii) Government policies influence women participation in leadership position(s)

1.6 Significance of the Study

The existing women empowerment policies and strategies propose socio-economic structural changes in cooperative societies' leadership, governance, infrastructural development and gender equality apparently intended to bring about rapid economic stability and regional development. The study will be of great benefit to the Kenyan policy makers on the best way forward to implementing non-discriminatory affirmative action, creating awareness and help improve the competitiveness of women leaders in the economy.

The Laikipia East District Cooperative Development Committee will use the study findings to identify strengths and weakness together with the **underlying obstacles in women participation in cooperative leadership**. The residents will also benefit from the study since it will reveal all the challenges faced by women participants in cooperative leadership and development programs. **The women will also be made aware of their leadership potential and be able to influence decision making in cooperative societies.**

The existing cooperative societies operating in Laikipia East District will **expose the challenges faced by women in cooperative leadership and on the implementation of cooperative society management plans**. Other research scholars will use the study as a reference test since it forms a basis of good background for future researchers.

1.7 The Scope of the Study

The study will be restricted to all registered and active cooperative societies in Laikipia East District in Kenya. Laikipia East district which is a semi arid district located on the leeward side of Mt. Kenya. The choice of the study area is based on the diversity in the social economic activities that are undertaken in the district. The target population of 79 cooperative societies will be considered for the study. A sample population of 25 cooperative societies of 79 active societies within the districts will be drawn randomly for the purpose of the study. The target group will include functional managers of active cooperative societies.

1.8 Limitations of the Study

Getting access to vital information is not easy and the researcher might be faced with hard time persuading the respondents to give the necessary information. Some respondents might be unwilling to respond to certain issues as required and might be suspicious whenever one is trying to obtain work related information from them. In order to address this limitation, the researcher will endeavour to ensure that the respondents understands the importance of the study and how the research findings will be not only inform the pool of knowledge but also can be used to improve gender equity in their respective cooperative societies. The researcher will further assure the respondents of the confidentiality of the information gathered and that the information will be kept confidential and used for the purpose of the study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Overview of the Chapter

The chapter presents a review of literature in terms of introduction, Theoretical review, Critical review, theoretical and conceptual framework that provides an in-depth analysis and background into various cooperative society development intervention programs and how these programs affected active participation of women in leadership of cooperative societies both in Kenya and around the globe. This study established some of the theories on the challenges facing women participation in cooperative leadership strategies focused on by other researchers, authors and professionals both in developing and developed countries around the globe. This enabled the researcher to have a solid basis of existing knowledge in certain aspects of cooperative society's leadership policies while highlighting areas where there exists a "knowledge gap" which this study aimed at fulfilling.

2.2 Role of Education on Women Leadership

According to (Birchal, 2004), literacy is a weapon for Social Change. Education becomes the means by which people perceive interpret, criticize and finally transform the world about. Freire attacks the culture of silence inhibited by illiteracy of the peasants in Brazil poorest areas and how it has contributed in an extraordinary way to the development of a sense of purpose and identify among the oppressed and demoralized majority. The work of Freire is the result of a process of reflection in the midst of a struggle to create a new social

order. His work is the authentic voice of the third world, which in the study are some of the initiatives that the Civil Society Organization would want to use to generate literacy.

Bennett (2003), views women educational empowerment as process of women being able to organize themselves to increase their own self-reliance and to acquire independent right to make choices and to control resources. It is the process by which people, organizations or groups who are powerless become aware of the power dynamics at work in their life, develop the skills and capacity for gaining some reasonable control over their lives; exercise this control without infringing upon the rights of others and support the empowerment of others in the community.

Gender mainstreaming according to United Nations is the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or education programs, in any area and at all levels (UN, 2001). To enhance women's participation in cooperative leadership, there is a need to advocate for gender mainstreaming in all sectors by advocating for gender balance and ensuring that institutional educational mandates, policies and actions are shaped by a gender policy as well as introducing clear policies and objectives, with an implicit gender educational orientation.

According to Onsongo (2005), colonial laws disrupted and displaced women's gender roles. Formal education was also mostly available to men, which meant that the majority of women remained illiterate and, therefore,

could not participate in modern economic transactions Women's work (which was mainly domestic) was classified as non-work since it did not fit into the colonial system's economic criteria. Most tribal elders viewed girls' education with suspicion. Throughout the colonial period, education of girls lagged behind. It was not until 1925 that the government openly decried the low status of women and girls' education, describing it as lagging behind that of men and boys. The government started to advocate for the improvement of girls' education, arguing for the first time that educated wives and mothers would contribute to the general welfare of the home and community (Kenya National Archives annual report as cited in Chege & Sifuna, (2006). However, it is clear that even as it attracted support for girls' education, the colonial administration failed to interpret the value of girls' education in terms of their personal development and well being, much less did it prepare them for leadership.

According to Assie-Lumumba (as cited in Chege & Sifuna, 2006), a new tradition was established for transmitting values of humility, low ambition and systematic underestimation of girls' and women's ability in cognitive achievement, social attainment and capacity to work in the public sphere. Among its specific objectives were to increase participation of women in governance and management; mainstream gender at all educational levels, institutions, policies, programs and activities, planning, implementation and budgeting (Republic of Kenya, 2007).

As educated persons, Kenyan women are still expected to retain their traditional roles of being mothers and submissive wives, while at the same time

opening up new normative spaces for themselves. Unfortunately, workplace and political norms in Kenya do not allow for combining of domestic and public roles, therefore creating conflicts for professional women who try to balance the dual political careers with domestic roles in the society. These contradictions have continued to affect women's careers and indeed how workplaces and politics are structured.

Women's participation in cooperative leadership is also generally very low especially in developing countries where cultural and social influences make it difficult for women to participate in education or any other activities outside of their households. The prevailing culture and social pressure make it difficult for women to play an active role in individual advancement in education within their communities or become leaders of the existing cooperative societies. Most women in developing countries do not have access to education, productive resources and other services. Such discrimination hampers them not to earn incomes and not to actively participate in cooperative leadership positions. In order to solve the problem, women empowerment becomes a global agenda. Customary gender values, rules and rights from the moral order of society that restricts the access of women to social, political and legal institutions ultimately create and perpetuate a vicious exclusionary cycle that maintains gender inequalities. (Mwaniki R. 2006).

2.2.1 Effects of Socio-cultural Barriers

Women's identities and roles have traditionally been associated with parenting and caring, while men's have been associated with paid employment

as well as becoming public and industrial managers (Neidhart & Carlin, 2003). The socialization process therefore structures and equips men and women to enact their respective and different roles. According to Livingstone (2004), domestic duties that women are still expected to do for their families take significantly more time and energy than those that most men expect and want to do. He adds that this inequity is the chief persistent disadvantage that women suffer in seeking opportunities for advanced education and career advancement. While femininity is associated with submissiveness, gentleness, emotional dependence and not quite good at decision making and tactfulness, masculine characteristics are dominance, aggressiveness, not emotional, blunt, independence, very good at decision making etc (UNESCO, 2000).

Socialization process results in boys and girls conforming to the socially determined behavior. Girls learn to be feminine while boys learn to be masculine. Socio-cultural influences are very strong tools of group control. All people in a place because the cultural aspect comprises of norms and values, relationship networks and interactions share this. These norms and values although humanly designed capture the mindsets of people and become the determining factor in the behaviour of the society (Otieno, 2001). He further observed that socio-cultural barriers mostly influence the frame in which we operate in, but for development to take place, we need to transcend the cultural barriers and limitations. In most African societies, women are not expected to speak before men, a thing that has kept many women's potential untapped or even unrealized at all. Women are also not expected to own property or even

share in the inheritance of their parents. This therefore limits them from contributing to socio-economic activities that are meant to bring about development of the whole society.

2.2.2 Influence of Government Policies

The exclusion of women has been identified as a major constraint in poverty reduction in Africa as a whole. As recommended in the United Nations Beijing Platform of Action and Declaration (1995), eradication of poverty cannot be accomplished through anti-poverty programmes alone, but require democratic participation and changes in economic structures in order to ensure access for all women to resources, opportunities and public services. In many developing countries, policies have been consistently discriminated against certain investment areas through high levels of taxation and other macroeconomic policies. As a result such policies adversely affect economic performance together economic base, resulting in high incidence of poverty and low level of development as manifested in low income levels.

The Government of Kenya through Economic Research Bureau (ERB) (2007) took some positive steps on second generation reforms, including the 1999 establishment of the Kenyan Anti-Corruption Authority, and measures to improve the transparency of government procurements and reduce the government payroll. The new National Rainbow Coalition (NARC) government enacted the Anti-Corruption and Economic Crimes Act and Public Officers Ethics Act in May 2003 aimed at fighting graft in public office. Reforms especially in the judiciary, public procurement etc., have led to the

unlocking of donor aid and a renewed hope for economic revival (Government of Kenya, 2001).

2.2.3 Political influence

Epstein *et al.*(2005) as quoted by Nyokabi Kamau noted that human right and obligation, political analysts and researchers from different regions of the world (for example Clinton-Rodham, 2003; Neuman, 1998; Maathai,2006; Thomas and Wilcox, 2005; Wanjohi, 2003) are in agreement that when women get into leadership and management, they bring a different perspective of political leadership. These analysts and researchers have argued that having more women in politics would help solve problems associated with perpetual poverty, especially as it affects women. Women's leadership not only aids in building nations but also helps to balance up decision making processes. Nyokabi Kamau (2010) further argues that women bring a different perspective of leadership when provided with political leadership opportunity. She further notes that gender inequality in political leadership contributes to women's issues not receiving enough attention even from men who may be sensitive to women's issues.

Okumu, (2008) however notes that men who have dominated politics are usually not very comfortable when women start getting into what they perceived as their domain. This insecurity he argues manifests in the manner men try to derail women from getting to political positions, especially through use of violence targeting women political aspirants. This situation is no different when it comes to leadership in the cooperative movement where the

election of leaders in cooperative societies is marred by political undertones mostly informed by the stakes to be controlled.

The legitimacy of political processes in cooperative movement has to be discussed with regard to several aspects. The over-concentration of social powers on men has restricted access to the decision-making process and limited the space for women to effectively participate in cooperative leadership resulting to high level political discrimination during cooperative society's leader's democratic election process. This legitimacy exists only in those cases in which the democratically elected bodies of a cooperative management teams have the possibility to influence the content of the strategy and are involved in its implementation of cooperative management strategies. The over-concentration of power by the male dominated elected elite bred corruption, restricted women access to the decision-making process, and limited the space for the women participation in cooperative leadership governance processes resulting to high level of resentment toward the ruling elite (ECA and AU, 2006).

2.2.4 Women and the Leadership Paradigm

Under-representation of women in positions of senior management continues to be a matter of concern, particularly as the cooperative membership force is largely dominated, by women (Cubillo & Brown, 2003). For instance, despite variations in the pattern of representation of women in positions of leadership across, what is common is that cooperative societies' leaders are predominantly male and women seem to be under-represented at managerial

levels (Riley, 1994). This is despite the fact that women have shown themselves to be extremely capable business leaders (Cubillo, 1999), and there is little doubt that many women have a great deal to contribute to the changing practice of cooperative management in response to the radical global restructuring of all economic sectors (Cubillo & Brown, 2003). Critical skills for female superintendents were visioning, determining the real needs, communicating, hiring the right people, delegating, developing team support, working effectively with people, and producing meaningful and lasting change (Funk, 2004). Female attributes of nurturing, being sensitive, empathetic, intuitive, compromising, caring, cooperative, and accommodative are increasingly associated with effective administration.

Cultural feminism theory was applied as a theoretical framework in the study. Cultural feminism can be traced back to Jane Addams in the 1890s. It later on emerged in 1970s becoming a strong voice in 1980s (Schemerhorn, 2001). Repeatedly, Addams advanced the argument that women were more humanitarian, caring, and "down to earth" than men. By restricting women's freedom to the home, the larger society was corrupt and unjust. Cultural feminism argues that there are fundamental biological and personality differences between men and women and those women differences should be celebrated as a source of personal strength and pride. Culturalists acknowledge the existence but not the inferiority of the difference and on this platform enunciates an equality of quality, not of sameness to men. One such difference is that women raise children while men do not. This makes women connected

and intimate beings. The consequences of a woman's potential for connection makes women value intimacy and develop a capacity for nurturance, and an ethic of care for the other with which they are connected, creating interdependence with and in the community (Schemerhorn, 2001).

In educational management and leadership women have been noted to exhibit characteristics such as empathy, intuition, sensitivity, caring, supporting, compassion, patience, organization, attention to detail and ability to integrate people, to listen to them and to motivate them through non monetary incentives (Cubillo, 1999; Funk, 2004; Growe and Montgomery, 1999). This is because, according to cultural feminism, women tend to value ideas such as interdependence, co-operation, relationship, community, sharing, joy, trust and peace, while men tend to value ideas such as independence, hierarchy, competition and domination. According to cultural feminism society should facilitate, by its laws and respectful attitudes, the full participation of women in all sectors, while neither denying their distinct nature nor discriminating against them for their differences (Schemerhorn, 2001).

Absence of women in decision-making positions stems from variety of factors. According to Neidhart and Carlin (2003), barriers to women's leadership can be categorized into: barriers stemming from socialization and stereotyping; individual and organizational barriers. Women have also lagged behind men in education (UNESCO, 2000). Ernest (2003) adds that "glass

ceiling” is the most important reason for women’s under- representation in leadership positions.

Individual barrier looks to women as the cause of their underrepresentation because it argues that women are not assertive enough, don’t want power, lack self confidence, are unwilling to play the game or work the system, don’t apply for jobs and even when in a job, they don’t apply for line positions (Tallerico & Burstyn as cited in Grove and Montgomery, 1999).

Organizational barriers include entrenched cultures and norms the way power is defined and exercised, selection procedures, lack of appropriate mentor schemes, exclusion from informal networks, failure of senior leaders to assume accountability for women’s advancement, job requirements, facilities; organizational climate; and placement (Livingstone, 2004). The resultant is that men are considered to be experts while women have to prove that they are (Ernest, 2003).

Women’s identities and roles have traditionally been associated with parenting and caring, while men’s have been associated with paid employment as well as becoming public and industrial managers (Neidhart & Carlin, 2003). The socialization process therefore structures and equips men and women to enact their respective and different roles. According to Livingstone (2004), domestic duties that women are still expected to do for their families take significantly more time and energy than those that most men expect and want to do. He adds that this inequity is the chief persistent disadvantage that women

suffer in seeking opportunities for advanced education and career advancement. None the less, socialization process results in boys and girls conforming to the socially determined behavior (Otieno, 2001). Girls learn to be feminine while boys learn to be masculine. While femininity is associated with submissiveness, gentleness, emotional dependence and not quite good at decision making and tactfulness, masculine characteristics are dominance, aggressiveness, not emotional, blunt, independence, very good at decision making etc (UNESCO, 2000). Women who get into leadership are trouble. In particular, strong women are labeled difficult and dangerous because they trouble dominant masculinities and modes of management by being different (Blackmore as cited in Cubillo & Brown, 2003). This 'masculine woman' is described as a 'monster' with gender problems and a risk to assumed stable identities, social roles and positions in the hierarchy of professions. The fear of losing femininity therefore becomes widespread and real (Ernest, 2003).

There is adequate evidence that educating women is beneficial at the national, community, family and individual level. With even basic education, individual women effectively engage in economic activities and thus contribute to greater national productivity. At family level, educated women have reduced fertility rates, brought up healthier, better educated children and reduced infant and maternal mortality rates. At the society level, educated women participate more in development activities as well as in political and economic decision making processes (Republic of Kenya, 2007). However for one to occupy top management and leadership positions one needs higher education.

According to Pearce and Robinson (2004), proper management style of cooperative societies contributes to the organization's continued growth, help solve organizational problems, enhance employee satisfaction and loyalty and increase productivity. Eventually, an organization benefits from its satisfied customers and higher returns on investment. On the other hand, if an organization adopts an incorrect management structure, it may lead to tensions between employees and their managers, resulting in lower employee morale and depleting women involvement in cooperative leadership. This will cost an organization direction in attaining laid down objectives and reaching the organizational goals. Therefore, an organization must exercise caution while adopting a management style or a blend of them.

2.2.5 Financial Resource Base

According to Mudibo, E. K. (2005), cooperative Societies provide a tool of women's empowerment, allowing them to be significant in society and economy. Cooperatives provide women with employment opportunities all over the world. In fact, in many developing countries, cooperatives enable women to have access to property and key productive factors and, generally speaking, to expand their basic capabilities, such as being adequately nourished, sheltered, educated and so on. In industrialized countries, cooperatives contribute effectively to enabling working women to have access to policies that allow them to reconcile work and family responsibilities. Furthermore, cooperatives, as democratic form of business, foster women's

participation in decision-making processes. Of course the situation and needs are different in areas around the world.

Generally cooperatives have contributed to improve livelihoods for women and have served as an avenue in which women have exercised their right to participation. Membership comes with other rights and obligations. It gives one the opportunity to access services such as training, etc. It also gives one access to services, credit and to other products that the cooperative may provide (Levin, M., 2000).

2.3 Theoretical Review

According to Birchall, (2004), it is over a decade since the liberalization of the cooperative movement in Kenya, which sought to create commercially autonomous member-based cooperatives that would be democratically and professionally managed, self-controlled and self-reliant business ventures. A quick appraisal of the situation reveals that cooperatives have largely survived the market forces and continued to grow in number, membership and income. These market forces have triggered a structural transformation that has seen the fading away of the inefficient cooperatives while at the same time increasingly diversifying their activities, products and introducing innovative ventures in order to respond to their members' needs.

According to the Ministry of Cooperative Development and Marketing (2008), the cooperative movement in Kenya has become a success story mainly in the areas of disbursement of loans. However, it continues to miss

opportunities in the use of modern ICT. There is a need for it to refocus and re-assess its capacity not just to mobilizing financial resources further, but also to manage them well for faster economic growth.

2.3.1 Behavioural Theory

Behavioural theories of leadership are classified as such because they focus on the study of specific behaviours of a leader. For behavioural theorists, leader behaviour is the best predictor of his leadership influences and as a result, is the best determinant of his or her leadership success. It states that leaders can be made, rather than are born. Successful leadership is based in definable, learnable behaviour. Behavioural theories of leadership do not seek inborn traits or capabilities. Rather, they look at what leaders actually *do*. If success can be defined in terms of describable actions, then it should be relatively easy for other people to act in the same way. This is easier to teach and learn than to adopt the more ephemeral 'traits' or 'capabilities'. This behaviour-focused approach provides real marketing potential, as behaviours can be conditioned in a manner that one can have a specific response to specific stimuli (Behavioural Theories of Leadership 2010). However leadership behaviour is determined, one can categorize it into various leadership styles. Many ways of doing this exist. For example, the Managerial Grid Model, a behavioural leadership-model, suggests five different leadership styles, based on leaders' strength of concern for people and their concern for goal achievement.

According Bell (2000) ,Kurt Lewin, Ronald Lipitt, and R. K. White identified three leadership styles: authoritarian, democratic, and laissez-faire,

based on the amount of influence and power exercised by the leader: The autocratic leader (Lewin, Lippitt, & White, 1939) is given the power to make decisions alone, having total authority. This leadership style is good for employees that need close supervision to perform certain tasks; The democratic leader (Lewin, Lippitt, & White, 1939) This style involves the leader including one or more employees in the decision making process (determining what to do and how to do it). However, the leader retains the final decision making authority. Using this style is not a sign of weakness, rather it is a sign of strength that your employees will respect. This is normally used when you have part of the information, and your employees have other parts. Note that a leader is not expected to know everything — this is why you employ knowledgeable and skilful employees. Using this style is of mutual benefit — it allows them to become part of the team and allows you to make better decisions; The laissez-faire ("let do") leader (Lewin, Lippitt, & White, 1939) In this style, the leader allows the employees to make the decisions. However, the leader is still responsible for the decisions that are made. This is used when employees are able to analyze the situation and determine what needs to be done and how to do it. You cannot do everything! You must set priorities and delegate certain tasks. This is not a style to use so that you can blame others when things go wrong, rather this is a style to be used when you fully trust and confidence in the people below you. Do not be afraid to use it, however, use it wisely! Burns, (1978) said that the transactional leader is given power to perform certain tasks and reward or punish for the team's performance. It gives the opportunity to the

manager to lead the group and the group agrees to follow his lead to accomplish a predetermined goal in exchange for something else. Power is given to the leader to evaluate, correct and train subordinates when productivity is not up to the desired level and reward effectiveness when expected outcome is reached. The transformational leader (Burns, 1978) motivates its team to be effective and efficient. Communication is the base for goal achievement focusing the group on the final desired outcome or goal attainment. This leader is highly visible and uses chain of command to get the job done. Transformational leaders focus on the big picture, needing to be surrounded by people who take care of the details. The leader is always looking for ideas that move the organization to reach the company's vision.

Bennett (2003) argued that cooperative management strategy may mean the totality of management decisions that determines the purpose and direction of the organization. The strategies adopted determines the internal character of the organization, how it relates to the outside world, the range of its products, the markets in which it operates and its intentions for the future. Cooperative societies management strategic decisions include matters relating to diversification, acquisitions and divestments, maximization of the institutional strengths, minimize its weaknesses and establish competitive advantage in the operational market place, how many workers to employ and the technology to be used in production, quality levels and the means for assuring that quality project targets are met.

2.3.2 Trait Leadership Theory

Trait theory tries to describe the types of behaviour and personality tendencies associated with effective leadership. This is probably the first academic theory of leadership. Ronald Heifetz (1994) traces the trait theory approach back to the nineteenth-century tradition of associating the history of society to the history of great men. Thomas Carlyle can be considered one of the pioneers of the trait theory. In *On Heroes, Hero-Worship, and the Heroic History* (1841) he used such approach to identify the talents, skills and physical characteristics of men who arose to power.

Proponents of the trait approach usually list leadership qualities, assuming certain traits or characteristics will tend to lead to effective leadership. Shelley Kirkpatrick and Edwin A. Locke (1991) exemplify the trait theory. They argue that "key leader traits include: drive (a broad term which includes achievement, motivation, ambition, energy, tenacity, and initiative), leadership motivation (the desire to lead but not to seek power as an end in itself), honesty, integrity, self-confidence (which is associated with emotional stability), cognitive ability, and knowledge of the business. According to their research, "there is less clear evidence for traits such as charisma, creativity and flexibility". The trait model of leadership is based on the characteristics of many leaders - both successful and unsuccessful - and is used to predict leadership effectiveness. The resulting lists of traits are then compared to those of potential leaders to assess their likelihood of success or failure. Scholars taking the trait approach attempted to identify physiological (appearance, height, and weight), demographic (age,

education and socioeconomic background), personality, self-confidence, and aggressiveness), intellective (intelligence, decisiveness, judgment, and knowledge), task-related (achievement drive, initiative, and persistence), and social characteristics (sociability and cooperativeness) with leader emergence and leader effectiveness. Successful leaders definitely have interests, abilities, and personality traits that are different from those of the less effective leaders

2.3.3 Functional Theory

Functional leadership theory (Hackman & Walton, 1986; McGrath, 1962) is a particularly useful theory for addressing specific leader behaviours expected to contribute to organizational or unit effectiveness. This theory argues that the leader's main job is to see that whatever is necessary to group needs is taken care of; thus, a leader can be said to have done their job well when they have contributed to group effectiveness and cohesion (Fleishman et al., 1991; Hackman & Wageman, 2005; Hackman & Walton, 1986). While functional leadership theory has most often been applied to team leadership (Zaccaro, Rittman, & Marks, 2001), it has also been effectively applied to broader organizational leadership as well (Zaccaro, 2001). In summarizing literature on functional leadership (see Kozlowski et al. (1996), Zaccaro et al. (2001), Hackman and Walton (1986), Hackman & Wageman (2005), Morgeson (2005)), Klein, Zeigert, Knight, and Xiao (2006) observed five broad functions a leader provides when promoting unit effectiveness. These functions include: (1) environmental monitoring, (2) organizing subordinate activities, (3)

teaching and coaching subordinates, (4) motivating others, and (5) intervening actively in the group's work.

A variety of leadership behaviors are expected to facilitate these functions. In initial work identifying leader behavior, Fleishman (Fleishman, 1953) observed that subordinates perceived their supervisors behavior in terms of two broad categories referred to as consideration and initiating structure. Consideration includes behavior involved in fostering effective relationships. Examples of such behavior would include showing concern for a subordinate or acting in a supportive manner towards others. Initiating structure involves the actions of the leader focused specifically on task accomplishment. This could include role clarification, setting performance standards, and holding subordinates accountable to those standards.

Functional theory argues that leaders' primary responsibility is to assess what their followers need and ensure that those needs are met. A range of studies indicate that leaders must perform five primary functions: monitor the environment, organize subordinate activities, train and coach subordinates, motivate followers, and participate in the group's work (Guzman 2013).

2.3.4 Glass Ceiling Theory

This term “glass ceiling” refers to many barriers that can exist to thwart a qualified woman’s rise to the top management of an organization. These barriers are artificial and invisible, providing a view to the top, but also providing a ceiling on how far a woman can go. When a glass ceiling exists,

men occupy a disproportionately high percentage of the higher ranks in a career field, while women tend to be overrepresented in its lower ranks (Sincoff, et al., 2006). Glass ceiling is therefore an effect of individual, organizational and socialization barriers and exists in its strongest forms denying women opportunities to gain access into top management positions. While it is true that more women, now than ever before, are slowly chiseling through the glass barrier to take on leadership positions, one can hardly claim to hear glass ceilings shattering around us (Cubillo & Brown, 2003)

As indicated by Levin, (2002), there are several global initiatives focused on women empowerment that African countries have pledged commitment to implement. Governments at the World Summit for Social Development held in Copenhagen, Denmark in 1995, pledged to eradicate poverty through decisive national actions, which include implementing national anti-poverty plans, international cooperation and gender equality. In a number of ways, cooperative societies play an important role in global and national economic and social development. With regard to economic and social development, cooperatives promote the fullest participation of all people and facilitate a more equitable distribution on the benefits of globalization. They contribute to sustainable human development and have an important role to play in combating social exclusion. Thus the promotion of cooperatives should be considered as one of the pillars of national and international economic and social development.

In addition to the direct benefits they provide to members, cooperatives strengthen the communities in which they operate. According to Somavia (2002) cooperatives are specifically seen as significant tools for the creation of decent jobs and for the mobilization of resources for income generation. Many cooperatives provide jobs and pay local taxes because they operate in specific geographical regions.

According to Levin (2002) it is estimated that cooperatives employ more than 100 million men and women worldwide. In Nigeria, cooperatives can provide locally needed services, employment, circulate money locally and contribute to a sense of community or social cohesion. They can provide their employees with the opportunities to upgrade their skills through workshops and courses and offer youth in their base communities short and long-term employment positions. Students could also be employed on casual-appointment basis during long vacations. Through these, cooperatives will contribute to economic development.

The millennium Summit of 2000 adopted the MDGs as a powerful agenda for a global partnership to fight both income and human poverty, and set the income poverty eradication target of cutting extreme poverty by half by the year 2015. In the context of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, Governments agreed to promote gender mainstreaming in all policies and programmes, including those aimed at poverty eradication (ECA, 2006).

The involvement of women in economic development has been the greatest global challenge facing the world today and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development, particularly for developing countries. The plan recognizes that although each country has the primary responsibility for its own sustainable development and poverty eradication, the role of national policies and development strategies cannot be overemphasized. The Plan calls for concrete actions and measures to actively involve women in community economic activities to enable the countries achieve the goals of sustainable development. It endorses the internationally agreed women empowerment and gender equality-related targets and reaffirms the achievement of vision 2030. At the national level, it calls for the empowerment of the people living in poverty through the delivery of health services, increasing food availability and affordability, increase access to sanitation, and promote full and equal participation in development (ECA and AU, 2006).

Additionally as indicated by Omutoko L (2006), the Kenya Government has tried to come up with social policies in areas of health, education, security and governance with an aim of increasing the number of women in leadership positions. These efforts, notwithstanding, have however not led to better results; instead, resistance and discrimination is still alarming in most cooperative societies in rural setup. In the past, the government has encountered numerous challenges in its efforts to provide and in cooperate women in the mainstream economic development.

Cotter (2001) et al. defined four distinctive characteristics that must be met to conclude that a glass ceiling exists. A glass ceiling inequality represents: "A gender or racial difference that is not explained by other job-relevant characteristics of the employee"; "A gender or racial difference that is greater at higher levels of an outcome than at lower levels of an outcome; "A gender or racial inequality in the chances of advancement into higher levels, not merely the proportions of each gender or race currently at those higher levels"."A gender or racial inequality that increases over the course of a career."

The glass ceiling metaphor has often been used to describe invisible barriers ("glass") through which women can see elite positions but cannot reach them ("ceiling") by Netzley and Sally A. (1998). These barriers prevent large numbers of women and ethnic minorities from obtaining and securing the most powerful, prestigious, and highest-grossing jobs in the workforce. Moreover, this barrier can make many women feel as they are not worthy enough to have these high-ranking positions, but also they feel as if their bosses do not take them seriously or actually see them as potential candidates (US Department of Labour 2011).

The glass ceiling continues to exist although there are no explicit obstacles keeping women and minorities from acquiring advanced job positions – there are no advertisements that specifically say "no minorities hired at this establishment", nor are there any formal orders that say "minorities are not qualified" (equal employment opportunity laws forbid this kind of discrimination) – but they do lie beneath the surface. When a company

exercises this type of discrimination they typically look for the most plausible explanation they can find to justify their decision by Biber and Carter (2005). Most often this is done by citing qualities that are highly subjective or by retrospectively emphasizing/de-emphasizing specific criteria that gives the chosen candidate the edge. Mainly this invisible barrier seems to exist in more of the developing countries, in whose businesses this effect is highly "visible".

There are many different impediments placed upon women that make it difficult for them to attain a higher work status. With these very negative effects on women and their self-esteem, the glass ceiling has created an even larger problem than just in the work place. Most see the glass ceiling as only being in the work place, which is where it originally was intended for, it has spread to encompass the household and others as well. The barrier within the household has been seen as the difficulty a woman has of getting out of the household and accumulating a job. Not all women feel as though they are being suppressed in the household and many women choose to be in the household in which case the glass ceiling does not apply to them. The term only applies to those women that wish to be out in the work field but are unable to be. Because the glass ceiling also limits the opportunities of women in developing countries, the term has broadened and also become an issue around the world according to UNICEF (2007).

2.3.5 Theoretical Framework

This will be a collection of interrelated concepts that will guide the study. Some of the better known theories on leadership will allow the researcher to

better decipher the nuances related to the issue of women leadership effectiveness as it relates to gender. The premise will be to establish a foundation of facts pertaining to commonly held beliefs on women leadership. In particular, this study will focus on two main theories, namely the behavioral and glass ceiling theories, and their relationship to women participation in leadership positions. This will be as follows:

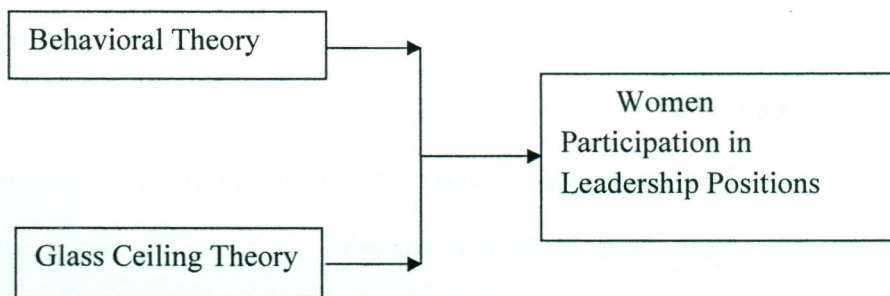


Figure 1: Theoretical frame work

2.3 Summary of the Study

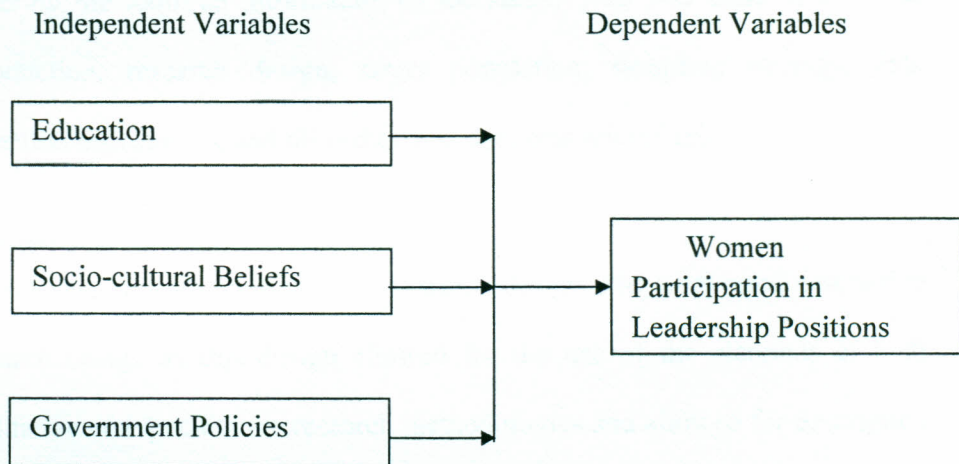
The review of some of the relevant literature indicated that a lot had been done in relationship to factors that affects women participation in leadership positions. However, there existed some gaps that had not been fully discussed. To start with, the researcher had identified that past studies on women participation in leadership positions in Kenya were undertaken before the Presidential directive on one third gender inclusion in the public sector in 2007 and the promulgation of the Constitution of Kenya 2010 which provided the legal foundation for affirmative action to ensure more women participation in the leadership positions; secondly, the cooperative subsector cuts across most

of the main sectors that drives the national economy and as such women participation in the cooperative subsector's leadership provides a clear indicator on their participation on national development as well as poverty eradication both at the household and at the national level. In this regard, very little work had been carried out and therefore the need to undertake some research on the same; and thirdly, past researchers such as Mudibo E. K. (2005) focused on cooperatives as tools for women's economic empowerment but little had been done in relation to women participation in leadership in the cooperative subsector and as such this study aimed at adding into the pool of knowledge by providing insights on women participation in the sub sector. In addition, the review of the literature had noted that despite commendable growth in cooperative business in Kenya, the most expected fruit of this growth, to trickle-downwards to be communities and fully implement women participation in cooperative leadership positions, had failed to take place, instead women were still vulnerable to discrimination, neglects and abuse when it came to seeking leadership positions in cooperative societies. This study, therefore sought to focus on situation in Laikipia East District and possibly bridge the gap.

2.4 Conceptual Framework

The conceptualization of the study will be based on the assumption that the effective management and subsequent implementation of women leadership policies provided control and guidelines on the overall involvement in cooperative society's wellbeing and improved women participation in the

cooperative leadership. The independent variables will be; education, socio-cultural beliefs, government policies and political views that tend to demoralize women participation in leadership positions. This will be as shown in the figure 2 below.



Source: Author (2013)

Figure 2: Conceptual Framework

Figure 2 captures the relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable of the study. Although each of the four independent variables has some independent effect on the participation of women, the variables correlates at some level and thus a greater influence on their participation.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Overview of the Chapter

This chapter presents a study design and the methodology that was used in gathering the required information of the study. This was done in terms of introduction, research design, target population, sampling strategy, data collection instruments, and procedure and data analysis criteria.

3.2 Research Design

This study adopted a descriptive research design. The study used descriptive research design as this design allowed for the use of the elements of both qualitative and quantitative research methodologies and allowed for description of associations and relationships between different variables. The research tools and instruments related to this research design also allowed the use of primary as well as secondary data and gives room for generalisation of the study results.

3.3 Scope of Study

The study was restricted to all registered and active cooperative societies in Laikipia East District in Kenya. Laikipia East district which is a semi arid district located on the leeward side of Mt. Kenya. The choice of the study area was based on the diversity in the social economic activities that are undertaken in the district.

3.4 Population and Sampling

A sample frame of the cooperative societies in this district indicated that there were 79 cooperative societies and using a formula suggested by Naissuma (2009)². The researcher used the computation where a sample of 25 societies was selected to represent the population where in each society one senior manager was interviewed. The computation of the sample was done as shown below:

Nassiuma (2000) provides a formula to calculate sample.

$$n = \frac{NC^2}{C^2 + (N - 1)e^2}$$

Where n = Sample size, N = Population size, C = Coefficient of variation and e = Standard margin of error. Nassiuma (2000) recommends a margin error ranging between 2%-5% and coefficient of variation ranging between 20%-30%. For this study, the researcher used a 5% margin of error and a 30% coefficient variation.

$$n = \frac{79 * 0.3^2}{0.3^2 + (79 - 1)0.05^2} = \frac{7.11}{0.285}$$

= 25 Senior Managers

² Naissuma DK, 2000. Survey Sampling: Theory and methods. University of Nairobi Press. Pp. 59-67

3.5 Sample Design

The selection of the cooperative societies that were sampled was based on simple random sampling where the first society was sampled through lottery method and the subsequent ones were selected through systematic sampling where the k^{th} item was the 3^{rd} cooperative society in the sample frame from the one selected. A structured questionnaire was used to collect the data where the data collected was cleaned and coded to allow for analysis.

3.6 Research Instruments and Data Collection Procedure

The researcher used structured questionnaires and face to face interviews to collect data. The structured questionnaires provided flexibility in the analysis of the responses. On the other hand, standardized questionnaire represented the least common denominator in assessing people's attitudes, orientations, circumstances, and experiences. Rather than asking respondents to fill out the study questionnaire, the researcher opted for the face to face interview where he asked questions orally and recorded respondents' answers. This type of data collection method generally helped in decreasing the number of "do not know" and "no answer" responses. In addition, this data collection method enabled the researcher to provide a guard against confusing items through clarifying issues that were not clear to the respondent, thereby obtaining relevant responses. This was in agreement by suggestions on the same by Babbie (1992).

3.7 Piloting

The researcher carried out a pilot study of a selected sample within the study area i.e. Laikipia East District, to test the validity and reliability of the

data collection instruments used. The piloting of the questionnaire was undertaken in five cooperative societies that had not been sampled. The purpose of the pilot study was to remove any irrelevant question items and focus on the questionnaire so as to ensure that only the right and relevant information was collected. After the pilot study the researcher proceeded to administer the questionnaire.

3.8 Data Analysis

The researcher used quantitative and qualitative methods to analyze data. Descriptive statistics, which includes statistical procedures was used to describe the population studied and to organize and describe the quantitative data collected. T-test was used to test probability as to whether the results of the analysis on the sample were representative of the population that the sample represented. This made it possible to generalise the results of the study and make conclusions. Content analysis on the other hand was used to analyze qualitative data.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Overview of the Chapter

This chapter mainly deals with the findings, interpretation and reporting of the study. The data collected is analyzed and the results are presented fully in this chapter in form of figures, tables and short narratives to accompany the figures and tables. The study results are also interpreted and discussed in relation to the extent to which the objectives have been achieved and the extent to which the study findings can be generalized.

4.2 Results

4.2.1 General Characteristics of the Respondents

The study respondents comprised of 61.5% males and 38.5% females. 11.5% were single while the rest (88.5%) were married. Majority of the respondents (46.2%) were aged between 45=55 years, 23.1% between 36-45 years, 19.2% between 25-35 years and 11.5% were over 55 years of age. The age distribution of the respondents is as shown in the figure below:

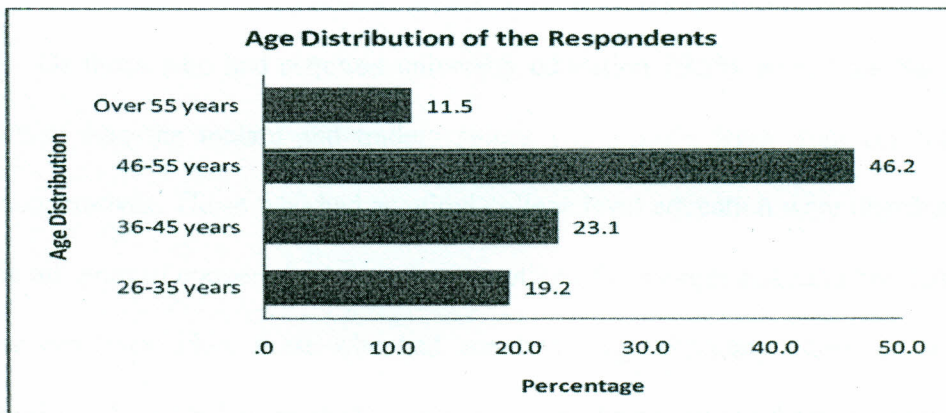


Figure 3: Respondents' Age Distribution

In terms of education, 23.1% of the respondents had acquired university education, 53.8% had college education while 23.1% had secondary education. Of those who had acquired university education, 15.4% were females while 7.7% were males; of those who had acquired collage education 34.6% were males while 19.2% were females; while of those who had acquired secondary education 19.2% were males while 3.8% were females. This is as indicated in the table below:

Table 1: Level of education * Gender Cross tabulation

Level of Education		Gender		Total
		Male	Female	
Level of education	University	7.7%	15.4%	23.1%
	College	34.6%	19.2%	53.8%
	Secondary	19.2%	3.8%	23.1%
Total		61.5%	38.5%	100.0%

Of those who had acquired university education 19.2% were from Saccos other than the matatu and traders saccos while 3.6% were from consumer cooperatives. Those who had acquired college level education were distributed in all types of cooperatives with the exception of consumer and sand harvesting cooperatives while those who had acquired only secondary education were mainly distributed in marketing, housing, sand harvesting and traders Saccos.

Interestingly these types of cooperatives do not demand high level of technical expertise. This distribution is as shown in the table below:

Table 2: Type of cooperative * Level of education cross tabulation

Types of Cooperatives		Level of education			Total
		University	College	Secondary	
Type of cooperative	Matatu Sacco		11.5%		11.5%
	Other Sacco	19.2%	19.2%		38.5%
	Marketing		7.7%	3.8%	11.5%
	Housing		7.7%	7.7%	15.4%
	Consumer	3.8%			3.8%
	Sand harvesting			7.7%	7.7%
	Traders Sacco		3.8%	3.8%	7.7%
	Youth Sacco		3.8%		3.8%
Total		23.1%	53.8%	23.1%	100.0%

4.2.2 Leadership in the Cooperatives

The position of chairman in the cooperatives was mainly occupied by males (96.2%) while only 3.8% females occupied this position. Of these 19.2% had university education, 30.8% had college education while 46.2% had only secondary education. The position of secretary was occupied by 61.5% males

and 38.5% females of which 15.4% had acquired university education, 61.5% college education, and 19.2% secondary education while 3.8% had only acquired primary education. Notably the position of treasurer was occupied by 46.2% males and 53.8% females. Of these 26.0% had university education 46.2% had college level education, 23.1% had secondary education while 3.8% had only primary education. The distribution of leadership positions in the cooperatives by gender is as shown in the figure below:

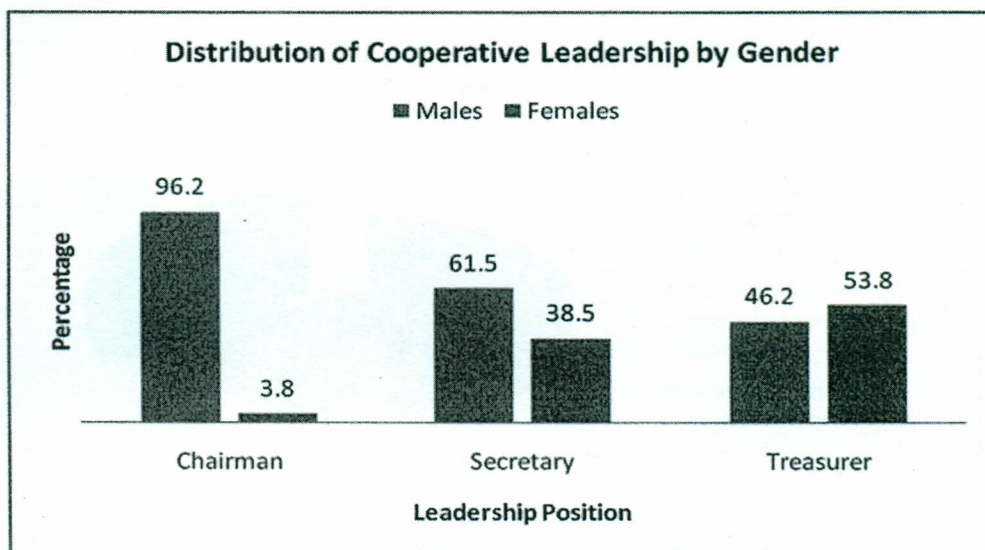


Figure 4: Distribution of Cooperative Leadership by Gender

4.2.3 Women Empowerment Programmes and Government Policies Supporting Women Empowerment

Awareness of the existence of women empowerment programmes was significantly high where 65.4% were affirmative while 32% said they were not aware of any such programmes. Of those who are affirmative, 14.3% mentioned UN women, 71.4% women enterprise fund, 7.1% Groots Kenya and another 7.1% mentioned Mwangaza Trust. In terms of awareness of

government policies supporting women empowerment, 98.0% were affirmative while 4.0% indicated that they were not aware of such policies.

4.2.4 Culture and Women Elections in Cooperative Leadership

Half (50%) of the respondents were of the opinion that culture affects the election of women as leaders in the cooperatives while the rest (50%) were of the opinion that there is no correlation between culture and election of women in cooperatives.

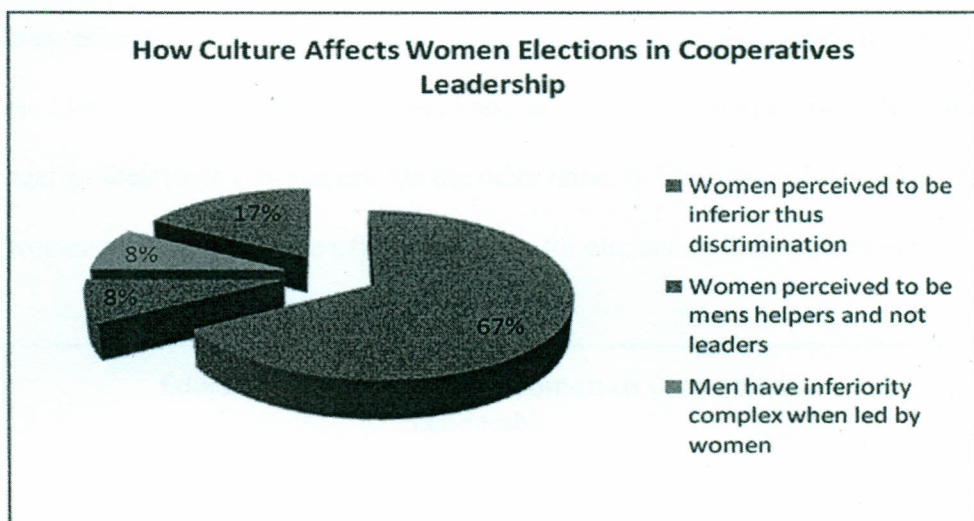


Figure 5: Culture and Women Election in Cooperative Leadership

Of those who were affirmative, 66.7% indicated that culture perceived women to be inferior than men thus their discrimination in cooperative leadership election; 8.3% reported that culture made women to be perceived as men's helpers and not leaders; 16.7% indicated that culture resulted to women's domain being perceived to be in the kitchen and not in the public sphere while 8.3% indicated that culture made men to be perceived as the *defacto* leaders and thus felt demeaned when led by women.

4.2.5 Education and Women Elections in Cooperative Leadership

65.4% of the respondents were of the opinion that education had some influence on election of women as leaders in the cooperatives while 34.6% were of the view that it does not. Of those whose view was affirmative, 87.5% indicated that basic literacy was a requirement for one to be elected as a leader in the cooperatives yet the unfortunate thing was that women were less literate owing to many factors key among them the discrimination of the girl child education. 6.3% indicated that in terms of advanced education, less women were educated as compared to their male counterparts and thus when it come to election of leaders in the cooperatives, men had an competitive advantage against their male counterpart. On the other hand, 6.3% indicated that educated women were less likely to offer themselves for election in the cooperatives.

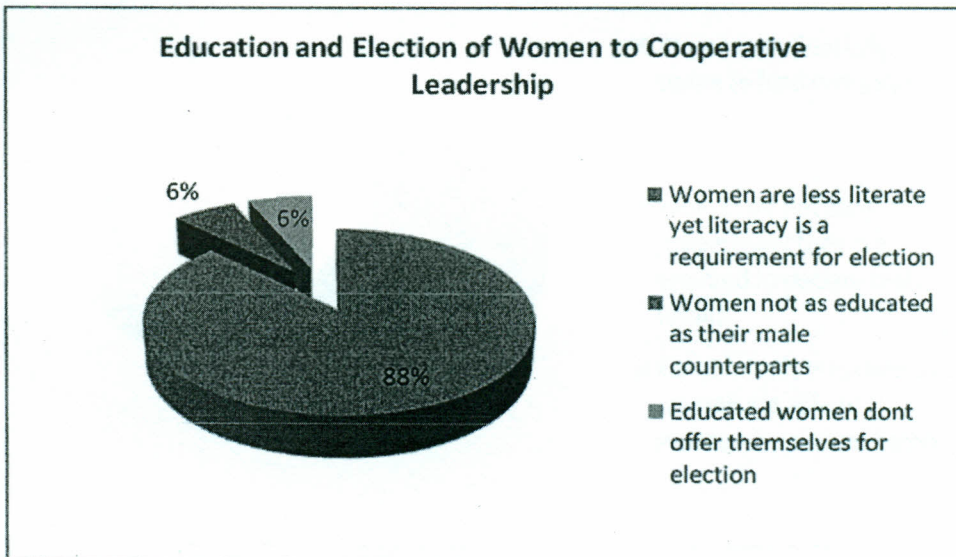


Figure 4: Education and Election of Women to Cooperatives Leadership

4.2.6 Economic Status and Women Election in Cooperative Leadership

Of those interviewed, 65.4% indicated that the economic status of a person affects women election in leadership positions while 34.6% were of the opinion that it did not. 56.3% of those who reported to the affirmative said that women were not financially stable and had no economic power to fund campaigns, 37.5% indicated that women do not own property yet they are required to declare their wealth a requirement that makes them shy off from contesting while 6.3% indicated that the economic status of individual women provided them with better opportunity to be elected to cooperative leadership and economically empowered women are able to express themselves better than less economically empowered women.

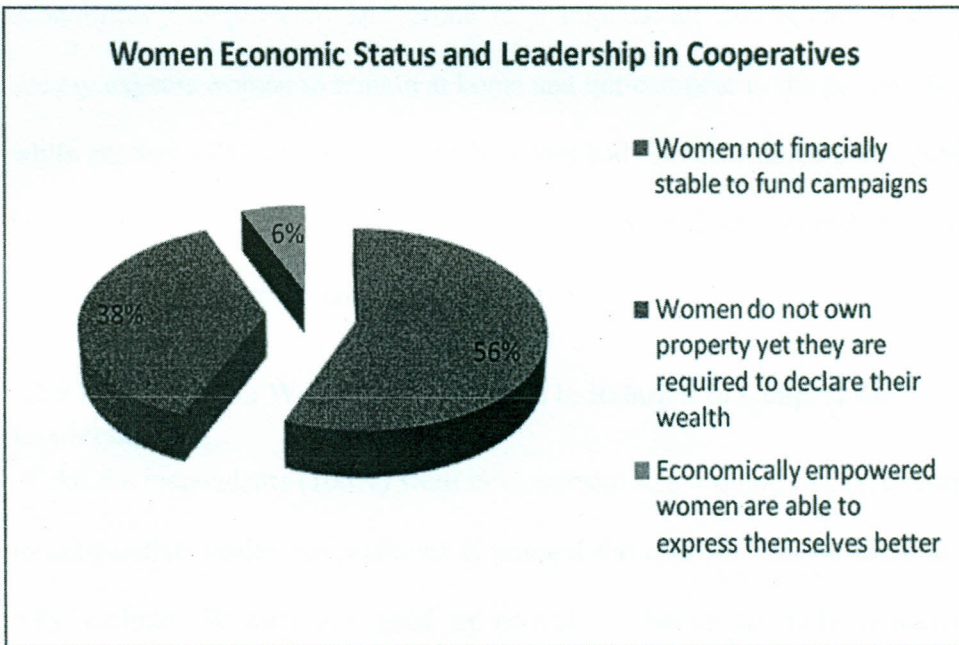


Figure 5: Economic Status and Women Election to Cooperative

4.2.7 Social Cultural Factors and Election in Cooperative Leadership

Slightly over half of the population (57.7%) was affirmative that social cultural factors play a role in influencing women election as cooperative leaders while 42.2% were of the contrary opinion. Of those who were affirmative, 15.4% indicated that historical injustice have rendered women to have low self esteem and confidence as they are rated as second class human being after their male counterparts; 30.8% indicated that although women have a lot of potential, social cultural factors have ensured that they are not provided with equal opportunity; 7.7% indicated that the society perceives women as poor decision makers; another 7.7% indicated that social cultural factors had ensured that women do not own factors of production making them less economically empowered and prone to manipulation; 30.8% indicated that society expects women to remain at home and not compete in the public sphere while another 7.7% indicated that such factors had limited women participation in cooperative leadership in that married women have to seek permission from their husbands before accepting a leadership position.

4.2.8 Perception on Women Effectiveness in Relation to Cooperative Leadership

All the respondents (100%) were in agreement that women can be effective in cooperative leadership positions if granted the change. Reason cited as to why include: Women are good at providing checks to male dominated leadership and are less corrupt (8.7%), women are more committed, trustworthy, reliable and honest (43.5%), women are as good as men if empowered with leadership skills (21.7%), if supported by their fellow women,

women leaders can provide equal or better leadership than men (4.3%), women are good at following Laws and Regulations (8.7%), women are able to multitask and thus better service delivery (4.3%) and that there are existing case studies of women in leadership where they perform better than men (8.7%).

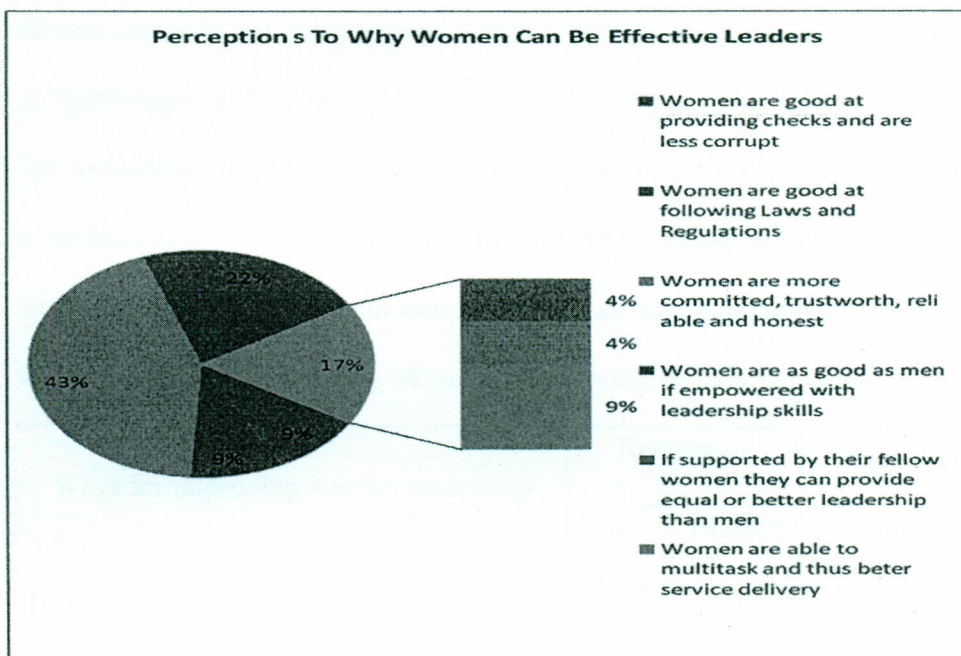


Figure 6: Perception as to Why Women Can Be Effective Leaders

In terms of satisfaction with women leadership, 23.1% of the respondents were strongly satisfied, 50% were satisfied, and 3.8% were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied while another 23.1% were dissatisfied.

4.2.9 Improving Women Involvement in Cooperative Leadership

Based on the responses received, the study received various suggestions on how to improve women involvement in leadership positions in cooperatives. Some respondents had more than one response and this was treated as a multi-

response question. The suggestions that were provided includes: Building the women's self esteem (2.2%), community sensitization on gender issues (6.5%), capacity building of women and training on leadership skills (28.3%), affirmative action and mainstreaming of gender in cooperative activities (17.4%), Economic empowerment (8.7%), provision of opportunity where women can be heard, involvement of men in championing for women inclusion in leadership (11.5%), Promotion of girls education (2.2%), Giving incentives for leadership (4.3%), Promotion of women participation in cooperative activities (17.4%), Sensitizing women to support fellow women (2.2%) and have regulations on leadership campaigns funding in cooperatives (2.2%).

Table 3: Ways of Improving Women Leadership in Co-operatives

Ways for improving women leadership	Responses		Percent of Cases
	N	Percent	
Building self esteem of women	1	2.2%	3.8%
Community sensitisation on gender issues	3	6.5%	11.5%
Capacity building of women and training on leadership skills	13	28.3%	50.0%
Affirmative action and mainstreaming of gender in cooperative activities	8	17.4%	30.8%
Economic empowerment	4	8.7%	15.4%
Providing them with an opportunity where their voices can be heard	1	2.2%	3.8%

Involvement of men in championing for women inclusion in leadership	3	6.5%	11.5%
Promotion of girls education	1	2.2%	3.8%
Giving incentives for leadership	2	4.3%	7.7%
Promotion of women participation in cooperative activities	8	17.4%	30.8%
Sensitizing women to support fellow women	1	2.2%	3.8%
have regulations on leadership campaigns funding in cooperatives	1	2.2%	3.8%
Total	46	100.0%	176.9%

4.3 Discussions

4.3.1 Government policies and Women Empowerment

The significantly high response (65.4%) of those who indicated that they were aware of the existence of government policies and programmes geared towards empowering women was in itself an indicator that the government had taken cognizance of the fact that women had been disadvantaged in many ways and therefore the need to have specific policies to address their marginalization. This research also revealed that the government had come to an acceptance that, as had been noted in the Beijing Platform of Action and Declaration (1995), eradication of poverty cannot be accomplished through anti-poverty programmes alone but requires democratic participation and

change in economic structures in order to ensure access for all women to resources, opportunities and public services. The fact that the economic status of a person was mentioned as key in determining women participation in cooperative leadership further supports the importance of the government supported policies and programmes aimed at women empowerment.

4.3.2 Education and Women Participation in Cooperative Leadership

Birchal (2004) had noted that literacy is a weapon for social change, where education becomes the means by which people perceive, interpret, criticize and finally transforms the world. Earlier on Bennett (2003) had noted that women's educational empowerment was the process of women being able to organize themselves to increase their own self reliance and the acquirement of independent right to make choices and control resources.

This study found that as indicated by the 65.4% respondents, education had a direct influence on the election of women as leaders in the cooperatives. Many respondents mainly associated access to education to patriarchy and historical injustices and cited this as being responsible for less women participation in cooperative leadership. However despite the fact that the study showed that among the respondents there were twice as much women who had acquired university education as their male counterparts (15.4% females; 7.7% males), the glass ceiling theory seems to apply, as the positions of leadership in the sampled cooperative societies were mainly male dominated with the exception of the position of treasurer where females were slightly more than males with the ratio being quite small i.e. (Chairman: Males-96.2% Females-

3.8%, Secretary: Males-61.5% Females 38.5% and Treasurer: Males-46.2% Females 53.8%).

Although education was deemed to liberate women from economic disadvantage and enhance their freedom of choice from being subjects to retrogressive cultures that oppress women, this liberation was still yet to be realized as culture and economic status of individual were also cited to have a direct influence on election of women as cooperative leaders. Still, there are fewer women elected to leadership positions in the cooperatives and there seemed to be a general defined limit where women could not go beyond..

4.3.3 Social Cultural Practices and Women Election as Cooperative Leaders

Although slightly over half of the respondents (57.7%) were affirmative that social cultural factors influence women's election as cooperative leaders, the reasons thereof were significant as far as this opinion was to be supported. These social cultural factors could be said to have had an influence on how women have been perceived by the society over the years and how this had negatively affected their behavior in relation to participating in leadership in the cooperative leadership. It's worth noting that human behavior is learned, thus all behavior can be unlearned and new behaviors learned in its place. The society and cultural practices have conditioned the women to learn and perceive themselves as being inferior to men. This had resulted to women behaving in a way that portrays low self esteem and confidence which is needed for one to participate effectively as a leader. Coupled with the fact that

the study population was patriarchy women participation in leadership was further affected to the negative.

4.3.4 Generalization of the Results

In order to generalize the result results, the researcher carried out an independent t-test of the independent variables i.e. education level, social cultural factors and government policies supporting women empowerment. The independent sample t-test was conducted to compare general opinion on these variables in relation to women participation in the cooperative leadership positions (dependent variable). The research revealed that there wasn't a significant difference in the mean of the variables between males and females which meant that none of the respondent was subjective or biased based on their respective gender while responding to the questions but rather all were objective. This is as shown in Table 4 below:

Table 4: Group Statistics

Independent Variable	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Does education affect women election in cooperatives	Male	16	1.31	.479	.120
	Female	10	1.40	.516	.163
Does social cultural factors affect women election in cooperatives	Male	16	1.31	.479	.120
	Female	10	1.60	.516	.163
Awareness on government policies supporting women empowerment	Male	16	1.06	.250	.062
	Female	9	1.00	.000	.000

The Levene's test of equality of variances further showed a value greater than 0.05 which meant that the variability in the independent variables was about the same. Put scientifically, this meant that the variability in the independent variables was not significantly different and so equal variance was assumed. The t-test results were that for education $t_{(24)} = -440$, $p < 0.664$; for social cultural factors $t_{(24)} = -1.446$, $p < 0.161$; while for government policies $t_{(23)} = 0.703$, $p < 0.465$. This is as shown in the table 5 below:

Table 5: t-test for Equality of Means

		Independent Samples Test								
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lower	Upper	
Does education affect women election in cooperatives	Equal variances assumed	.645	.430	-.440	24	.664	-.088	.199	-.498	.323
	Equal variances not assumed			-.432	18.127	.671	-.088	.202	-.513	.338
Does social cultural factors affect women election in cooperatives	Equal variances assumed	.645	.430	-1.446	24	.161	-.288	.199	-.698	.123
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.420	18.127	.173	-.288	.202	-.713	.138
Awareness on government policies supporting	Equal variances assumed	2.535	.125	.743	23	.465	.063	.084	-.112	.237

women empowerment	Equal variances not assumed			1.000	15.000	.333	.063	.063	-.071	.196
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Based on this, the researcher concluded that all the three independent variables had a significant influence on women participation in cooperative leadership positions and therefore the results could be generalized.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Overview of the Chapter

This chapter provides the conclusion and inferences made from the findings of the study. It relates these to the problem statement and the study gaps that were identified before undertaking the study. Recommendations have also been made on what could be done to address the gaps identified by the study in relation to women's participation in leadership in the cooperative sub sector.

5.2 Conclusions

This study was anchored on the need to address existing knowledge gaps in relation to women participation in leadership in the cooperative sub sector. Towards this, the researcher made the following conclusion: Past studies on women participation in leadership positions in Kenya had been undertaken before the Presidential directive on one third gender inclusion in the public sector in 2007 and the promulgation of the Constitution of Kenya 2010 which provides the legal foundation for affirmative action to ensure more women participation in the leadership positions. Towards this, the one third rule on gender integration seems to have almost being achieved in the cooperative subsector's leadership. Nonetheless, women participation in the top most position of the chairman still remains a tall order to achieve; Women participation in the cooperative subsectors' leadership based on democracy and good governance rather than set rules and Laws was still wanting despite the fact that the cooperative subsector cuts across most of the main sectors that

drives the national economy and as such women participation in the subsector's leadership provides a clear indicator on their participation on national development as well as poverty eradication both at the household and at the national level; The glass ceiling theory was very much applicable in the cooperative subsector especially in relation to women participation in the subsectors' leadership. This was more so supported by the fact that despite more women having acquired university education than their male counterparts the position of chairman and secretary was still being perceived as a male domain; Women participation in cooperative subsector's leadership was being approached from a virtual perspective rather than looking at it from a point of women's capability and qualification. This was supported by the fact that despite all (100%) the respondents indicated that women can be effective as leaders, over half (52.2%) of the respondents associated this effectiveness to the virtual of being less corrupt, trustworthy, committed, reliable and being honest; and Social cultural factors that supports and sustains women vulnerability and discrimination are still rife and thus despite commendable growth in cooperative business in Kenya, the most expected fruit of this growth, the trickle-downward effect where the communities can fully implement women participation in cooperative leadership positions, is yet to be realized.

5.3 Recommendations

Based on the study findings and the conclusions, the researcher recommends the following:

- (1) There is need to upscale awareness creation and sensitization on the need to mainstream gender issues in the cooperative sub sector. Inclusion of men to champion for gender mainstreaming should be encouraged as such as possible.
- (2) The stakeholders in the cooperative subsector should develop strategies aimed at engaging men in championing for participation of women in leadership in the cooperative subsector. This is informed by the fact that the population of study was patriarchal and therefore the voice of men is likely to influence decision making in relation to women participation.
- (3) There is need to have regulations on leadership campaign funding in the cooperative subsector so as to ensure that corrupt individuals do not buy their way into leadership through voter bribery and also to ensure that women, most of whom are not economically empowered, are given equal or fair playing ground in regards to elections as cooperative leaders.

5.3.1 Recommendations for Further Research on Women's Participation in Leadership in the Cooperative Subsector

Based on the findings of the study, the researchers identified the need to undertake a comprehensive study on the processes of election of leaders in the cooperative subsector in order to have an in-depth understanding of the dynamics involved and understand whether women's inclusion is done just to fulfill legal requirement or is it done in cognizance of the immense potential for

leadership that women possess. The researchers therefore recommends further studies be carried on this area. The researcher also recommends that studies be carried out to find out the effectiveness of the one third constitutional requirement on gender representation on empowerment of women – does representation necessarily translate to empowerment?

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APPENDICES

Appendix One - Project Schedule

PHASE	ACTIVITY	DURATION	Remarks
1	Proposal Development	Nov 2012	
2	Developing Research instrument	Dec 2012	
3	Pre-testing the Research Instrument	Jan 2013	
4	Data Collection	Jan 2013	
5	Data Analysis	Feb 2013	
6	Final Report Writing and submission	March 2013	

Appendix Two - Project Budget

ITEM	QUANTITY	UNIT COST	TOTAL
Printing papers	3 Reams	700	2,100
Field Note Book	10 Pieces	100	1,000
Pens	No 20	15	300
Compute Cartridge	No. 1	8,000	8,000
Flash Disks	2	2,000	4,000
Binding	3 Copies	500	1500
Traveling Accommodation and Expenses			5,800
Public Transport			6,000
Contingency			15,000
TOTAL			42,800

Appendix Three – Research Questionnaire

Instruction - Kindly answer all the Questions

SECTION ONE

BIO-DATA OF SENIOR MANAGER

Background information (Tick appropriately where applicable)

1. Name (optional).....

2. Gender

Male

Female

3. What is your age category?

18-25 years

26-35 years

36-45 years

46-55 years

Over 55years

4. Marital status?

Single

Married

Divorced

Separated

5. Level of Education?

University

College

Secondary

6. Type of cooperative society?

.....

SECTION TWO

7. BIODATA OF CO-OPERATIVE OFFICIALS

POSITION	GENDER	LEVELS OF EDUCATION
Chairperson		
Secretary		
Treasury		

SECTION THREE

8. a) Are you aware of any women empowerment program/policies in regard to women leadership carried out within the district?

Yes No

b) If Yes in question (6a) above, kindly state which ones

(i)

(ii)

(iii).....

9. Are you aware of Government policies supporting women empowerment?

Yes

No

10. a) Does culture affect the election of women as cooperative officials?

Yes No

b) If yes, which ones?

.....

11. a) Does education levels affect the election of women as cooperative officials?

Yes No

b) If yes, which how?

.....

12. a) Does economic status of an individual have any effects on women leadership in cooperatives?

Yes No

b) If yes, how?

.....

13. a) Does the social cultural factors have any influence on women leadership in cooperatives?

Yes No

b) If yes, how?

.....

14. a) In your opinion can women be effective in cooperative leadership positions?

Yes No

b) If yes, how?

.....

c) If no, why?

.....

..

15. What is your level of satisfaction on women leadership in the cooperatives?

Strongly satisfied

Satisfied

Neither satisfied/dissatisfied

Dissatisfied

Strongly dissatisfied

16 Suggest ways of improving women involvement in leadership positions in the cooperatives?

.....

.....

.....

.....