

**BARRIERS TO UPWARD MOBILITY OF FEMALE  
TEACHERS IN ADMINISTRATION OF PUBLIC SECONDARY  
SCHOOLS: A CASE OF BUNGOMA WEST, BUNGOMA  
COUNTY, KENYA**

**BY**

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UNIVERSITY**

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*Barriers to upward  
mobility of female*



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This is my original work and has not been submitted to any other institution for any other programme.

  
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This Project has been submitted for examination with our approval as University Supervisors.

  
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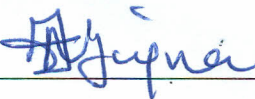
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## DEDICATION

This project is dedicated to my two loving daughters; Brenda Wambani Bunyasi and Berryl Dorah Bunyasi for their support and for allowing me time off to go and study. May this motivate you to scale the heights of the academic ladder.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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## ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

- BOG:** Board of Governors.
- CEDAW:** Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women.
- DEO:** District Education Officer.
- EFA:** Education for All.
- HT:** Head Teacher.
- MDG:** Millennium Development Goals.
- MOE:** Ministry of Education
- MOEST:** Ministry of Education Science and Technology
- PDE:** Provincial Director of Education.
- QASO:** Quality Assurance and Standards Officers
- SPSS :** Statistical Package for Social Science
- TSC :** Teachers Service Commission
- UNESCO:** United Nations Educational, Science and Cultural Organization.
- U.S.A:** United States of America.

## ABSTRACT

In Kenya, although there are many women in the teaching profession, the number that holds administrative positions has been low. The reasons that have led to this situation had not been fully investigated. The purpose of the study was to establish the factors hindering female teachers' advancement to administrative positions, thus causing women under-representation in the administration of public schools in Bungoma West district, Bungoma County. The study was guided by four objectives which were: to establish the factors that influence female teachers career advancement; to establish the extent to which social/ cultural factors influence career advancement to administration; to investigate whether gender issues and stereotype are limitations and to determine possible solutions to the problem. Like their male counterparts, women have climbed the academic ladder and there are many of them in the profession but there still remains an under- representation at the helm of secondary schools administration. Women leaders are very crucial in the secondary school administration especially as mentors to girls in their future lives. The study endeavored to determine the strategies of strengthening women upward mobility in the field of secondary school administration and identify the challenges that they face. In the study descriptive design was used to describe the actual situation in Bungoma West District of Bungoma County. There were 26 public secondary schools in Bungoma West district, Bungoma County with a population of 472 teachers, 26 principals and 26 deputy principals. Out of the 26 schools, 13 schools were sampled by use of purposive sampling technique. One hundred and seventeen respondents were selected from the sampled schools from 1 principal, 1 deputy principal and 7 H.O.Ds from every school. The study also included 8 officers from the Bungoma District Education Office bringing to a total of 123 respondents. These made up 26% of the population under study. Piloting was carried out at the District Education Office and identical schools for the purpose of pre-testing the instruments. Data was collected and analyzed by use of statistical package for the social sciences (SPSS). The findings were presented through descriptive statistics by use of percentages, frequencies, pie-charts, tables and graphs. The study came up with various findings which considered the challenges facing women teachers' upward mobility in public secondary schools that have prevented them from ascending to administrative positions in Bungoma West district, Bungoma County. It also confirmed that there were indeed few female administrators than the male. The study revealed that the women perceived themselves majorly as home makers and mothers than professionals. Gender and culture played a major role in contributing to the small percentage of female administrators. The male respondents expressed their lack of confidence in female administrators citing the fact that women were temperamental and attached personal experiences to professional duties. It was also clear that though many women had the right qualifications and were aware of procedures of promotion very few of them applied. The research recommended among other things the need for female teachers to seek further information on the criteria used for promotion and act on that information accordingly. Women should also rise above their traditional role and family responsibilities and be prepared to take up more leadership roles. They also need to attend empowerment seminars and workshops to prepare them in both curricular and co-curricular duties. There is also need for women to become more ambitious and aggressive in developing their career. Further research was recommended upon finishing the study in relation to women upward mobility in general and in public secondary schools so as to create a more supportive environment at all levels of management.

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

This chapter reflects on a number of sub-sections. It looks at the background to the study from the international, national, regional and to the local scenario of Bungoma West district, in Bungoma County. It also gives the statement of the research problem, the purpose of the study, objectives and the research questions as well as assumptions of the study. It further establishes the limitations and delimitations of the study, theoretical framework and conceptual framework. It also throws light on the significance of the study and finally gives the definitions of operational terms.

#### 1.1 Background to the Study

Gender related policies, interventions and legal framework are among the international statutes that have been embraced world over. Onsomu (2008) noted that Kenya, like many African societies is a patriarchal society. Although there are still many gender related challenges facing the country, a few strides in form of policy development and enactment of key legislation have been undertaken in the recent past geared at gender equality and protection. These include the sexual offences Act (2006), the passing of the Gender Policy Bill (2007) and a Presidential Decree of 30% Affirmative Action (2011) in terms of formal appointments to public offices. Onsomu (Ibid) further says that the country is also committed to International Conventions such as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the Education for All (EFA) and the Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). Therefore there is need to practically emulate the international world in their bid to implement gender related policies and interventions.

In the Philippines for instance, the government initiative called 'Career Advancement Program for Women in Government Service'-CAPWIGTS, forms part of the government's commitment in addressing the policy of ensuring total access to and full participation in the power structures and decision making, specifically for women in the public sector (Chisholm, 2006). The objectives of CAPWIGTS are to provide equal opportunities, time and support for women's career development, create a gender friendly culture and environment in government and ensure equal representation of women and men in decision making. This initiative in the Philippines provides an example of what happens in several countries in the world. Career advancement among women has various areas of intervention such as policy strengthening and development, mainstreaming, capacity building and advocacy; and development of support mechanisms (Berman Barbara, 1998). Policy strengthening and development clearly entails the review and revision of gender discriminatory policies.

Throughout the world today, efforts have been stepped up in a bid to ensure advancement in the career of women employees so as to empower them and develop their full potential. Jeannette (2009) states that currently, on the international and national levels, women's status seems to have considerably improved. However, it is also apparent that not all areas move at the same pace particularly in societies that enjoy a rich cultural heritage. The challenge today is that traditional societies and religious based communities are not immune to the influence and social changes around them. The same sentiments are echoed by Kram (2007) who asserts that women have historically had the fewest employment opportunities in the area of educational administration. Education for women and greater opportunities for employment and self-sufficiency are affecting many traditional communities.

The government of Kenya in writing the constitution, referred to the international standards therefore subscribing to universal interventions. Republic of Kenya (RoK) (2010) quotes the Equity Bill (2002) which aims at eliminating all forms of social and economic discrimination and promotes equity of access and opportunity for all persons. It also outlaws all forms of sexual harassment in the private and public sectors. This includes the appointment and promotion of all officers including administrators in all secondary schools in Kenya. The constitution further refers to the Affirmative Action Bill (2000) that seeks to improve representation for marginalized groups in society including women and people with disabilities.

Human resource is an essential asset to a country's economic and social development. Therefore there is need to equip male and female workers suited for any position that will contribute to this development. Chege (2007), referring to the National Commission on Gender and Development Act (2002) says that in order for a society to deem itself developed, it needs to establish a commission to ensure gender mainstreaming in National development process. This requires the utilization of all capable human resources both male and female. She also referred to the Public Officers Ethics Bill (2003), which outlaws all forms of sexual harassment in the public sector. She therefore concludes that although most issues that affect women are addressed in the above legal frameworks, only a few legislations have been enacted.

Expressing the same sentiments Rajuili, (2007) in her study on 'barriers to accessing senior positions by women' states that representation of both men and women in decision making process is critical for effective implementation of policies that affect the general population.

This includes participation in Government organs, civil positions and Senior Government positions among others. She further says that on overall, a negligible proportion of women are represented in senior and middle level policy formulation and implementation process despite the substantial number of women in communities. This form of structure contributes to the limited gender sensitivity in policy process including roles and needs of women.

Participation of women in management has been a worldwide concern. Seddoh (2006) says that despite improvements during the last two to three decades, access to upward mobility remains a problem for women in many countries. This is because of the gender gap that has existed in management in relation to opportunities. However, in the recent past there has been an attempt to improve this in society. This has been noted in the access to wide range of jobs including managerial positions. There have even been legislations to prevent unfair discrimination against women at their work place. An example of such legislations is the affirmative action which states that women should be accorded one third of all available posts in Kenya.

According to Women's Learning Partnership (2004), overall women's representation in management and administrative posts is around 33% in developed world, 15% in Africa, and 13% in Asia and the Pacific. This disparity doesn't seem to be justifiable considering that women, in this 21<sup>st</sup> century hold 50% of the professional jobs at the middle and lower levels Gentry (2008). It is this prevailing situation that makes us to note that barriers to women advancement cut across all cultures and civilizations. The same opinion was expressed by Havoline (2006) who in her study of highly successful superintendents, concluded that

females who wish to access power circuits need to be critically bilingual, that is, they need to 'speak the language of those in male circuits of power while remaining feminine.'

Administration has its origin from the concept of leadership right from the family setup. Most African traditions had men at the top of their hierarchy of leadership. A study carried out by the Institute of Economic Affairs (2005/06), reveals that a majority of households in Kenyan societies are headed by men. However the percentage of men headship both at the family level and at the school administration in Western Kenya seems to be the highest at 69.4% compared to that of other areas like the Central region which is at 31.2% at the family level and 47.3% at school administration level. This could be indicative of the leadership perspective in this region which is dominated by men and could be reflected even at places of work.

The trend of women being relegated to positions of lower value has attracted great concern. Kenya Economic Survey (2007), on a related subject states that female workers constitute 30% of the overall wage employment. The report further states that there is low participation of women in productive employment activities in major positions and this can be attributed to factors that curtail women's mobility in economic domain and their conflicting roles mainly domestic and reproductive responsibilities constraining nature of occupations where domestic responsibilities cannot be easily combined with economic activity. The survey further notes that another constraining factor could be limited access to required skills especially during the undertaking of education and training programs.

The position of a school principal demanding as it may be, can be compared to that of a king at the head of his realm. In her research Marianne (2011) on gender and leadership, points out

that the principal pays focus on building and leading a community of learners, staff, and board for whom the key interest is improving a range of student learning outcomes. Effective educational leadership builds the pedagogical, administrative and cultural conditions necessary for successful learning and teaching. Principals do not do this alone. They use their leadership management skills in ways that motivate and develop the capabilities of others so that responsibility for strengthening and sustaining the work and direction of the school is shared. Aspects of educational leadership are specific to the principal's role. These include setting strategic goals intended to enhance teaching and learning, and obtaining and managing the resources needed to achieve those goals. This therefore appears to be the most powerful and prestigious position that is in most cases associated with masculinity. Unfolding beliefs about women aptitudes, skills and dispositions and reproductive responsibilities could also work to hinder women participation in some productive sectors, thus the need to review existing policies on career advancement regardless of gender.

A country should have a Plan that is intended to guide and support its commitment of ensuring women's participation in leadership. Sharyn (2011) noted that the Department of Education in Western Australia developed the Women in Leadership Action Plan (2011-2014). This Plan specifically addresses the under-representation of women employees at senior levels and targets the development of leadership capabilities for female employees of the Department. The Action Plan is a specific commitment within the Department's Equity and Diversity Management Plan (2011-2014). The Plan is intended to guide and support this commitment of ensuring women's participation in leadership.

Educational administration like all the other fields has been affected by this imbalance. Latigo (2009) on the same issue of leadership notes that although in the last two decades there has been a marked increase in teacher employment worldwide and women are climbing higher and higher in the academic ladder, it is still very difficult for them to gain recognition and influence so as to gain power. In addition, Onsomu (2008) notes that research done globally shows concern that there are inequalities in educational management. The report further states that events leading to inequality are either done consciously or unconsciously. He further observes that educational administration both at national and international levels rely on three common trends namely:

- i) Educational leaders are predominantly male.
- ii) At all levels of education in virtually all countries, women leaders and administrators are under-represented.
- iii) The number of women employed declines as the age of students rise.

Women representation in educational administration is necessary for the sake of boosting their morale in the profession especially considering the general large numbers. McKay and Brown (2007) note that teaching as a profession is predominantly a female profession. In their research they noted that within Europe, the percentage of female school teachers ranges from 80% in the UK to just fewer than 50% in Germany. Women occupy just over 40% of administrative positions in primary schools. They further noted that at secondary school level, women constitute about half of the teaching force except in Netherlands where they form 27% of total number of teachers; but again are substantially under-represented as administrators or head teachers level. The number of principals is so minimal that it ranges from 4% in Netherlands to 43.5% in Greece. It has also been established that women teachers have fewer

chances of promotions than their male counterparts and are particularly non-existent in top academic administrative positions. This is according to research done in Britain and the USA (Berman, 1998).

In Kenya there are no obvious discrimination laws as far as promotion is concerned. However, gender inequalities have been noted. UNESCO (2004), records that the number of female administrators has improved. The total number of public secondary school teachers increased by 11.8% from 43,016 in 2008 to 48,087 in 2009. Therefore in 2009 the total number of male teachers was 29,901 (62.2%) as compared to 18, 186 (37.8%) female teachers. The increase is attributed to the teachers' recruitment in 2008 and reported on duty at the beginning of 2009. (Economic Survey, 2010).

Though the percentage of female trained teachers has been on the increase compared to that of males, the most coveted administrative posts of head teacher, deputy head teacher, senior teacher, and that of H.O.D's are occupied by male teachers. The male form 76.4% of the administrators especially in boys' schools and in most mixed secondary schools, except in special circumstances where a school may be purely for girls (Onsomu, 2008). The study therefore attempted to find out, from the respondents the barriers of upward mobility in secondary school administration in Bungoma West District in Bungoma County.

**1.2 Statement of the Problem**

From the foregoing discussion, there is an imbalance in representation of female Administrators worldwide. The obvious imbalance in representation of female educational administrators just as it is in other fields in the corporate world is a great disadvantage to the female teachers. Despite the fact that the number of female teachers is on the increase and

they too have the professional and academic qualification, there still remains an under representation at the top ladder.

Rajuli (2007) states that women teachers' careers have tended to be couched in terms of a pre-occupation with motherhood accompanied by a low level of professional commitment. She further states that men, in contrast, have been thought to represent the professional norm, strongly motivated in their careers, understood in terms of a clear promotion orientation and underpinned by an attribute role of bread winners. One wonders what happens to the women folk and what criterion is employed so as to result into such disparity. The situation further poses questions such as supposing the situation was reversed, what impact would it have on school administration as a whole?

The TSC data bank (2011) revealed that the total number of male administrators which stood at 3,223(73.2%) outnumbered by far that of the female administrators which was at 1,181(26.8%) in all public secondary schools countrywide. The scenario then suggested that there was a rationale of finding administrative and socio- cultural impediments or any other that needed to be investigated. This study therefore intended to find out factors affecting career advancement of women teachers in public secondary schools in the Bungoma West district, Bungoma County.

### **1.3 Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study was to identify the barriers that hinder upward mobility of female teachers in public secondary schools to educational administrative positions; a case of the Bungoma West district in Bungoma County, Western province. It also sought to identify what

promotion procedures that are used that end up discriminating against women thus affecting their career advancement in Bungoma County.

#### **1.4 Objectives of the Study**

The study focused on the following objectives.

- i. To establish the factors that influence female teachers' career advancement in Bungoma West, Bungoma County.
- ii. To establish the extent to which social/cultural factors influence career advancement among female teachers in Bungoma West, Bungoma County.
- iii. To investigate whether gender issues and stereotypes are limitations to career progression of women in Bungoma West, Bungoma County.
- iv. To determine possible solutions to barriers facing upward mobility of women teachers in Bungoma West, Bungoma County.

#### **1.5 Research Questions**

Based on the objectives the study attended to the following research questions;

- i. What are the factors that influence teachers' career advancement in Bungoma West, Bungoma County?
- ii. To what extent do social/cultural factors influence career advancement among teachers in Bungoma West, Bungoma County?
- iii. How far do gender issues and stereotypes limit career progression of women in Bungoma West, Bungoma County?
- iv. What are the possible solutions to barriers facing upward mobility of women teachers in Bungoma West, Bungoma County?

## **1.6 Significance of the Study**

The findings obtained in this study could be used as a yard stick for improving administrative procedures to give all deserving teachers a chance in career advancement in schools in Kenya. It is also hoped that the findings of the study will provide ways and means of improving teachers' perceptions of career advancement not only in the sampled schools but in all educational institutions country wide. In so doing, the study would contribute in bridging the gap that exists between non-discriminatory theory and practice. This means the desire on the part of policy makers to uphold principles of fairness and traditions as well as practices that negate equality would be put into consideration. The findings from this research could also contribute greatly to educational administration. Existing head teachers shed light on procedures that were employed to get them to occupy the positions. The study has potential utility to young women aspiring to be administrators as well as sensitize the female teachers on what they can do in order to increase their representation at the top level. It will also act as a guide to policy makers and implementers both at the TSC and the Ministry of Education, as it will point out the distribution of administrative positions between men and women in Bungoma West district and in general, in Kenya's public secondary schools.

## **1.7. Limitations of the Study**

The study dealt with selected public schools in Bungoma West district, Bungoma County. This was due to limited time. The researcher therefore intended to start early enough and make use of every available time during the study. It is also worth mentioning that studying the entire Bungoma County would have generated more conclusive results but due to financial constraints and other logistics arising from the vastness of the region, a limited area was used for the study. While the findings of this study may be of great importance to education, they

cannot be generalized to cover issues of career upward mobility in other areas. In order to come up with a more conclusive result, a wider area and a larger sample in other settings needs to be studied. However, it was noted that principals were not in a position to give the study the due attention considering their other responsibilities. This required patience on the part of the researcher who had to adjust her own programme so as to fit in their schedule. Teachers were not willing to provide honest information that seemed to be questioning their career prospects. Their unwillingness to participate in the study was one of the limitations of the study; a limitation that the researcher intended to overcome by assuring the male and female respondents of total confidentiality plus highlighting the significance of the study.

### **1.8 Delimitations of the Study**

The study was confined to female respondents to a larger extent and a percentage of male respondents among them principals, deputy principals and Heads of departments of secondary schools teachers and some Education officers. Thus the results could only be generalized to the rest of the country with caution. The study was also carried out in public schools only. Private schools were left out because they have different management procedures. It is possible that there could be several other factors but this study only focused on the social/cultural, personal administrative and political barriers to upward mobility of career women in educational administration.

### **1.9 Basic Assumptions of the Study**

The study assumed that,

- i) The respondents were confident to give honest responses.
- ii) All respondents would co-operate and provide reliable answers.

- iii) Principals of selected schools would cooperate with the researcher.
- iv) Criteria for promotion were the same for both genders.

### **1.10 Theoretical Framework**

The theoretical framework in this study was guided by two theories due to the nature of study. First, the radical feminist theory that focuses on the marginalization of women in education and also how to challenge gender stereotypes was used. Acker (1994) points out that feminist theoretical frameworks address, above all, the question of women's subordination to men; how it arose, how and why it is perpetuated, how it might be changed and (sometimes) what life would be like without it.

Since the 1980s writings by radical feminists have placed the concerns and the marginalization of women high on the social agenda. Orodho (2005) noted that this theory asserts that it is patriarchy that oppresses women, and that their subordination stems from the social, economic and political dominance of men in society. Therefore radical feminists believe that the legal and political hindrances should be abolished in order to achieve equity. Until then, the marginalization of women will be an enduring feature of society. However, it is worth noting that the theory has one distinct weakness which tends to make no distinction between various forms of male power or between different classes and types of men.

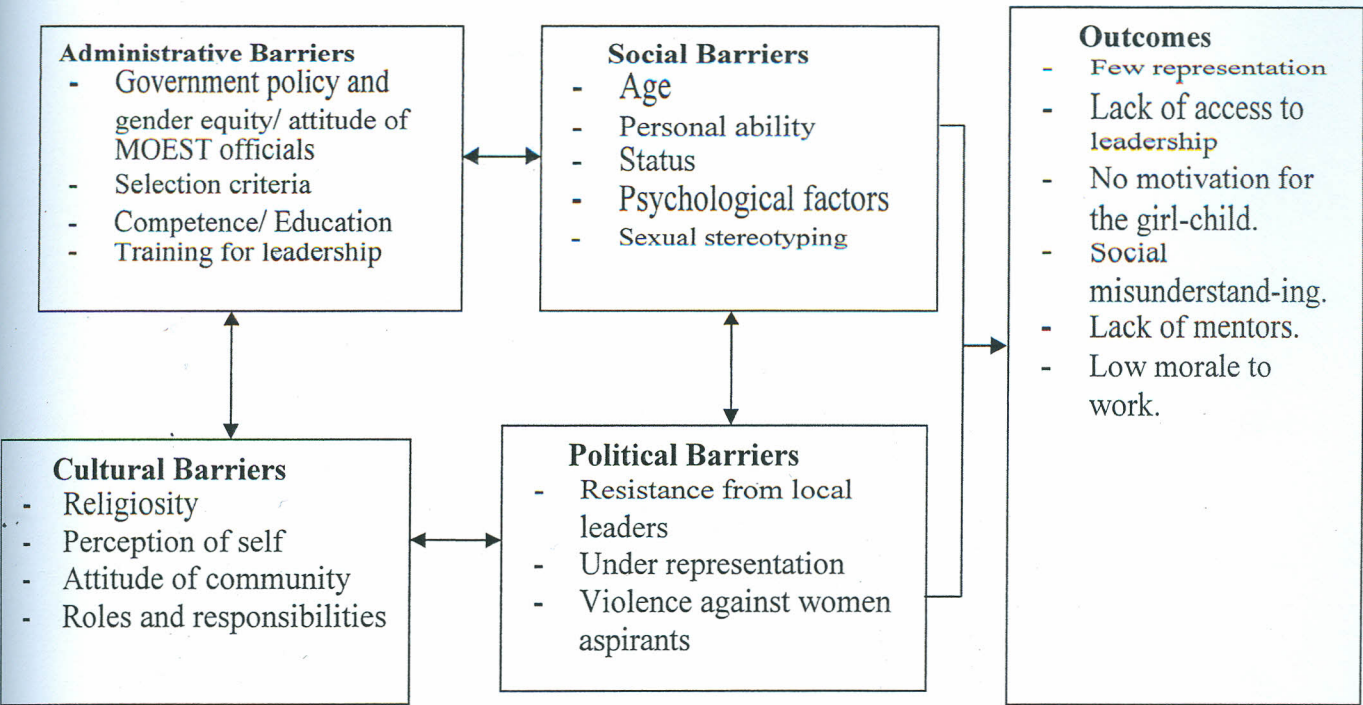
Another theory that applied to this study is the Ruth Pearsons' Framework (1992) on Gender Relations. This theory views all activities that are carried out to be based on social roles and interactions of men and women. This is an assumption of gender roles as dictated by society which views the notion of gender roles and activities as having a strong ideological content and that policy often reflects normative or prescribed versions of female and male roles rather

than activities as they are actually practiced (Orodho 2008). The same sentiments were echoed by Pearson (1992) who stated that the society seems to have ultimate authority on the precise nature of what women and men actually do, and their real contribution to production and reproduction which turns out to be biased against women. The theory argues that because of these biases, the performance of women and men is affected in nearly all spheres of life. This therefore sheds light on the marginalization of women on social, cultural and economic activities. The theory was appropriate for the study because productive work involves the production of goods and services for consumption and their social differences.

### **1.11 Conceptual Framework**

According to Orodho (2005) a conceptual model serves the purpose of helping readers to quickly spot the relationships of variables in the proposed study. This is the interaction between the independent and the dependent variables. They include both internal and the external barriers as portrayed in the model as shown in figure 1.1

**Figure 1:1 Conceptual Framework on Females Access to Leadership positions**



**Source: Adopted and modified from path-goal theory, Okumbe 1998, pg 95.**

Administrative, Cultural, social and political barriers were the independent variables. The interplay as seen in the model are what led to low participation of female teachers in administration, keeping them at the same low grades for many years. Other hindrances that were institutional included discriminatory policies which contributed to low percentages of women at the top levels. As shown above, the number of women at the top is only likely to improve if factors such as government policies favoring women are implemented. Women are unable to access positions of leadership due to their own attitude and that of society as a whole. Social and cultural barriers such as sexual stereotyping, domestic roles and family responsibilities lead to lack of women mentors other women in the teaching profession. The fact that there are political obstacles, there will be a disparity in decision making and policy

implementation. The model therefore shows that in order to ascend to administrative positions; women will have to devise strategies of overcoming the hindrances.

## 1.12 Definition of Significant terms

**Administration:** Refers to the range of activities connected with organizing and supervising the way an institution functions.

**Administrative Areas:** Refers to the Areas of duty allocation and supervision of staff and students that guide the principals/ head teachers in carrying out their responsibilities.

**Administrative Task:** Refers to the activities that the principals carry out for the smooth running of the schools.

**Barrier:** Refers to the Obstacles to the upward mobility of females to administrative positions.

**Career mobility:** Refers to occupational career progression which takes either an upward or horizontal trend

**Career path:** Refers to course that a person moves and steps that one takes to move up in an occupation through promotion.

**Discipline:** Refers to the enforcement of school rules that facilitate learning and minimizes disruptions.

**Gender bias:** Refers to discrimination based on stereotyped roles of male and female.

**Gender:** Refers to the cultural socialization of sex roles.

**Gender Violence:** Refers to behaviour, acts, threats or outbreaks by use words or physical force intended to hurt or cause physical, emotional and psychological harm on female teachers and administrators.

**Head teacher's Behavior:** Refers to head teachers' personal attributes, while interacting with the environment which influences the manner in which they carry themselves within the school.

**Management:** Is used interchangeably with the word administration. Also refers to the process of planning, organizing, directing, co-coordinating and controlling the activities of an organization to achieve its set goals.

**Policy makers:** Refers to People charged with the responsibility of making decisions that guide and effect educational matters.

**Principal:** Refers to a TSC appointee who has the overall administrative responsibility over a secondary school in Kenya.

**Public Schools:** Refers to government schools, developed and maintained by public funds.

**Sex:** This is the state of being male or female.

**Women administrators:** Refers to women holding the topmost positions of responsibility in the public secondary schools.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.0 Introduction

This chapter contains a review of literature directly related to the study. The literature review focuses on what researchers, scholars and educationists have found and said about the importance of equity and women upward mobility in secondary schools. Literature review was reviewed under the following headings:-

- i) Under-representation of women in leadership.
- ii) Academic Qualifications for Head Teachers.
- iii) Leadership and Women in Organizations.
- iv) Women's Socio-Economic Status in Kenya.
- v) Gender Inequality in Leadership.
- vi) Comparative Issues on Women Leadership.

#### 2.1 Under-representation of Women in Leadership

The need for women in leadership positions in schools in developing countries is important to ensure sensitivity within schools for the well-being of adolescent girls, to provide girls with career choices with role models in women who are decision makers and leaders and to address issues of social justice by providing gender equity between adults within the educational profession (Sperandio and Kagoda, 2010). Women must be present in leadership positions in education systems worldwide to provide a gender perspective on educational change and development, and to ensure social justice through gender equity at leadership and the decision making levels (Chisholm, 2006).

According to Brown and Ralf (2006), the fourth World Conference on women (1995) called for governments worldwide to create a gender sensitive education system in order to ensure full and equal participation of women in educational administration and Policy decision making (*Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BDPA) Article 82*). The BDPA mission statement asserts that equality between women and men is not only a matter of human rights and a condition for social justice, but also a condition for “people centered sustainable development”. (Celestin, 2000) notes that the presence of women in leadership roles at the secondary school level and above contributes to sensitivity within schools for the well-being of adolescent girls and provides girls who are beginning to consider career choices, with role models of women who are in positions of decision making and leadership. It is also imperative that women be actively involved in leading educational change given the vital role that education system of a country plays in both national development of a gender equal society. For women to be active participants in the change and development process they must be present and provided with the necessary skills and understanding needed to participate effectively in educational leadership and policy making at both school and national level (Kagoda, 2008).

Women remain under-developed in educational leadership in most developing countries, of which Kenya in East Africa is one of them. But Kenya, in common with majority of other developing countries, still struggles to meet the 30% representation of women in leadership roles in educational and other areas that the Beijing Platform of 1995 considered critical for women to have an impact on decision making (Latigo, 2009).

According to RoK (2008), opportunities of women in many sectors of Kenyan economy have been improved by the provision of educational opportunities for girls and the acceptance of women's rights in the work place, but female representation in the economy is still very low. While the situation has improved since 1988 when only 3% of government employees were women the number of those holding senior positions is still minimal. (Gentry, 2007) noted that men have for decades dominated the administrative and professional jobs while few women who managed to secure employment mainly took on low level jobs such as clerks, secretaries and tea girls in the non teaching staff and as teachers, women only rise to the level of a senior teacher in mixed public secondary schools.

A study of women in educational leadership positions in education undertaken by (Brown and Ralph (2006) indicate that women were making little progress in achieving equity with men in attaining leadership positions in educational administration and policy making. The study suggested that women are hindered by both internal and external barriers which keep them from advancing to leadership. Internal barriers included the effects of socialization and sex stereotyping. External barriers were derived from the structure of the education system that locked women into low-power, low visibility, dead-end jobs, and limited their performance and opportunities as a result. In Kenya, they further argued that women educational administrators' advancement was further impeded by the cultural imperatives of male dominance and suppression. A study of choices for career development made by female teachers in Kenya (Brown and Irby, (2007) notes that there are many barriers women must overcome before assuming leadership roles in the school educational administrative system.

Sabogu, (2008) in his work; A Survey of the Factors Affecting Women Participation in Management, stated that although Africa has witnessed an increase in teacher employment to ensure adequate staffing, the number of women at administrative and managerial levels has only increased at the primary school level. He further notes that in Europe, the number of female teachers has generally increased as women's participation in activities outside the home worldwide. However, although women are climbing higher and higher the academic ladder, it is still difficult for them to gain a foothold in those positions which bestow recognition and influence.

The above discussions therefore meant that women were hindered from ascending to administration positions and the researcher intended to establish how previous studies related with the locale chosen. While most of the studies were carried out in urban areas, this study examines rural Kenya to see among other factors, the effect of customs and traditions in a majorly homogenous society.

## **2.2 Academic Qualifications for Positions of Leadership.**

Leadership of secondary schools in Kenya suffers from a more pronounced under-representation of women. Statistical evidence generated by the Ministry of Education in 2008 indicated that the Head teachers and Deputy Head teachers of secondary schools in Kenya are women occupying only 20% in leadership positions of government schools, and 10% of leadership in private schools (RoK, 2010).

In government secondary schools, leadership roles have traditionally been filled by teachers progressing up through the ranks of posts of responsibility, such as Departmental Heads for a particular academic subject area. Interviews are done by government agents at District

headquarters and posted to Teachers Service Commission for Appraisal. Private schools are free to hire at will and unlike government schools applicants don't have the benefit of security of tenure. (RoK, 2008).

Women seeking positions of leadership in the secondary schools must have training for, and experience in teaching. Currently, minimum requirement for a deputy head teacher in secondary schools include a university degree or qualification in education at the diploma level from a recognized university or training institutions. In addition six years of teaching experience are required, of which two must have been in a position of responsibility in a secondary school (Mckay, and Brown, 2006).

It requires that the head teacher's actions influence the effectiveness of the educational programmes offered by the school. His/her education, training experience and personality influence his/her behavior, knowledge and skills in educational leadership and the art of organizational management. Academic background has an influence on leadership behavior, in that, graduate secondary school heads were rated higher than their non- graduates counterparts. The government ensures that those appointed as head teachers have appropriate academic qualifications, experience, ability, competence, integrity, and initiative. (Onsomu, 2008).

Latigo (2009) notes that Educational qualifications and training of women is a part of the solution towards increasing work opportunities and placement in administration. Persons who seek to rise in an organization must seek development and training opportunities. Women who fail to seek such opportunities contribute to stagnation of their career mobility. Mulkeen (2007) asserts that the reason for poor female representation in management is simply because

for close to two decades, they generally have had lower academic qualifications than that of men. This means that when promotions are done on merit, more men are qualified as compared to women. The issue of low qualifications which had kept women away from management positions still hinders them from taking up leadership positions.

Although the above discussions portray men as more qualified academically than women, this study sought to establish how the situation in Bungoma West County could relate to these findings. This is in view of Mikkola (2006) who noted that both women and men went to the same schools, were taught by the same teachers and went to the same colleges or universities. Therefore this study compares the academic level of the women with that of their counterparts to establish whether this could have been a barrier to career development of women in Bungoma West, Bungoma County.

### **2.3 Leadership in Organizations**

Often one asked question is: do women and men exercise leadership differently? Some say yes, men make better leaders because they are more willing to take risks, more assertive and more confident. Hence, women should act more like men. Others say yes, women and men exercise leadership differently, but offer different reasoning. Women make better leaders, they argue, because they are more relationship-oriented and more care-focused. Men should act more like women (Fly, 2008). Still others argue that there is no gender difference in leadership styles; and that is the problem: women act too much like men which are against the natural norms in different societies.

Models of career progression reflect the male pattern of continuous employment and high workload. Management attributes traditionally associated with men such as authoritative,

decisive, controlling and emotional balance are often more respected by potential employees in management than the more decentralized approach to leadership which involves the manager as a facilitator of a shared vision and shared decision making. Kariuki (1998), in her study on Teachers' Perception of the Leadership Behaviour of Women Head teachers of Secondary Schools in Kiambu District, noted that women head teachers leadership behavior does not seem to measure up to the expectations of their teachers.

Maureen (2009) argues that rather than analyzing women leaders relative to men's, it is suggested that an organization uses women's experience as an opportunity to learn about itself. More so when a group has trouble entering an organization or moving through its ranks, that organization has an opportunity to learn something about unexamined assumptions that may well be inhibiting more than just the advancement of a particular group. Kram and McCollon (2007) agree that this discrimination sends trouble signals of something "toxic" in the organization environment more generally that is affecting everyone and the system is not operating optimally. The change in work practices can change the way gender manifests in the organization.

What then does gender have to do with leadership? Fletcher (2007) observes that it is widely agreed leadership is fundamentally about adoptive learning which requires change in values, in beliefs, and in behavior. Issues that arise about gender, about race, about any group of people who are somehow not "fitting in" present an important opportunity to exercise a crucial organizational capacity to stop, reflect and learn something about how the organization can be truly transformed. Holvino (2006) confirms that it is pointless to ask whether women and men lead in the same way or differently. Instead we must use women's experiences in

organizations to interpret why things work the way they do in an organization. In other words as not “what differences does gender make” but rather “How can gender make a difference?”

According to Rapoport and Bailyn (2008) women remain scarce in highest technical positions and two conventional explanations of this problems are; one, women are working their way through the pipeline, and people have to wait, for a long time; two to coach women on career issues such as getting on to the best projects with the most visibility, networking, and even fitting into the culture by dressing and talking like “credible geeks” is insufficient. They remain in leadership probation “hangover” for so long while forgetting that “doing good work” leads to promotion in an organization.

In relation to negotiation and gender in leadership Kolb (2009) points out that if men and women negotiate differently, it is not good for women. Women do not ask because they fear conflict, they might scare the boys, they compare themselves to other women, or they do not think they are worth much. Holvino (2006) adds that meta-analyses have shown a significant likelihood that women will be more cooperative and may not do as well when money is being negotiated. But the real problem is the way questions are posed and moreover that the questions send us looking for gender difference in the first place which shows that either women are same as men, or they are different. This focuses women’s deficiencies as “inspirational collapse”. “Fixing the woman” is left up to individual woman. Therefore systematic problems and learning opportunities in the organization are overlooked.

With globalization, the perspectives of women in the different locations and with different interests and context come to the fore. Indeed, some argue that in the global world, female labour power is the most important “natural source”. For example in export, factories women

make up 70-90% of the total workforce (Fletcher (2007). The situation of women in today's world cannot be understood without paying attention to globalization. Looking at gender practices in global context there are two biases, that women in 'developing' countries do not face the same career challenges that their "western" counterparts do and secondly learning flows in one direction, from "developed" to "developing" countries (Kram and McCollon, 2008).

In view of these factors, women have continually battled with this barrier to upward mobility in all spheres of development. This study therefore sought the reasons that have led to this situation in Bungoma west so as to establish whether women are incapable of taking up leadership roles in public secondary schools or there other factors at play that have relegated women to second place.

#### **2.4 Women's Socio-economic Status in Kenya**

Various national, regional and international conventions documentation have emphasized that enabling the population, regardless of gender to actively participate in social and economic well-being is critical for long term sustainable social, political and economic development of any society UNESCO (2010). In Kenya gender equity has taken center stage resulting in the development and enactment of various legal and policy interventions including enactment of National Commission on Gender and Development Act in 2003 and subsequent establishment of the National Commission on Gender and Development in the same year; introduction of gender desks in various sectors; the introduction of the women's enterprise fund; the passing of National Policy on Gender and Development 2006 and the 30% presidential decree on affirmative action in public appointments, among others. Although, females constitute 52% of

the population in Kenya, gender disparities are still persistent in most sectors. Most surveys show that there is low female representation in every sector (Onsomu, 2008).

RoK (2008), notes that gender equality is important for both intrinsic and instrumental reasons. It affects social harmony and society's well being in various dimensions. It involves policy dimensions in all areas including education, poverty, labour, financial markets, political and economic empowerment, institutions and overall economic development. Gender equality enhances prospects of achieving both international and national commitments such as Millennium Development Goals (MDG), Education of All forms of Education Discrimination against Women (EDAW).

Matasyoh (2006), in her study points out that social and cultural training demand that administration is a man's job. She further states that this is the reason why many females have succumbed to such norms such that they do not apply for promotions when the vacancies are advertised even if they are academically qualified. This therefore becomes one of the major factors that hinder upward mobility of women teachers to educational administration.

Mikkola (2006) confirms that Vision 2030, 2003-2009 Economic Recovery and Employment Creation Strategy, poverty reduction and sustainable development are directly linked to social development. The country's commitment to addressing gender equity and inequalities can be traced in both international and national policy commitments. The third and fifth Millennium Development Goals (MDG) underscore the need for gender parity especially in education and access to social, economic and political opportunities, by 2015. As a result the country has put in place various policies and interventions including legislations, female specific policies, plans and programmes aimed at addressing specific gender gaps or forms of discrimination.

Latigo (2009), on the other hand argues that most of the policy interventions targeting elimination of gender gaps are however not consistently documented and they are not informed by data or statistics. Moreover, the status of female population with respect to distributions of opportunities in various economic, social and political dimensions is scantily documented. In view of this, this study looks at the effect that government policies may have on career advancement particularly in Bungoma West of Bungoma County.

## **2.5 Gender Inequality in Leadership**

Gender refers to how a person views himself or herself in terms of being masculine, feminine or androgynous (Kram, 2007). He also states that many people equate the word gender with women, but promoting gender equality ought to be a responsibility of both men and women. Latigo (2007), on the other hand points out that gender is a social construction of ideas, events and issues, responsibilities and assignments of the society to either male or female.

Muteti, (2008) observed that throughout history, many have come to believe that positions of leading or in this case, administration, is a traditionally masculine activity. However, it is important that people be perceived as individuals when it comes to matters of administration not as different genders. Various theories have been used to contextualize the gender inequality aspect. This ranges from socialization theory to hierarchical gender prescriptions. (Klasen, 2009) identified three distinct theoretical traditions that help understand sex and gender:-

### **2.5.1 Gender- selves**

The first difference focuses on gender-selves, that is, whether sex differences are due to biological or socialization. This focus is on the individual level of analysis encompassing

social identities in which case men mature to be competitive and work oriented while women mature to become nurturing, person oriented and child centered. In terms of gender, the socialization theory suggests that children are taught to behave in a certain way according to their sex. Boys are taught to be masculine and girls to be feminine. For example, parents will often buy boys trunks or army toys and for girls, they will buy dolls and playhouse sort-of-toys.

Wavinya (2006) in her study noted that as a result of girls being socialized within the family they had been accustomed to taking the number two position. The study further stated that 66% of the girls had indicated that women with children should discontinue work, while 41% believed that social work or classroom teaching were the best careers for women. The responses of these girls clearly indicated that even some of the women themselves did not aspire for senior positions at work.

Onyango (2003) notes that women always perceive themselves as inferior to men and for them to succeed, they usually wait for consent and support of others; especially men. However, this study has proved that women are qualified for the senior most positions and it is up to them to take up the challenge more aggressively.

### **2.5.2 Social Structure**

The second tradition focuses on how social structure creates gender behavior. This approach argues that men and women behave differently because they fill different positions in institutional settings, work organizations and families, that is, they take on different gendered roles, a characteristic that is cultivated right from childhood.

Rajuili (2007) noted that as children, boys are taught to be aggressive, assertive, independent, rational and task oriented while girls are taught to be modest, submissive, affectionate, nurturing, people oriented and emotionally expressive. This kind of upbringing is what results in both extrinsic and intrinsic barriers that make it difficult for women to advance. Kariuki (2007) on the same topic stated that women who succeed in traditionally male dominated fields are judged as either unfeminine or incompetent and feminine.

### **2.5.3 Theoretical Underpinning**

Third, theoretical underpinning is the interaction perspective, which emphasizes contextual issues such as cultural expectations and taken-for-granted situational meaning. This concept implies that an individual is expected to create differences that are neither inevitable nor essential. This gender differences can therefore be interpreted to mean legitimization of inequality, as what is female in a patriarchal system is devolved. This argument finds support in similar studies in which case there is often less than efficient investment of girls because the returns are to accrue to another family, after marriage (Dollar and Gatti, 2009).

Thus gender inequality, considered as hierarchical view of gender relations, with men above women, and women regarded as inferior and less valuable by virtue of their sex, is growth retarding (Mikkola, 2006). The argument is that gender equality expressed in an equal valuing and provision of opportunities for both genders enhances development in all spheres. Mikkola further argues that Gender hierarchy shows that in a family, inheritance laws and customs, valuations of women's work as opposed to men's work, and the power to make decisions in society, family, church and social networks was controlled by men. It shows the opportunities available for development, education, health and nutrition. It shows in violence and in general

invisibility of the women's work. The hierarchy is generally acceptable by both genders, and is not normally questioned. It is general enough to apply across nations, cultures and time periods with underlying presumption that changes in the status of women will become apparent in development only over a longer time period.

Men and women tend to have different socio-economic profiles within an economy in terms of the positions they occupy, the activities they engage in and their overall economic status. In this regard, economic, growth and development will not obviously benefit men and women equally. In this context, gender inequality acts as constraint to growth and poverty reduction as evidenced by emerging macro-economic analysis on Africa (Latigo, 2009). This inequality is especially in access to a wide range of economic, human and social capital assets that comprises key poverty dimensions in Africa. Consequently, once society at large and women in particular appreciate that culture is dynamic, the myths of cultural determinism should be set aside. That would lead to the liberation of women to play their rightful role in education alongside male colleagues. This cultural orientation of sexes has a great bearing on career progression in most African rural folks. This therefore implies that there are very few women who occupy administration positions, a factor that this study sought to establish.

The above explicitly discussed gender inequalities in leadership. It is clear that they all agree that there is need for adopting a strategy for redressing gender imbalances in secondary school administration. However, they did not examine the changing times and the fact that both men and women have had to take on other roles and responsibilities on a more less equal basis in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century; an issue that this study sought to examine.

## 2.6 The Power of Politics

The political climate of an area in most cases determines the trend of many other factors affecting the people. Muteti (2008) quoting Pinto, says that women representation in Kenya is still not adequate. She further states that few women have made it so there is no adequate voicing of the plight of women in the August House. Unequal power relations between men and women are responsible for the lack of equity in management positions among educators. A research carried out by Infotrak Research and Consulting Company on gender representation showed that Kenyan women felt unfairly treated by the society. It shows that over 50% of women interviewed felt that they were not fully satisfied with the way both the government and the civil society have been addressing gender issues. It also states that most workplaces still lack gender inclusive culture and that women are treated less favorably by men in many ways (Daily Nation, 2008 March 8).

Mwaniki, (2002) in his study on 'Obstacles to Women Participation in the Management of Secondary Schools in Nakuru District' indicates that at the school level some women principals have had to contend with male civic and parliamentary representatives who are opposed to their being school administrators. He further says that some of them have even been ejected from their positions for not having the blessings of the political leaders. Since the political climate of an area seems to dictate the direction that everything else takes, it poses a problem to the upward mobility of women teachers to administrative positions.

Rajuli (2007) noted that there is a direct link between upward mobility and a willingness to conform to the views of those in power. She further says that due to political oppression some

women have had to resign their posts opting to work in an environment that is less combative and where they do not have to feel that they are always swimming against the tide.

While the other studies could have concentrated on the male political leaders, this study looks at a less conservative period where women representation at parliamentary and civic level is possible. The study therefore sought to find out if there were any women politicians and what their contribution was towards empowering the women in public secondary schools in Bungoma West, Bungoma County.

## **2.7 Other Related Issues in Women Leadership**

Other than the selected themes that have been discussed, there were other factors that could have contributed to the prevailing situation of underrepresentation of women at the administrative level. These too were discussed as were presented by other scholars.

### **2.7.1 Women and Management in Higher Education**

Seddoh, (2006) notes that despite improvements during the last two decades, access to higher education remains a problem for women in many countries. He further states that while women have fairly equal access to higher education in the more developed regions where they comprise 52% of tertiary students, the share of tertiary education in the less developed regions ranges from 33% in China to 49% in Latin America and the Caribbean (Seddoh, 2006). In the least developed countries, only 27% women reach the tertiary level. Poor access to higher education is accompanied by under-representation of women in science and Technology and a clustering of women in traditional female studies of arts, humanities, languages, education, nursing and medicine. In many countries, women's enrollment also decreases as they move up in the higher education system (Chliwniak, 2009).

Chesterman, (2007) affirms that in the area of higher education, both in teaching and management, women are still a long way from participating on the same footing as men. Women have made some progress in achieving parity in teaching but are grossly under-represented in higher education management. A Commonwealth survey (2009) reveals that the Commonwealth average is 24%. It is noted that the proportion of women decreases significantly as women move up the academic and occupational ladder. The pattern that emerges suggests that women are being appointed at the lecturer level but either get stuck at this level or drop out of the academic life, unable to combine family and academic commitments. This means that they are unable to ascend to the top leading to having just a handful of women administrators.

It is clear that while other studies have been carried out on this subject, their main focus was on the small percentages of women at the top of the ladder. They did not consider the reasons that have led to this scenario particularly at secondary school level in Bungoma County. This study sought to establish how these relate to the situation at public secondary school administration level, more so in Bungoma West, Bungoma County.

### **2.7.2 Leadership Perception among Women**

Senior executives' perceptions of men and women are more informed by gender-based stereotypes than facts, leading to misrepresentation of the true talents of women and contributing to the startling gender gap in leadership (Gentry, 2008). He adds that the issue of institutions giving dominance to men is what has led to school administration often being defined in masculine terms. The achievements of women leaders also need to be showcased, particularly those in traditionally male dominated fields.

That view is based on the observation that affirmative action strategies are difficult to monitor. While they satisfy women's personal aspirations, they may not bring about institutional and attitudinal changes. According to him, the net effect is that these strategies trigger a male backlash where the males in power resist and even curtail affirmative action interventions. A couple of years ago, the phenomenon of the "hidden brain drain" raised the issue of talented women leaving the workplace because of the rigidity of the traditional career paths (Chege, 2007). In other words, the rare impossibility of being an administrator while having so many other distractions of family life.

On the other hand there is the category of women who have excelled and want to remain at the top. A research by Naomi Ellemers, found out that women bosses were tougher on their underlings than their male counterparts. She described the female bosses' behaviour as a "queen bee syndrome" because bee colonies usually have one reproductive queen per hive. The rest of the female bees are infertile and serve the queen bee. She also noted that some women bosses tended to marginalize other women. According to social psychology experts, female bosses displayed masculine traits to fight their way to the top and once they had reached the queenly position, they protected it from other females (Ellemers, N. 2004, October, 3 Sunday Times, South Africa).

A related study found out that older women bosses were more likely to give female underlings a hard time, presumably because when they started working, it was rare for women to be in charge (Rajuili, 2007). Havoline (2006) concurred with Rajuili in saying that these findings showed potential female managers face a double hurdle in attaining senior positions in education. They have to contend with male prejudice on the one hand and rejection by their

own sisters on the other hand. This being the case in most African rural setups, the study will want to establish whether this too is one of the barriers of upward mobility of female teachers to administration in Bungoma West, Bungoma County.

### 2.7.3 The Demography of Women in Kenya

The number of public secondary school teachers by qualification and sex between 2005 and 2009 is shown in table 2.1. The total number of public secondary school teacher increased by 11.8% from 43,016 in 2008 to 48,087 in 2009. The increase is attributed to the teachers' recruitment in 2008 and reported on duty at the beginning of 2009. In 2009 the total number of male teachers was 29,901 as compared to 18,186 female teachers (Economic Survey, 2010).

**Table 2.1: Number of Public Secondary School Teachers by Qualifications and Sex, 2006-2010.**

	2006		2007		2008		2009		2010	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
<b>TRAINED</b>										
Graduate	19,734	10,629	21,565	11,934	22,431	12,572	22,131	12,502	24,009	15,501
Approved	8,415	4,425	5,225	2,747	5,435	2,894	5,135	2,397	5,329	2,397
S1/Dip	1,541	1,035	101	68	105	72	85	65	95	74
Technical	449	208	371	172	386	181	365	187	361	192
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>30,139</b>	<b>16,297</b>	<b>27,262</b>	<b>14,921</b>	<b>28,357</b>	<b>15,719</b>	<b>27,716</b>	<b>15,151</b>	<b>29,794</b>	<b>18,164</b>
<b>UNTRAINED</b>										
Graduate	606	85	133	19	138	20	87	15	76	11
Dip/Tech	212	96	47	21	49	22	35	12	31	11
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>818</b>	<b>181</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>30,957</b>	<b>16,478</b>	<b>27,442</b>	<b>14,961</b>	<b>28,544</b>	<b>15,761</b>	<b>27,838</b>	<b>15,178</b>	<b>29,901</b>	<b>18,186</b>

Source: Economic, Survey 2010.

According to Kenyan population, females are 52% while males are 48%. However, there are disparities across age groups. For instance, there are more females in age groups 25-29years (1:11) ratio to men, 35-39years (1:19) ratio to men and 60-64 years (1:14) ratio to men. The relatively high dependence ratio creates a lot of pressure on social and economic development and more particularly on women who to a large extent have to provide basic needs for their families (RoK, 2009).

A survey of women in the work force in Kenya undertaken in 2007 indicated that 13.5% of women of working age were in the professions (which included teaching and government services) 6.4% in business, 3.2% in clerical positions, 1.9% in technical occupations, while 75% were classified as housewives (Ministry of Gender and Community Development, 2008).

The minister for Education noted in a ministerial seminar on education that the government of Kenya was still committed to creating an enabling environment for full participation of women in leadership and other areas of development (2005). However, staff lists for the Ministry of Education issued in 2005 indicated that while the ministry at that time was headed by an assistant education minister who was a woman, men still dominated the higher levels of management and leadership. Women held less than 30% of the positions at each level of the ministry, but their total representation was 24 out of 98 positions at the level of Senior Education Officer and above. Majority were represented in the lower paid positions which included secretaries, office attendants, data entry clerks and drivers. The number was rated high, with 53 out of 96 positions held by women (MoE, 2006). This implies a low number at the higher ranks and women dominating the lower levels. This is reflective of the situation at secondary school administration where most of the top positions are held by men.

Although the above survey was carried out in the Ministry of Education, this study looks at the teaching fraternity at secondary school level to find out if this factor has contributed as a barrier to upward mobility of women teachers to administration positions in Bungoma West, Bungoma County.

### **Summary**

The Kenyan woman has sufficiently asserted that she is equal to the challenge of getting what she wants based on meritocracy. She should therefore banish the antiquated notion that she can only rise to positions of power through invitation. Article 27 (8) of the Bills of Rights says that everyone is equal before the law, and has the right to equal protection and equal benefit of the law (RoK, 2010). The consensus appears to be that an increasing number of competent women find themselves blocked to the very top positions, and there is a feeling that subtle factors are at play preventing their crashing through the glass ceiling into the highest positions.

One notable observation is that in the entire review, the researcher did not come across any study that only concentrated on H.O.Ds, deputy principals and principals as target population in data collection. One of the major gaps emerging from the reviewed literature is the continuing lack of studies on barriers faced by women in career progression to secondary school administration particularly in rural Kenya, Bungoma West included. This is the gap that the researcher intended to fill.

## CHAPTER THREE

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### 3.0 Introduction

This chapter describes the methodology that was used in this study. It also comprises of the research design, locale, sampling techniques and sample size, research instruments, piloting, data collection procedures, data analysis and its final presentation.

#### 3.1 Research Design

The study employed a survey research, which is descriptive in nature; descriptive phenomena must be obtained by means of descriptive research. Descriptive research attempts to describe what is in the social system and educational problems (Kombo, 2009). The study also used descriptive survey design to describe the factors hindering women access to higher administrative positions as well as allow the use of instruments like questionnaires and interview schedules (Orodho, 2004).

#### 3.2 Location of the Study

The study was conducted in the Bungoma West District of Bungoma County, Western province. Its headquarters is at Sirisia. This is one of the 7 districts in Bungoma County. It borders Bumula to the south and Uganda to the east. It has 8 divisions. It covers an area of 562.56 square kilometers. The choice of Bungoma West district as a locale of study was based on accessibility to the researcher. The entire County has only 7 registered girl's schools and 6 day mixed schools headed by female principals. It also has a fairly good terrain, and therefore most people practice agriculture.

### **3.3 Target Population**

Tuchman (2007) defines population as all the members of a real or hypothetical set of people, event or objects to which a researcher wishes to generalize the results of the study. The study targeted public secondary schools in the County. Bungoma County has twenty six (26) registered public secondary schools. (TSC records, 2011). The total target population was 536 which comprised 26 Principals, 26 Deputy-Principals, 472 Teachers (male and female), and 12 District Education Officers.

### **3.4 Sampling Techniques and Sample Size**

This section dealt with the techniques that were used in sampling and also considered the sample size.

#### **3.4.1 Sampling Techniques**

Miles and Huberman (2006) define a sample as a small group obtained from the accessible population. Each member in a sample is referred to as a subject. The purpose of this sampling was to secure a representative group, which enabled the researcher to gain information about the population since it was difficult to study the whole of it. Participating schools were selected through simple random sampling which comprised of 13 schools which are 50% of the registered public secondary schools.

Stratified sampling was used in the selection of teachers from the schools in order to give both male and female teachers equal chances of being selected. The population was divided into strata of male and female teachers and then purposive sampling was used to select the required sample from each stratum. The same method was used in selecting education

officials. The population was divided into separate stratum, in this case female and male education officials were separated.

### 3.4.2 Sample Size

The sample size was as follows:

- a) All the principals and the deputies of all the selected schools participated.
- b) Out of the 472 teachers, the county has 129 TSC appointed heads of departments. Out of these, 39 (3 from the 13 schools) male and female were used. 52 teachers were selected (4 from the 13 schools) adding to a total of 91 teachers and H.O.Ds both male and female.
- c) 8 officials from the district education office were selected.

The total number sampled were 125 respondents as indicated in the table 3.1:

**Table 3.1 Sample Size for the study**

	<b>CATEGORY</b>	<b>TARGET POPULATION</b>	<b>NUMBER SAMPLED</b>	<b>%</b>
1.	PRINCIPALS	26	13	50%
2.	DEPUTY PRINCIPALS	26	13	50%
3.	MALE TEACHERS& MALE HODs	88	39	44%
4.	FEMALE TEACHERS &FEMALE HODs	61	52	85%
5.	EDUCATION OFFICIALS	12	8	66.6%
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>213</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>58.8%</b>

### **3.5 Research Instruments**

The research adopted the following research instruments:

#### **3.5.1 Questionnaires**

These are lists of open and closed ended questions to collect data from a large geographical area (Orodho, 2005). The research employed self-administered questionnaires. The questionnaire method was considered appropriate in the study because all those who took part were literate and capable of responding to the items on their own. This instrument was preferred to obtain information from teachers and deputy principals/ head teachers.

##### **a) Questionnaires for Teachers and Heads of Departments (H.O.Ds)**

The H.O.Ds' questionnaire was divided into two parts. Part A focused on personal information while Part B sought information on the general perception of school administrators and administration. The section however concentrated more on characteristics of women administrators such as career aspirations, traditional implications and impact of gender roles.

##### **b) Questionnaire for deputy principals**

This had an introductory note to the respondent introducing them to the purpose of the study. It was divided in section A, containing demographic information and section B that covered questions on administrative, cultural and traditional barriers. It also briefly enquired on coping strategies as well as suggestions to ensure more participation of women in administrative positions.

### **3.5.2 Interview schedules**

#### **a) Interview Schedule for Principals**

This is a semi-structured interview schedule that is used to obtain in-depth information on the case in study from respondents (Webster, 2007). This was a preferred method for collecting data from principals considering their busy work schedule that could not allow them time to sit down to fill in the questionnaires. It also helped to avoid the risk of receiving inadequate information or compensate in a case of unreturned questionnaires. A face to face interview helped generate relevant information at one sitting where clarification was sought.

#### **b) Interview Schedule for District Education Officers**

This too was a face to face interview to obtain demographic information and administrative and traditional barriers that could have hindered women from ascending to senior administrative positions.

### **3.6 Pilot Study**

A pilot study was carried out at the District Education Office and in secondary schools for the purpose of pre-testing the research instruments in order to validate them and ascertain their reliability. Four officials were selected to participate in the pilot study. At the schools level, the eight (8) principals of the selected schools plus four teachers, 2 female and 2 male will be used. The officials and the selected schools were excluded during the final study to help control the extraneous influence on the research findings due to prior knowledge of the information required by the instruments. Through the pilot study, major problems and instrument deficiencies were identified and improvements made. The pilot study also elicited data from the instrument that was checked to see if it could be meaningfully analyzed in

relation to the stated research questions. It was also used to check the appropriateness of the language used and contextualize the items for predictability besides being instrumental in identifying ambiguous items and reconstructing them.

### **3.6.1 Instrument Validity**

This refers to whether an instrument is measuring what it is intended to measure. The instruments used in this study are standardized instruments whose content validity will be established at the design stage (Kombo, Ibid). For the purpose of this study, content validity of the instruments was checked through the pilot study. Threats to internal validity were also checked through administration of the research instruments by the researcher.

Mugenda, (1999), defines validity as the accuracy and meaningfulness of inferences, which are based on the research results. To enhance validity of the instrument, a pre- testing (pilot study) was conducted on a population similar to the target population. The reasons behind pre-testing is to assess the clarity of the instrument items so that those items found to be inadequate in measuring the variables are either discarded or modified to improve the quality of the research instrument thus increasing its validity. During the pre-testing study after each respondent had completed filling the questionnaire, each question item was discussed with him/ her to determine suitability, clarity and relevance for the purpose of the study.

### **3.6.2 Instrument Reliability**

Goetz (2007) defines reliability as a measure of the degree to which a research instrument yields consistent results or data after repeated trials. However reliability in the research is influenced by random error. Random error is the deviation from a true measure due to factors that have not been effectively addressed by the researcher. As random error increases,

reliability decreases. These errors might arise from inaccurate coding, ambiguous instructions to the subjects, interview fatigue and interview bias. The researcher in designing and administering of the instruments took care to avoid such errors. The test on the reliability of the questionnaires was computed using Pearson Product Moment correlation through split half method. To get the full correlation, Spearman Brown Property formula was used. A correlation coefficient of about 0.75 was considered high enough to judge the instrument as reliable enough for the study. The following formula was used:

$$\begin{aligned}
 \text{Rho} &= 1 - \frac{6(\sum d^2)}{n(n^2-1)} \\
 &= 1 - \frac{6(5)}{5(5^2-1)} \\
 &= 1 - \frac{30}{5 \times 24} \\
 &= 1 - \frac{30}{120} \\
 &= 1 - 0.25 \\
 &= \underline{0.75}
 \end{aligned}$$

$d^2$  = Deviation of the first trial and second trial of the instruments

$n$  = Entry of the number of questionnaires given for trial

The results of 0.75 showed that there was perfect relationship.

### **3.7 Data Collection Procedures**

A research permit was obtained from the Ministry of Education Science and Technology. Thereafter the Teachers Service Commission headquarters Nairobi, and the District Education Officer, Bungoma was contacted before the start of the study. The study was carried out in two phases. The researcher paid a visit to each of the head teachers of the selected schools to discuss and make arrangements on the most suitable days, time and procedure to be followed in conducting the study in the school. The schools were then visited on the set dates, and questionnaires, personally administered to the respondents by the researcher. The researcher then arranged to interview the targeted officers in the DEO's office. The second phase was when the researcher paid a visit to the respective principals as per the scheduled personal interviews. The participants were assured of strict confidentiality that would be maintained in dealing with all the information they would provide according to the ethical principles. The filled in questionnaires were then collected after a week.

### **3.8 Data Analysis Techniques**

The researcher examined all the coded data and critically made inferences. In this relation data becomes information only when it becomes relevant to the problem identified by the researcher who will make sure that the information becomes facts when data can support it. Facts were important to this study because they rely on the revelations of the data. Facts will lead to new information, new experiences and new views before analyzing the collected data; the researcher ensured that data was well organized. After the data collection exercise, the researcher was in possession of all the filled forms of questionnaires from the respondents. Before starting the compilation and coding of the data, the researcher made sure that each question had been answered and the answers were properly recorded, that is, the researcher

was checking the completeness, accuracy, and the uniformity of the research instruments. From here the researcher developed a coding scheme.

The researcher familiarized and immersed herself in the text (field notes, interview scripts) by reading as many times as she made the notes, drew diagrams and also brain storming. This helped the researcher to know the data well and also made it easy to locate information that supported the interpretation. This helped in drawing out relevant themes that were used in the study. The researcher used numbers assigned in to represent attributes, statistics in order to summarize the scores. Then the researcher used the statistical analysis in data organization, that is, that she needed to interpret using descriptive statistics, frequencies, tables, graphs and charts in this study. The data was analyzed by use of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) and summarized into percentages, means and frequency distributions. In a nutshell the study relied on what analytical framework intended to show, the scale by which variables were measured, number of variables that were analyzed, relationship between variables, the number of samples that were involved and the nature of data.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

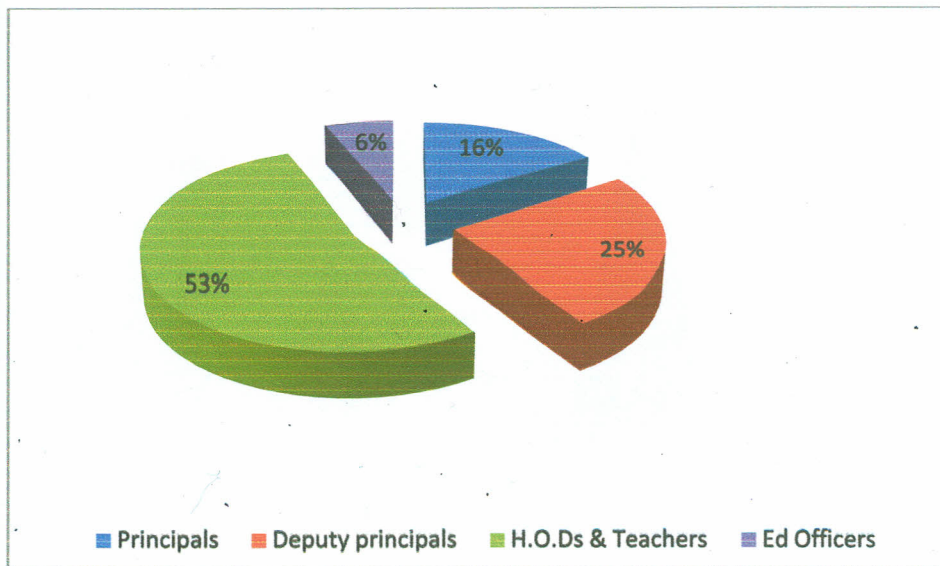
### **RESEARCH FINDINGS, INTERPRETATIONS AND DISCUSSIONS**

#### **4.0 Introduction**

This chapter is divided into two main sections. Section one presents demographic data of the respondents. The second section interprets and explains the findings of the analyzed data in relation to factors that hinder upward mobility of female teachers in administration in public secondary schools. The study sought information from H.O.Ds, deputy principals, principals and officers from the district education office. Data analysis was done using frequencies and percentages and then analyzed data was presented in form of tables and figures. This was followed by a summary statement of the conclusion of the study in regard to the questions and guided by the research objectives. Out of the 104 questionnaires distributed 98 (94%) were returned, giving a return rate of 94%.

#### **4.1 Demographic Data of All Respondents**

Respondents' demographic data is presented in the following paragraphs. Variables such as age of respondents, their marital status and gender were considered. Positions held by various respondents were analyzed and presented in figure 4.1

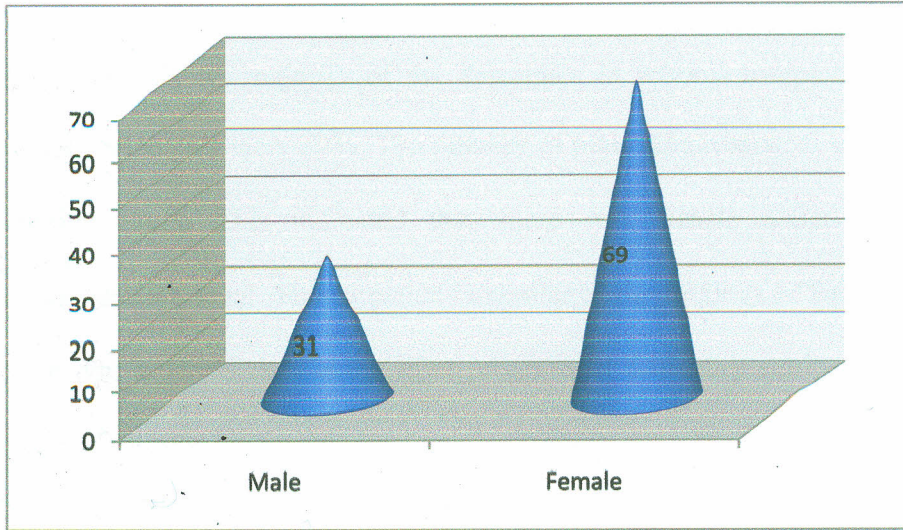


**Figure 4.1 Respondents' Positions**

Figure 4.1 indicates that majority of the respondents (53%) were teachers and Heads of Departments, 25% were Deputy Principals and 16% were Principals and 6% were Education Officers.

#### **4.1.1 Respondents by Gender**

Gender issues in education have been there for centuries in most of the countries worldwide. Therefore it was important to identify the gender of the respondents in the sample. This is indicated in figure 4.2.

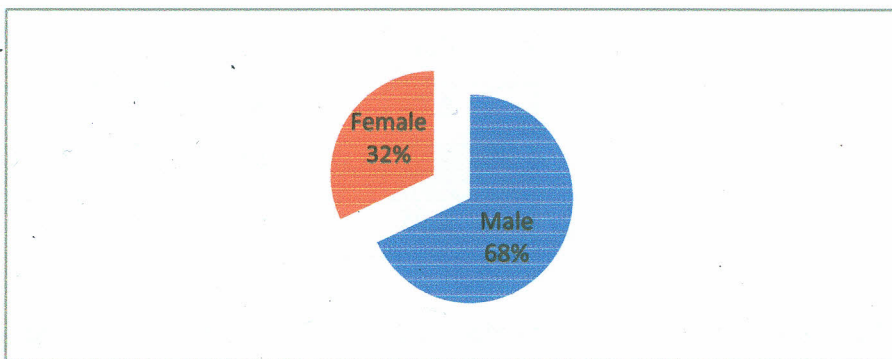


**Figure 4.2 Teachers, H.O.Ds and Deputy Principals by Gender**

Figure 4.2 shows majority of the respondents (69%) were females while 31% were male. It is evident that there were more female teachers than the male teachers who were willing to participate in the study. This was probably due to the nature of study. Some men thought that the subject favoured women and so they were not interested to participate. This kind of thinking was expressed by Kram (2007) who said that many people equate the word gender with women and they forget that promoting gender equality should be the responsibility of both men and women.

The study considered the gender of the principals separately. This was for the purpose of ascertaining the actual situation on the ground. The findings are presented as shown in figure

4.3



**Figure 4.3 Male and Female Head Teachers by Gender**

Figure 4.3 shows majority of the Principals in schools sampled were male at 68% while female principals were 32%. The number of male administrators was twice that of the female administrators. This indicated that there was female under-representation at the top administration level. This situation is similar to the findings of Ralph and Brown (2006) who state that women are making little progress in achieving equity with men and in attaining higher positions.

#### 4.1.2 Ages of the respondents

Age is a factor that is considered important in a person's career development. The results from this study showed that respondents' ages ranged from 31 years to 53 years. The results are presented in table 4.1

**Table 4.1 Ages of the Male and Female Principals and Deputy Principals**

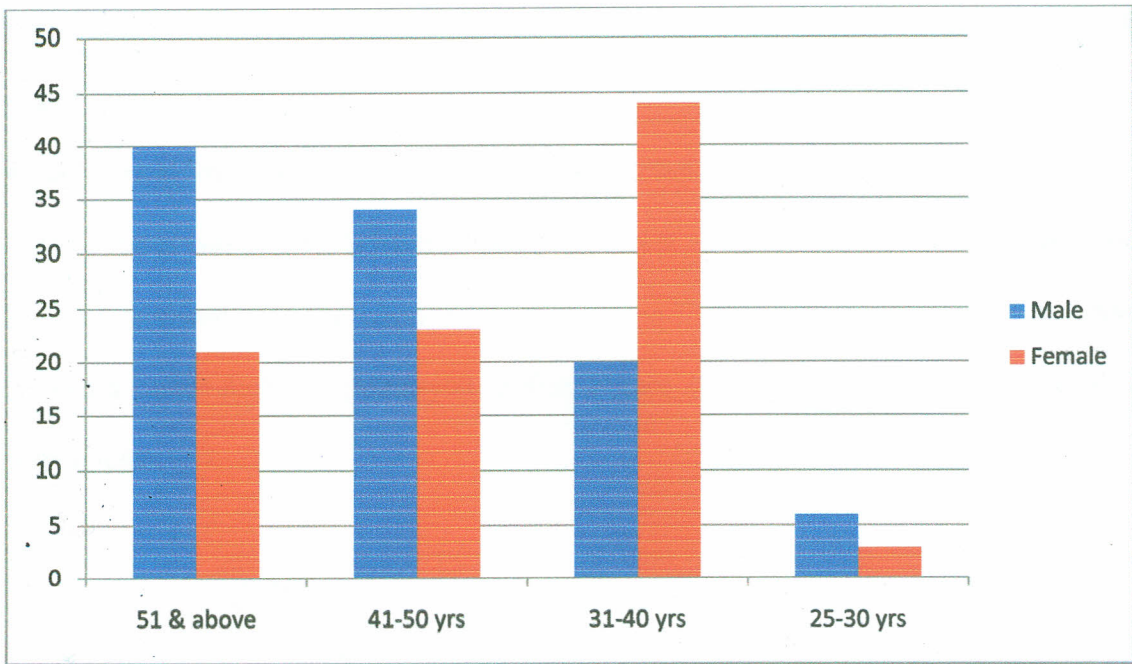
The age brackets of the male and female respondents were as recorded in table 4.1.

AGE OF PRINCIPALS & DEPUTY PRINCIPALS	FEMALE %	MALE %
25-30	0	0
31-36	8.5	7.2
37-42	37.5	10.5
43-48	28.3	47.5
49-53	14.9	14.3
54 & Above	10.8	20.2

Table 4.1 indicates that majority of the male principals and deputy principals (47.5%) were between the age bracket of 43-48 years compared to the 28.3% for women in the same age

bracket. This was followed by 20.2% in the age bracket of 54 and above years for male and 10.8% female, then 14.3% male between 49-53 years and 14.9% for the female. Those aged between 37-32 years were only 10.5% for male compared to the female who recorded the highest percentage of 37.5. The male principals and deputy principals who were aged 31-36 were 7.2% compared to the 8.5% for the females. None of the administrators were between 25 to 30 years of age for both male and female. It is evident that the majority of those holding the posts of deputy principal and principal were in their mid years and yet the expected trend would link increasing age with career upward mobility. It is clear from the findings that there was male dominance in secondary school administration. This finding agrees with Gentry (2007) that men for decades have dominated the administrative and professional jobs while women occupied low level positions.

It was also necessary to determine the ages of the other respondents in the teachers' category. The information was presented as is in figure 4.4.



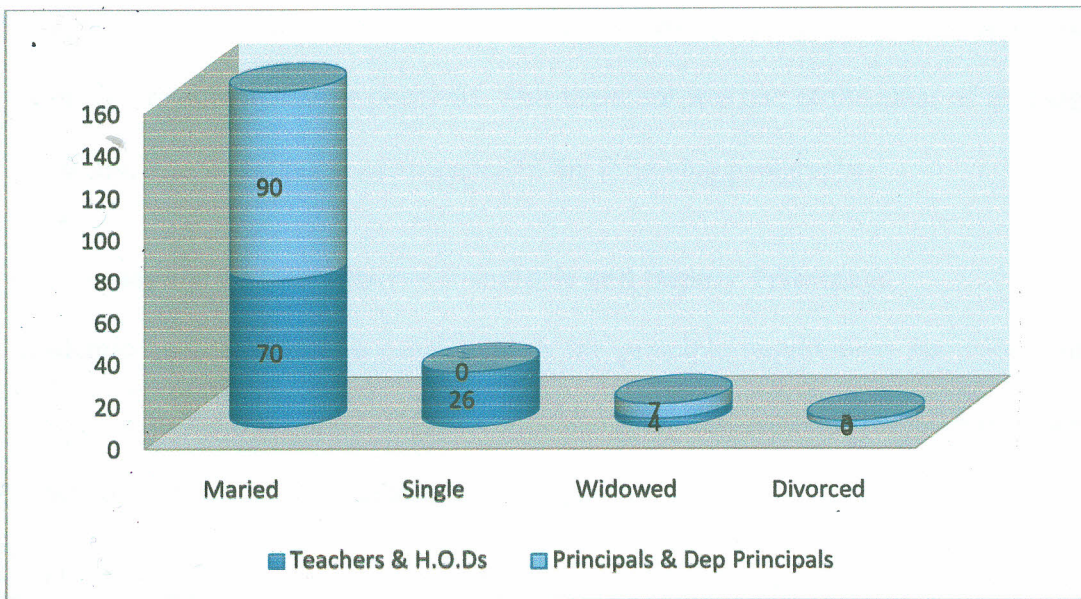
**Figure 4.4 Ages of the Male and Female Teachers and H.O.Ds**

Figure 4.4 shows that majority (40%) of the male respondents (teachers and H.O.Ds) were 51 years and above, followed by 34% at 41-50 years, 20% at 31-40 years and only 6% were between 25 and 30 years. This indicated an issue of stagnation where many were approaching retirement age or had reached a prime age and yet they had not attained administrative posts. The findings from the female respondents revealed that the majority (44%) were between 31-40 years. The numbers of female teachers and H.O.Ds at the lower age of 25-30 years were few (12%). Those at 41-50 years were 23% and 21% for those that were 51 years and above. The difference is glaring revealing that the number of teachers at the advanced ages was higher than at the lower age. The situation was occasioned by two major reasons. One was due to the break in the recruitment of teachers' policy by the government of Kenya in the year 1998. Another reason is probably due to the high numbers of teachers who leave the

profession in search of 'greener' pastures elsewhere for men while women remained in the teaching profession.

#### 4.1.3 Marital Status of the male and the female respondents

Marital status was known to have an effect on career advancement for women. The reviewed literature showed that the importance of a supportive partner was a factor that affected women's career mobility (Matasyoh, 2006). Figure 4.5 represents the marital status of the respondents.



**Figure 4.5 Male and Female Respondents on Marital status**

From figure 4.5, 90% of the principals and deputy Principals were married compared to the 70% of teachers and H.O.Ds that were married. It is evident that majority of the respondents were married 26% of the teachers were single and none of the principals and deputy principals recorded to be single. The teachers and H.ODs that were widowed were at 4% compared to 7% of the principals and deputy principals. Principals and deputy principals that were divorced were 3% compared to the category of teachers and H.O.Ds who recorded none.

Female respondents, apart from their professional occupations, had to deal with other family obligations. The double role could be overwhelming to the female teachers. This could be the reason why female teachers declined to take on any more extra responsibilities. Muteti (2008) observed that marital obligations hindered career mobility for women because most of them were not considered as candidates for promotion.

#### 4.2 Academic Qualifications and Professional growth

The general view was that academic qualification and achievement was a major yardstick for promotion to administrative positions. This therefore was one of the areas of investigation for this study. The findings are as presented in the following paragraphs.

##### 4.2.1 Academic qualifications of Principals and Deputy Principals

Academic qualification was considered as the principle requirement for placement and for promotion to the next level. Figure 4.6 presents the responses of the principals and deputy principals concerning their academic qualifications.

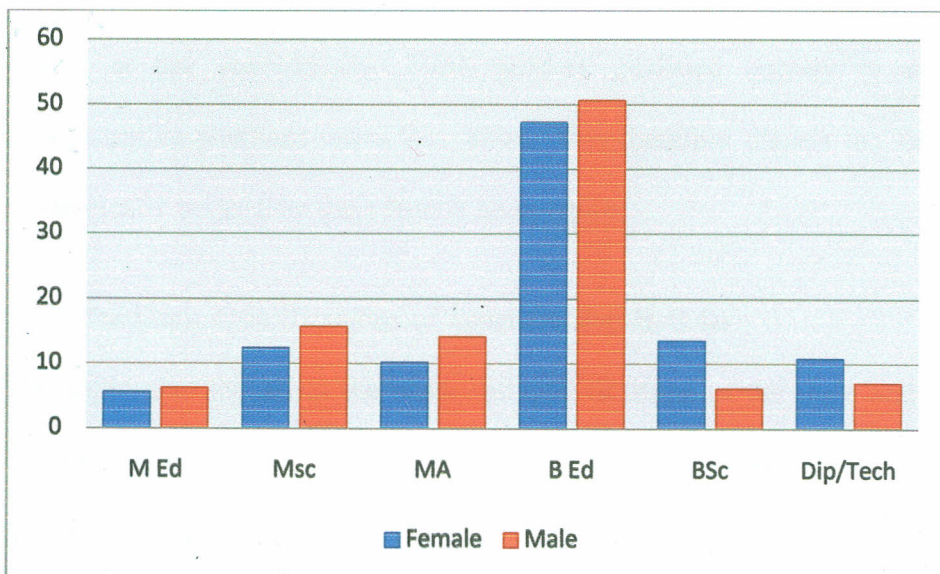
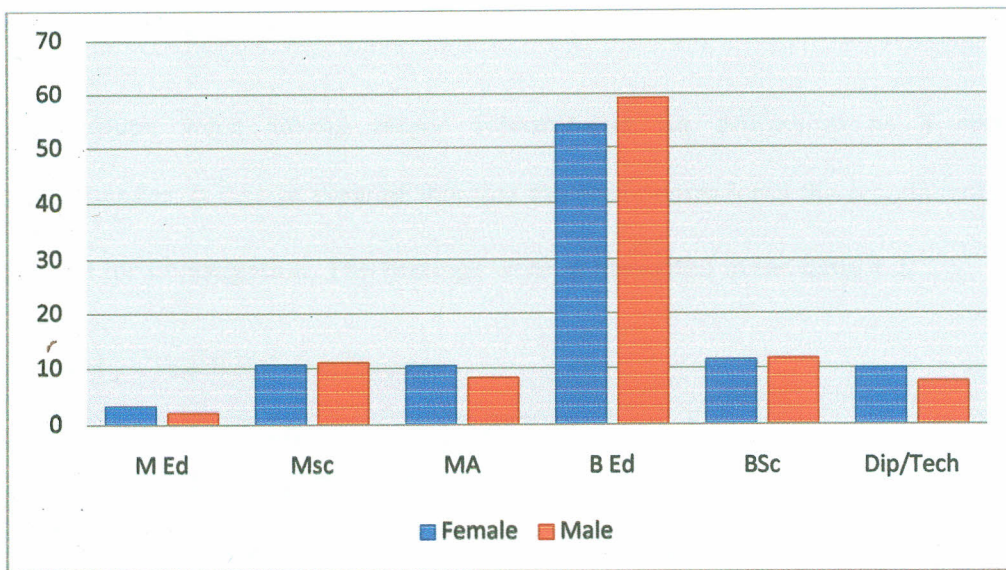


Figure 4.6 Principals' and Deputy Principals' Academic qualifications

Figure 4.6 indicates that majority (47.3%) of the female respondents had attained Bachelors of Education degree while the male were at 50.7%. Master of Science also recorded favorably high percentages of 15.8% for the male and the female at 12.5% considering that this is the minimum academic requirement for lecturers at tertiary level. Holders of Master of Education among the male principals and deputy principals were 5.6% and 6.2% respectively. Master of Arts holders were at 10% for female and 15.8% for the male. Bachelors of Science degree holders were 13.6% and 8.8% for male and female principals and deputy principals respectively. Both genders recorded lower percentages of those who had attained the level of Diploma in Education and Technical Education. This could be possibly due to the current minimum academic requirement for a deputy head teacher in secondary schools to be a university degree in education or any other university degree in Arts or Science from a recognized university plus a post graduate diploma in education. This agreed with the findings of an earlier study that stated that in addition, six years of teaching experience are required, of which two must have been in a position of responsibility in a secondary school (Mckay, and Brown, 2006). It is apparent that male and female principals and deputy principals were almost at par academically. Both genders qualified equally to apply for the senior administrative positions when they arose. This therefore dispels the fact that men could be academically better than their female counterparts.

#### **4.2.2 Academic Qualifications of Teachers and H.O.Ds**

The study also looked at the academic qualifications of the male and female teachers and H.O.Ds for the purpose of comparison with that of the principals and deputy principals. The findings are presented the figure 4.7



**Figure 4.7: Male and Female Teachers and HODs on Academic qualification**

Figure 4.7 indicated that majority of the respondents both male and female had attained Bachelors of Education with the female at 54% while the male recorded 58%. Those who had attained Bachelors of Science were at 11% for female and 12.5% for the male followed by Masters of Science at 11.5% for male and 10.5 for the female. Masters of Education recorded the lowest figures at 3% for the male and 4% for the female.

The findings revealed that the academic qualifications of the male and female teachers and that of heads of departments were almost at par. Although fewer women than men had advanced their academic studies further than the minimum requirement of Bachelors of Education degree it was just by a small margin. The male and female teachers were equally qualified to apply for administrative positions when they arose. Unfortunately, most female teachers including those who had an interest in school administration indicated that they had never applied for promotion.

### 4.2.3 Job Groups of Teachers and H.O.Ds

Job groups were among major determinants for promotion as a secondary school administrator. It was in view of this that the study considered the respondents' job groups as an area for investigation. The findings were as presented in the table 4.2.

**Table 4.2: Teachers' Job Groups**

	Female %	Male %
<b>K</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>L</b>	<b>34.4</b>	<b>17.4</b>
<b>M</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>31.6</b>
<b>N</b>	<b>27.8</b>	<b>32.4</b>
<b>P</b>	<b>4.4</b>	<b>13.3</b>
<b>N/A</b>	<b>2.4</b>	<b>0.3</b>

Table 4.2 revealed that majority of the female respondents 34.4% were in job group K, while majority of the male respondents were in job groups M and N. Another 27.8% of the female respondents were in job group N and 21% in job group M, 10% in job group K and 4.4% in job group P and 2.4% were not in any of the job groups indicated. The T.S.C states that to qualify to be an administrator one has to be on job group M and above. This means that 53.2% of the female teachers qualified for promotion in comparison to their male counterparts at 77.3% who had ascended to job group 'M' and above. These findings indicated that the male respondents rose faster than their female counterparts, hence the difference in their positions of administration. It is evident that if promotions were awarded on the basis of job groups, then the female teachers would be disadvantaged. However, one did not just ascend to these job groups basing on academic qualification and work experience only. Involvement in

co-curricular activities particularly sports and drama was rated highly. These are the two areas where most female teachers indicated having had little or no experience at all. Although this was the position, male teachers had the advantage of socializing with those who give promotions because they had all the time unhampered by their gender roles.

### 4.3 Work Experience

Other than the job groups of the respondents, the study also considered working experience of both the male and female deputy principals.

#### 4.3.1 Working Experience of Deputy Principals

Employment background of the deputy principals was an area of interest in the research. Variables such as when one was promoted last and how long they had served in the current capacity were considered. Figure 4.8 presented the findings.

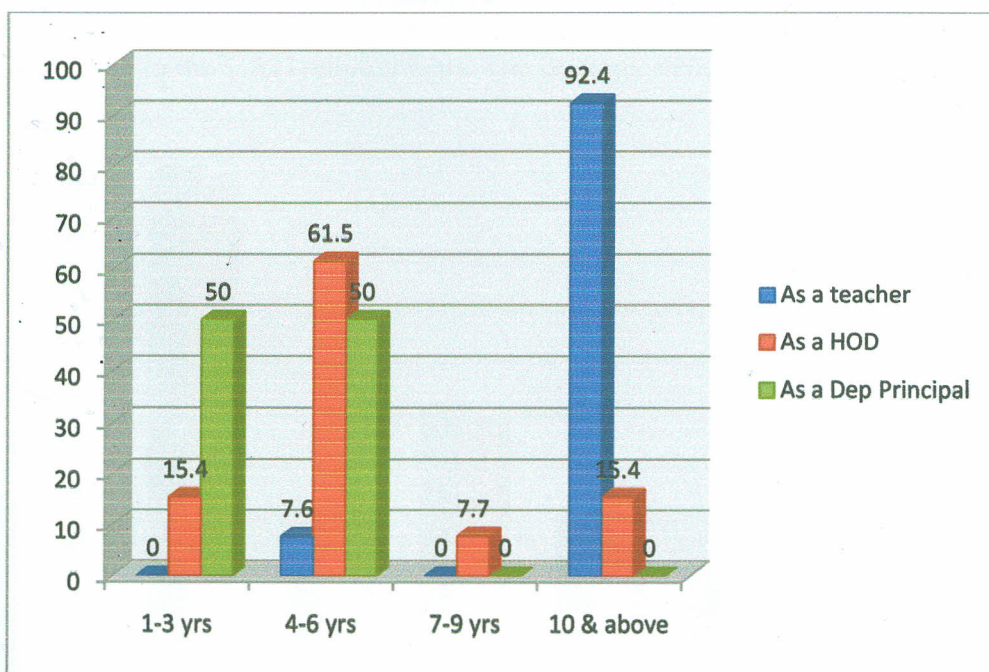
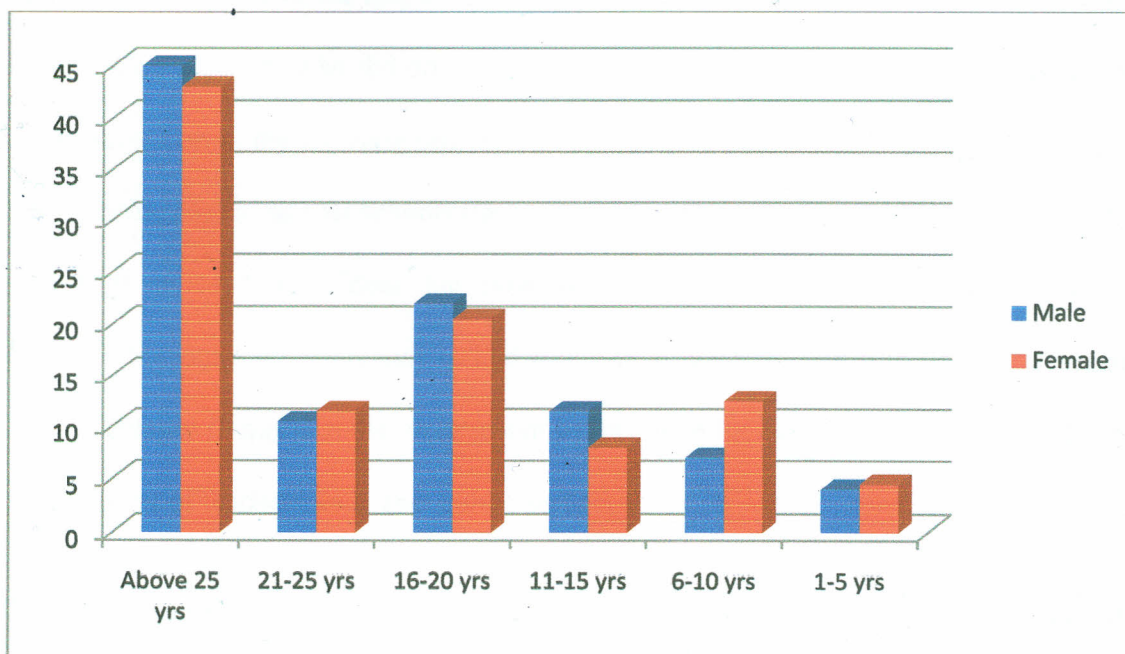


Figure 4.8 Female Deputy Principals' Work experience

From Figure 4.8 the female deputy principals' response on work experience indicated that majority 92.4% had worked as teachers for 10 and above years and 61.5% as Heads of Department. 50% had worked as Deputy Principals for between 1-3 years. The respondents indicated that over the years they rose through the ranks first as teachers, then as H.O.Ds then to their current level of deputy principals. It is clear that the female deputy principals had acquired enough experience to allow them to ascend to the top administrative post. These findings are in agreement with the views of McKay, (2006) who said that to qualify as a deputy principal six years of teaching experience were required, of which two must have been in a position of responsibility in a secondary school.

#### 4.3.2. Working Experience of Teachers and H.O.Ds

It was also necessary to look at the working experience of the teachers and the heads of departments to establish what percentage qualified for the position of the top administration according to the T.S.C requirements. The findings were as presented in figure 4.9.



**Figure 4.9: Teachers' and HODs' Teaching Experience**

Majority (43%) of the teachers and Heads of Departments had a teaching experience of above 25 years followed by 20.5% who had taught for between 16-20 years. 12.5% had an experience of 6 to 10 years while 11.5% had worked for between 21-25 years. 8% had worked for 11-15 years. The least, 4.5% apparently are those who had worked for fewer years. It is clear that the figures decreased as years moved by. The higher percentage can be explained also by the ages of the female teachers then. These recorded their ages to be 40 years and above. This happens to be the period when the teaching career was very popular among the women. As years moved by, others left the profession for what they considered 'greener pastures' in the corporate world. Other female teachers were deployed to office jobs either at the Teachers Service Commission or in the Ministry of Education. The period at each stage before any promotion was too long a situation similar with the conclusion by Rapoport and Bailyn, (2008) who stated that women remain scarce in highest technical positions because women are working their way through the pipeline, and they usually have to wait for a long time. However some of the respondents expressed satisfaction with the situation. There were some female teachers who did not have any interest in changing their status. This contented group stayed on in the teaching profession not caring to move up the ladder. Some expressed fear of being sent to further schools upon promotion while others could not spare any time for additional duties. It is evident that even though the female teachers knew that they were qualified for senior positions they lacked ambition to reach the top. It is also worth noting that the percentages dropped in the more recent years due to the government policy of freezing the employment of teachers and other public servants.

The study also sought to know the teaching experience of the male teachers for comparison sake. As shown in figure 4.9 the majority of the male teachers (45%) had an experience of 25

and above years. Those who had taught for 21-25 years were at 10.5%, 22% had taught for 16-20 years while 11.5% had an experience of 11-15 years. Just like it was with the female teachers, the percentages dropped with 7% at 6-10 years and 4% with the minimum teaching experience of 1-5 years. The receding number could be explained by the same factors that affected the numbers of the female teachers. However some men (41%) indicated that they wished to join other professions that were considered more 'manly'.

#### 4.4 In- Service Courses and Career Mobility

In- service training was considered relevant to the study as it usually compliments professional qualifications and contributes to upward mobility of teachers. Therefore the study sought the perception of the male and female respondents on the role in-service training and workshops in the teaching profession. The findings from the male respondents were presented in Figure 4.10.

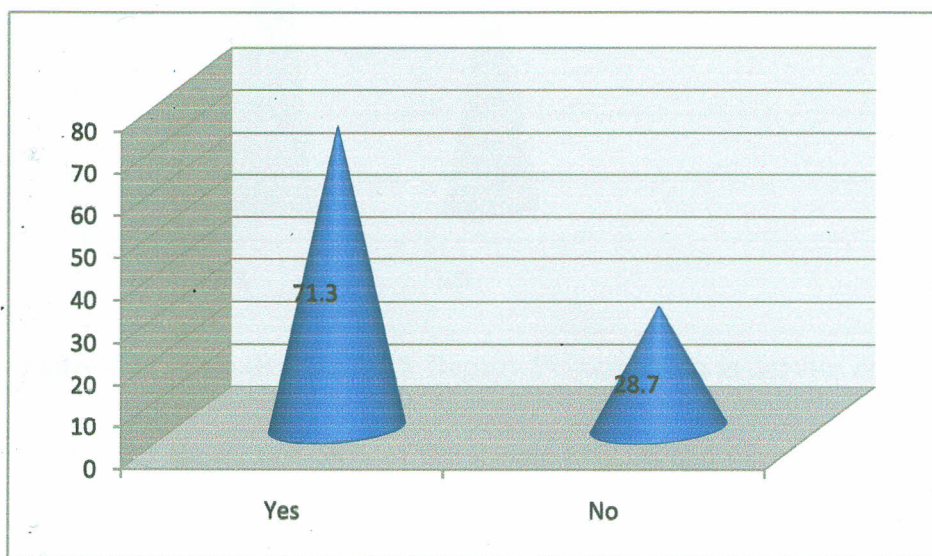
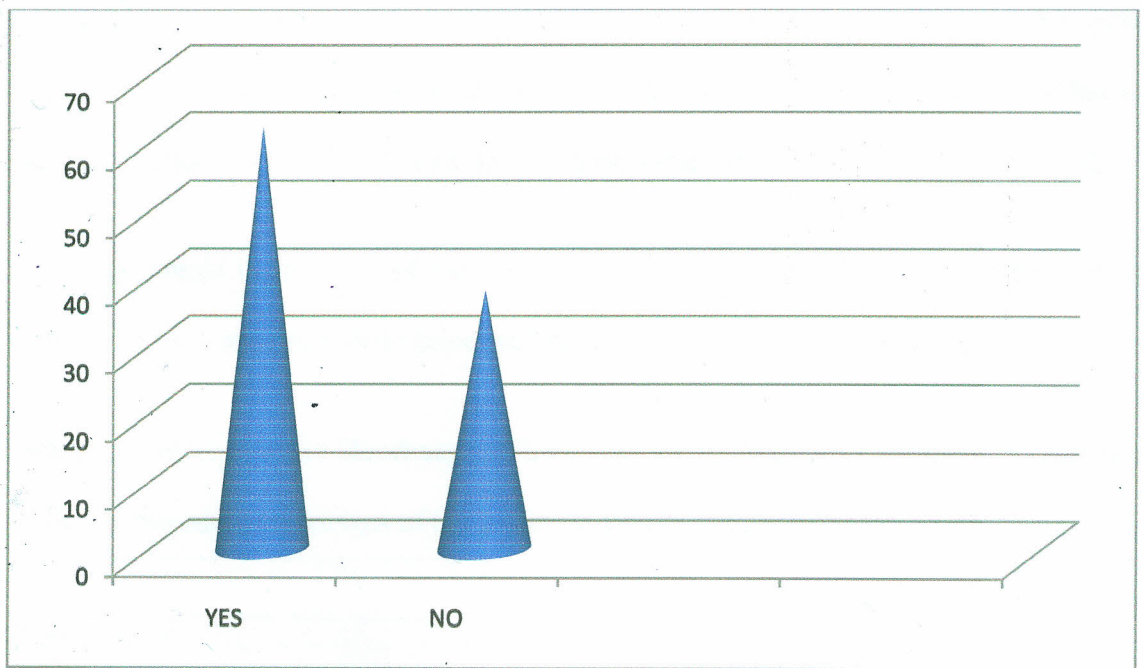


Figure 4.10: Male H.O.Ds & Deputies' on in-service courses and Workshops

Asked whether the respondents (male deputy principals and H.O.Ds) had ever attended an in-service course, majority (71.3%) said yes while 28.7% had not attended any. The majority had had the opportunity as a result of the aggressiveness by the ministry of education that ensures that teachers in all parts of the country are in-serviced. It is also considered as one of the qualifications for promotion to the next job group. This therefore was a motivation to many teachers who were seeking to better their job groups.

The study also sought the opinion of the female teachers on the role of in-service courses and how many had benefited. Figure 4.11 displays the findings.



**Figure 4.11: Female H.O.Ds & Deputy Principals on in-service courses and Workshops**

Figure 4.11 shows that 64% of the female H.O.Ds and deputy principals indicated that they had attended in-service courses and workshops while 36% had not. The percentage was lower than that of the male teachers and some female respondents attributed family responsibilities as the reason for this situation. The literature under review had not considered this as an item

for investigation but was very important for this study seeing that because it is a requirement by the Ministry of Education to keep teachers abreast with any new developments and changes in Education. Seminars and workshops are necessary for professional development and any teacher or administrator who intends to grow has no choice but to embrace this effort.

#### 4.5 The Concept of Gender and Administrative Perspectives

‘Gender’ refers to how a person views himself or herself on their roles determined by their socialization and the job requirement. It is also looked at as the fact of being man or woman. Mutetei (2008) asserts that gender is a social construction of ideas, events, issues, responsibilities and assignments of the society to either male or female. Gender is constantly created and recreated out of interaction of social life and is the texture and order of that social life. Hence gender outlook was regarded as an important area that could not be ignored.

The study sought the opinion of the male and female respondents on whether they preferred working under a male or female principal and the reasons for their preference.

**Table 4.3 Preference for Headmaster/Headmistress by Male and Female the teachers**

Table 4.3 recorder percentages of the preferred gender of administrator.

	%
Head master	62
Head mistress	34
Any	4

Table 4.3 revealed that majority of the teachers (62%) preferred male principals while 34% preferred female principals. Those who said they did not mind working under either male or

female principal were 4%. Reasons given for each favoured principal were as explained in the following paragraphs.

#### **4.3.2 Preference for Head Masters by both male and female teachers**

The male respondents said that their male boss was rational and was understanding in case of hard challenges. The men also said they felt more comfortable with male principals who were usually friendlier and were always able to come up with quick and good decisions on sensitive matters in the school. Some of the male respondents (32%) indicated that the male administrators had an easier time in communication as they were precise and to the point unlike the female administrators who tended to be more emotional and temperamental. They termed female head teachers as people who were unpredictable, could throw tantrums, had mood swings and held grudges.

The female respondents (28%) who preferred male principals said it was because men did not transfer home issues to work places. They were thought to be sober and open minded unlike some ladies who attached their personal experiences to professional duties. They also felt that men were more open to different opinions and they understood women's domestic problems more than female administrators. This contradicts Matasyoh's opinion who in her study pointed out that females were better school managers because by virtue of being mothers, they approached challenges more realistically as compared to the men ( Matasyoh 2006). The male respondents (63%) and female respondents (48%) shared the same opinion that male principals were more likeable, supportive and emotionally strong. They also indicated that men had proved to be more dynamic and hardworking. This finding agreed with the views of Rajuili (2007) who said that in most cases the reasons for this kind of preference were

unfounded. She notes that if a woman is given a senior post, the men and other women become less supportive becoming resentful of her outspokenness and independence of mind.

#### **4.3.3 Preference for Head Mistress by both male and female teachers**

The findings indicated that fewer teachers both male and female preferred female administrators. The respondents who preferred the female administrators said women were more understanding and were easy to work with. The female administrators had proved to be more compassionate when handling problems. The female respondents indicated that female administrators understood what women go through in the course of duty. They were also referred to as 'feelers' because they are often in touch with the plight of teachers while men were thought to be more business minded and were less concerned with the problems of teachers.

Other respondents felt that female administrators tended to be more dedicated to their work and were mindful of the progress of the institutions they were in charge of. The female administrators were also termed as good financial managers and rarely diverted school funds to personal projects or other projects that had not been planned for. They tended to be keen, not petty, concentrated on academic matters unlike male head teachers who at times tended to mix social and academic issues. Some male head teachers were accused of sexually harassing female teachers. These were opinions expressed by both male and female respondents.

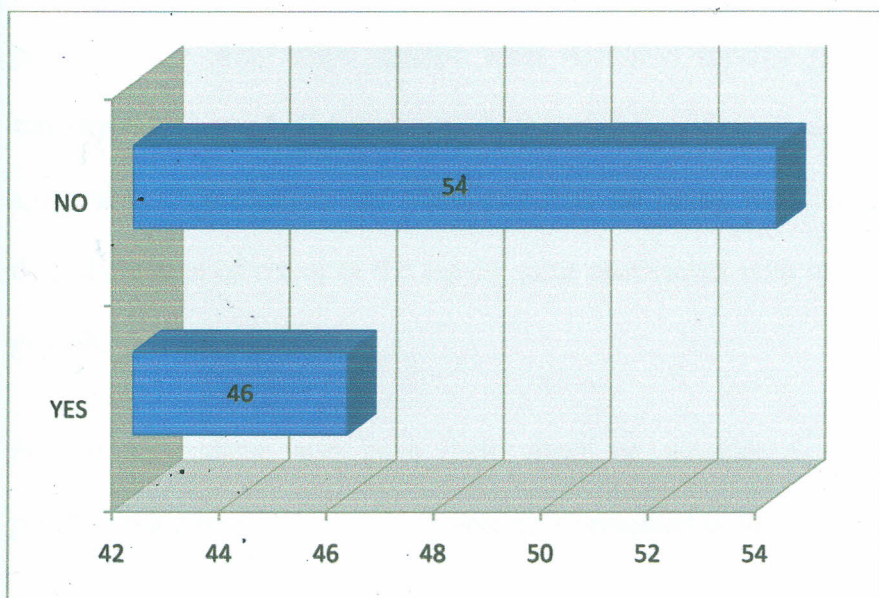
46% of the respondents were of the opinion that women were more motivating and inspiring. They were naturally committed to both the professional and social welfare of the teachers. This in itself motivated the teachers to go an extra mile in ensuring a smooth running of programmes within the school. Women also exhibited good leadership styles and encouraged

participation of both male and female teachers appointing them to significant positions in the school. This agrees with Nemko, (2004) who said that on average women are rated as slightly better managers than men. Other respondents also indicated that women were more understanding in dealing with personal matters that affected their members of staff compared to male administrators.

#### 4.6 Sex and professional growth

The idea of being male or female is a physical characteristic that may or may not have a bearing on the different roles in society.

It was important to find out the opinion of male respondents on what they thought about what one's gender had to do with professional growth. Figure 4.12 shows what the findings were.



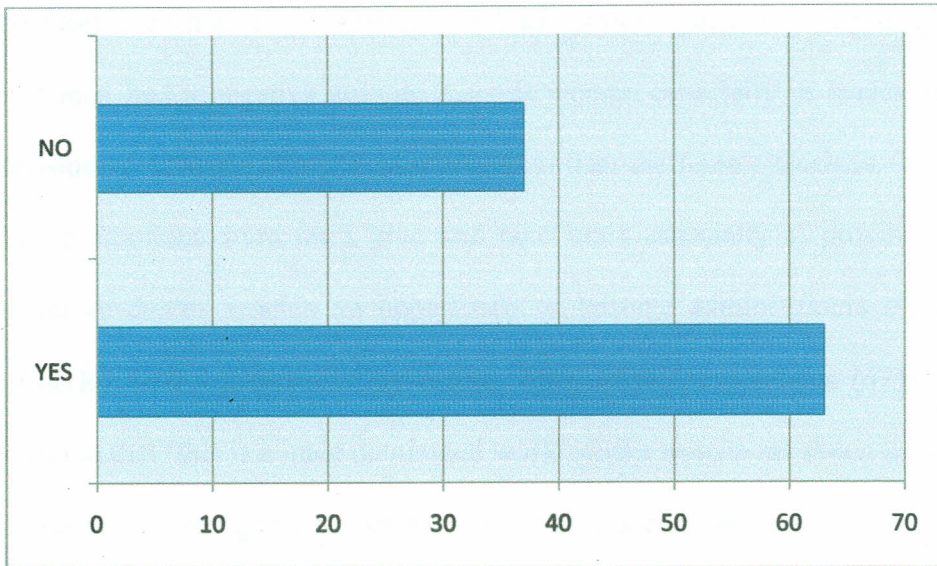
**Figure 4.12 Male respondents on Sex of a Teacher and professional growth**

Asked if the sex of the teacher affected professional growth, majority of the male respondents 54% said yes while 46% said it does not. Those who said yes briefly explained that because of

women's role as mothers their family responsibilities were quite involving away from the normal teaching job and most women found it difficult to balance between work and domestic responsibilities. They also said that most female teachers were mostly influenced by their families who might not be cooperative to allow them take up extra co- curricular duties that may added weight when one applied for any senior positions.

Other respondents said that some ladies feared responsibilities hence kept away from advancing their career. Some respondents were of the opinion that men could handle a job well and could make hard decisions without being emotional. Males tend to be more aggressive and yearn for power while females are easily satisfied. Misguided attitude that males were better managers and were considered strong emotionally were expressed but all these varied from one individual to the other. Other respondents said that males were associated with power and strength and so were easily allowed chances of growth professionally. Also some specific areas needed a specific gender. Women were always stereotyped as not being accommodative of fellow female teachers, were impatient with aggressive male teachers and were mistaken for being weak vessels. Therefore they were denied chances of rising to the top by male chauvinists who were against women teachers' growth.

Female respondents also gave their views on whether a person's sex affected one's professional growth. The findings were as is presented in figure 4.13.



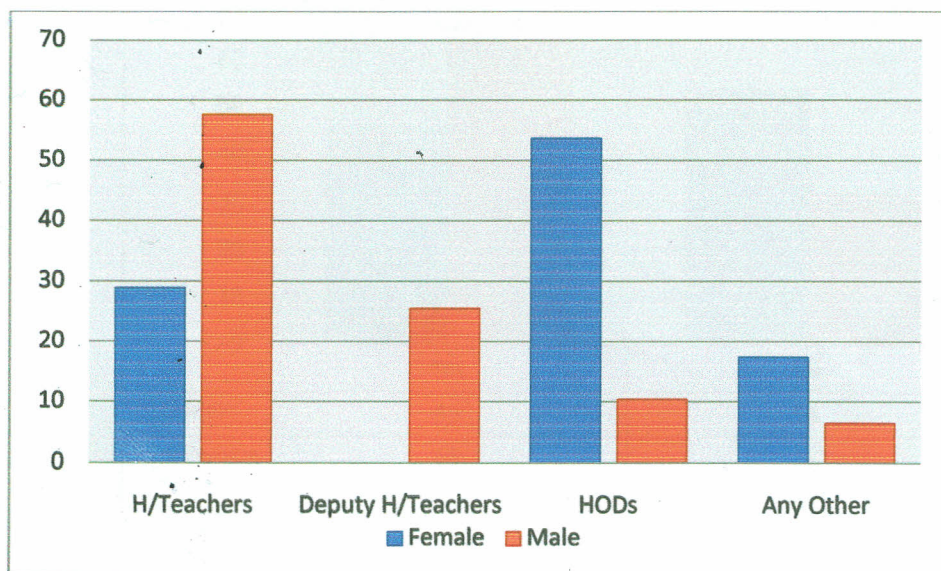
**Figure 4.13. Female respondents on Sex of a Teacher and professional growth**

Figure 4.13 shows that 37% of the female respondents indicated that one's gender affected one's professional growth while 63% said otherwise. This shows that fewer women compared to men believe that one's sex has a bearing on their professional growth. Female respondents who said 'yes' indicated that female teachers always had many duties to attend to. They also added that ladies were subjected to a lot of prejudice due to maybe maternity and cultural overtones. This made it difficult to get a senior position in boys' schools because of the perception of some male teachers and Education officers that certain posts could not be given to a female teacher like deputyship or even headship in a boys' school. Other respondents (42%) thought that some female teachers exhibited inferiority complex while other ladies feared responsibilities hence kept off from advancing.

Respondents who said 'no' indicated that there were some specific areas which needed a specific gender for example a head teacher in boys' schools ought to be a male teacher. While this may be an important factor, there was no proof that female teachers were unable to

perform in such an environment. This bias opinion agrees with Rajuili (2007) who observed that men had a negative attitude towards women especially in leadership. Men were more considered in leadership and administration than the female teachers. These also pointed out that promotions were on a give and take basis especially at provincial level. Corruption therefore denied women an opportunity to become administrators especially those whose lifestyles were conservative by nature. Most of the respondents (67%) did not hesitate to mention that ‘this is a male dominated world where women are down-trodden and the societal duties or different gender roles make women less committed to their careers’. It was evident that women had too much household chores hence limited time to further their education.

In regard to how a person viewed himself or herself the study investigated on the highest position the respondents (teachers) wished to attain in their teaching profession. Figure 4.14 revealed the following findings.

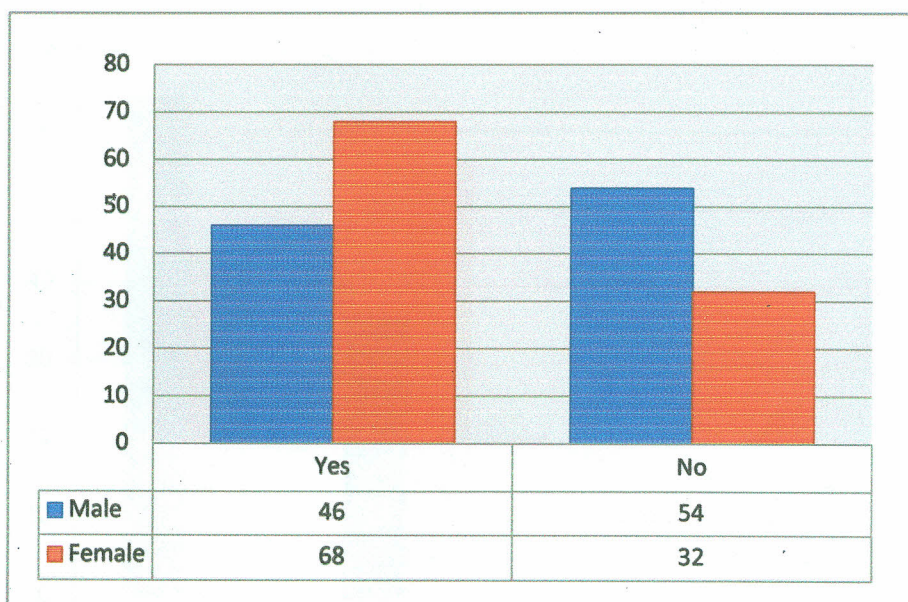


**Figure 4.14 Teachers' responses on Highest Position wished to attain**

It is evident that more male (57.6%) than female teachers (28.9%) wished to rise to the rank of the head teacher. It was surprising that none of the female teachers was interested in the deputy head teacher's position compared to 25.5% of the male respondents. Majority, 53.7% of the female teachers wished to become H.O.Ds compared to 10.4% of the male teachers. 17.4% of the female teachers were not interested in any specific position or were undecided compared to only 6.5% of the male teachers. The findings revealed that the male teachers had higher aspirations especially in regard to the highest administrative post in the school than the female teachers. Most women were contented with the position of a H.O.D.

#### 4.7 Gender bias in promotion

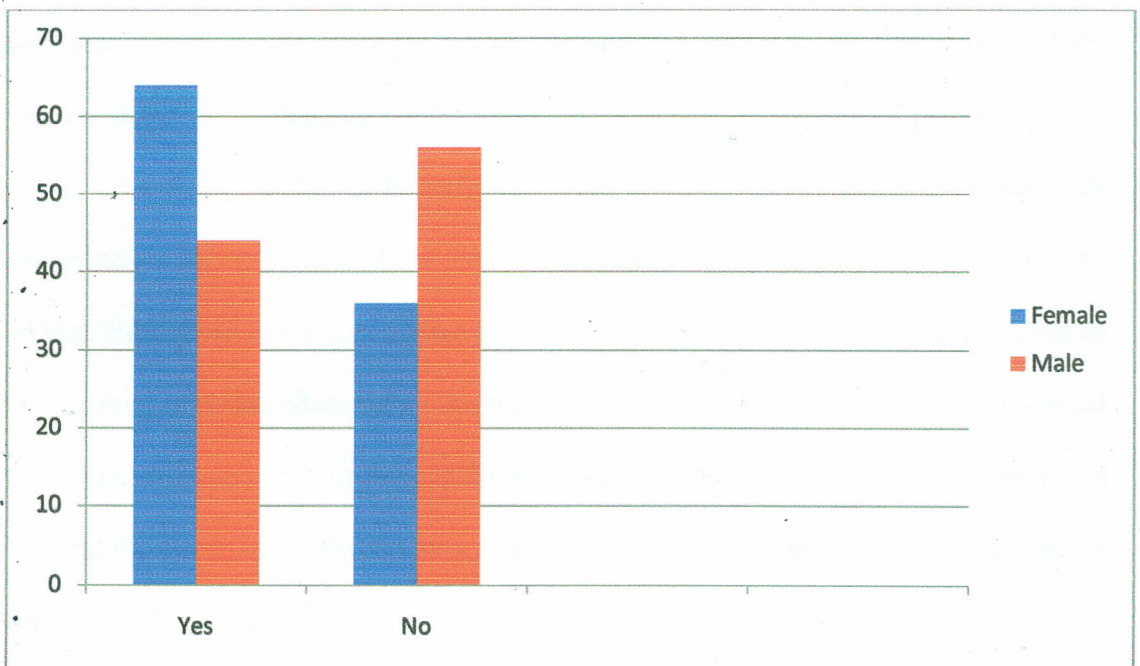
The study also had an objective of establishing whether there was any bias while carrying out the promotions. The results were displayed as in figure 4.15.



**Fig. 4.15 Principals and Deputy Principals perception on gender biases in promotion**

Figure 4.15 revealed that majority of the respondents (54%) felt that gender had a bearing on professional advancement while 46% felt otherwise. Most of the female respondents felt that they were discriminated against on the basis of their gender. This was evident by the situation on the ground that even though there were many mixed schools they were headed by male principals and the best that was offered to the women is the post of a deputy principal. Kagoda, (2008) seemed to express the same sentiments in his study by noting that men leaders and panelists tended to give women lower rating thus denying them fair competition for the top position. Kagoda further notes that such marginalization of women on the basis of their gender has the effect of causing some to withdraw from the academic discourse.

The same question on bias on the promotion of teachers was put to the teachers. Figure 4.16 presented the findings.



**Figure 4.16 Male and Female Teachers' responses on Gender bias on Promotion**

Majority of the female respondents (64%) indicated that there was gender biasness in the promotion of the teachers in the County while 36% expressed otherwise. This situation is similar to what was recorded by Havoline (2006) that women for a long time have had to contend with male prejudices in most African setups. On the other hand, the male teachers did not seem to share the same opinion with the female teachers. The majority (56%) did not think that there was any biasness while 44% indicated that it existed. The male perception of gender biasness was of two perspectives. Some thought that women were favoured by some panelists while others did not agree with the affirmative action because it favoured women.

#### **4.8 Gender Violence**

In response to the question as to whether female principals experienced Gender violence in the course of discharging their duties, majority of the respondents (48%) indicated they had been involved in gender violence as school administrators while 52% indicated otherwise. It is evident that more female principals had encountered violence as they played their administrative duties. The violence ranged from psychological to sometimes physical. Some men resisted women leadership just because they were women. They regarded the position of the school principal as the domain of the man. These echoed the words of Rajuili, (2007) who observed that throughout history, many have come to believe that leadership is a traditionally masculine activity. On the other hand, the respondents who said they had not experienced gender violence indicated that in their stations professionalism was highly maintained and people respect the teaching profession as a whole. This was a good indication of a new dawn where professionals are identified as officers rather than male or female.

#### **4.8.1 Status of respondents' biological traits**

It was also necessary to know how the respondents assessed themselves as to whether their biological traits were a barrier to career development. All the respondents (100%) agreed that their biological traits were not a hindrance to senior administrative responsibilities. The respondents commented that many among them had moved from classroom teachers to become administrators.

It was important to ask the female teachers whether their role as wives, mothers and home makers conflicted with their professional role. Majority of the respondents (61.5%) indicated that they did not experience role conflict between their traditional and professional roles while 38.5% said that they experience the conflict. Those who said 'yes' commented that traditions expected women to be on the receiving end and be subjected to lighter roles at school. This had socialized them to accepting junior ranks to those of their male counterparts.

#### **4.9 Challenges faced as teachers work towards attaining goals**

Some of the female teachers (43%) indicated that they found it difficult to balance between personal or family duties and official duties in school. They could not plan for both professional and domestic responsibilities. Other respondents complained of lack of adequate time due to motherhood, other family duties and domestic chores. Uncooperative spouses who were neither supportive nor encouraging were another challenge that some female teachers had to contend with. However a larger percentage (57%) did not find any problem balancing their two roles.

At their place of work, they had to deal with misunderstanding from colleagues and other members of the school community. Discouragement from the other members of staff such as

discrimination by male teachers because they felt women were not competent enough was another major obstacle. They also faced competition from other like-minded people in the profession. Some administrators viewed women as a threat to their positions if they kept on advancing.

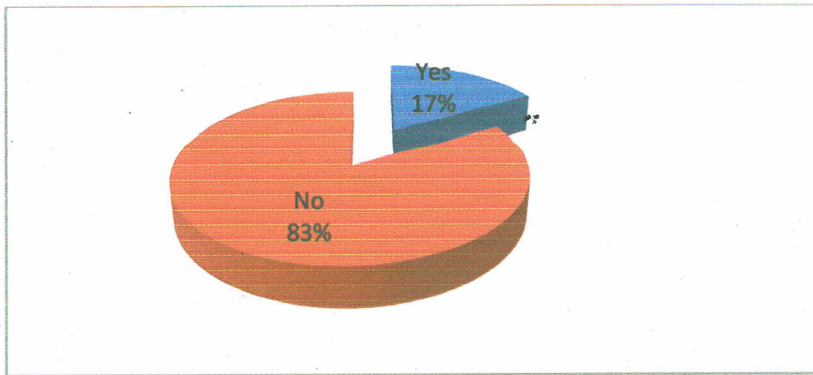
Administratively, issues such as stringent rules to upward mobility and limitations imposed by TSC on qualifications for study leave were pointed out. Others said they were denied a chance to further their studies even though some stated that they faced a challenge of insufficient funds to attain higher education.

#### **4.10 Government Policies and Political Influence on Career Mobility**

The study also investigated principals and deputy principals' knowledge of government policies and political influence on career advancement.

##### **4.10.1 Teachers' perception of Government Policies on Promotion**

Like other government officers, teachers are subjected to the same government guidelines regarding movement from one job group to the other. Though these policies are outlined in the T.S.C code of conduct, it was necessary to find out if the teachers were aware of them and what effect they had on their career mobility. Asked whether the existing policies posed any threats to their upward mobility they expressed their opinion as displayed in figure 4.17.



**Figure 4.17 Teachers opinion on threats posed by Government policies to upward mobility**

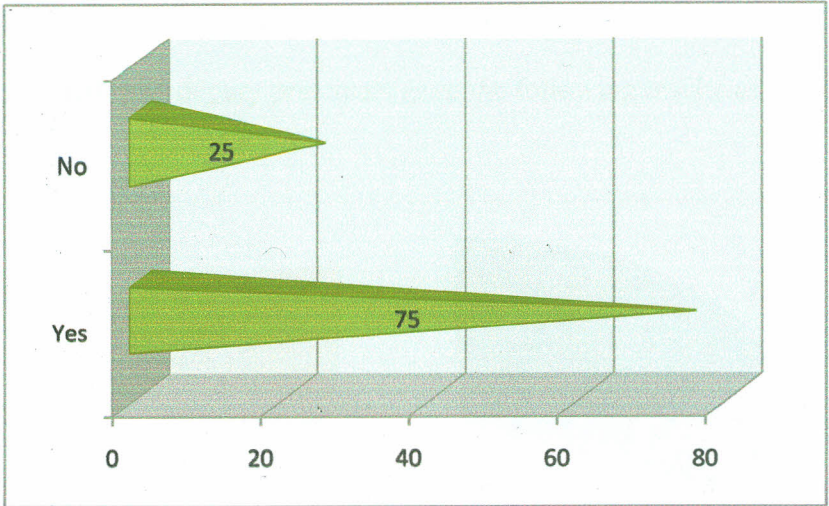
One of the questions sought to find out whether the government policies were a barrier to female upward mobility. Both the male and female respondents were asked this question and their responses were as presented in figure 4.18. This indicated that majority (83%) of the male and female teachers felt that government policies did not pose a threat to women mobility to the top administrative posts while 17% felt that the policies were a threat.

Government policies on career mobility are very clear. Kariuki (2010) quoting Article 32 of the Constitution says that men and women shall have equal rights regarding education, employment and promotion. These are fair to every employee if only they ceased being rhetoric statements on paper that were not implemented to the latter. These were unfortunately sometimes dictated by the political climate of an area at times and therefore were sanctioned by individuals who sought to perpetuate their own beliefs.

#### **4.11 Constitutional Rights and Equality among Men and Women**

The Constitution of Kenya stipulates that male and female employees are entitled to equal rights of promotion. This is covered under the Gender Policy in Education (July 2007). This study sought to find out if the respondents in all the categories were aware of these rights and

their opinions as regards the implementation of these rights. The findings were displayed in figure 4.18.

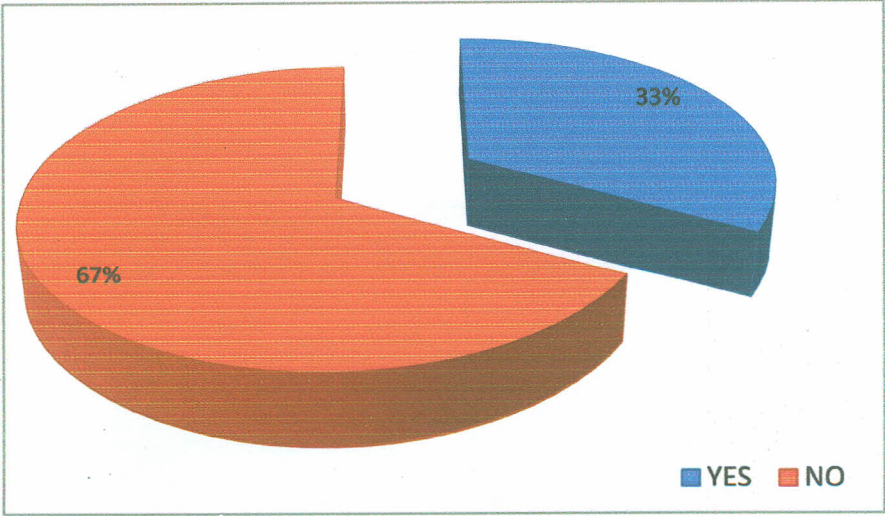


**Figure 4.18 Male and Female respondents' opinion on Constitutional Rights Equality among men and women**

Figure 4.18 indicates that majority of the respondents (75%) indicated that men and women have the same constitutional rights while 25% indicated otherwise. In Kenya gender equity has taken center stage resulting in the development and enactment of various legal and policy interventions including enactment of National Commission on Gender and Development Act in 2003 and the passing of National Policy on Gender and Development 2006 and the 30% presidential decree on affirmative action in public appointments, among others. However, the women still lag behind in comparison with the male counterparts due to lack of aggressiveness on the part of the women themselves and sometimes stereotypes among men in the society. Therefore the documentation may exist but if they are not practically implemented they are mere rhetoric statements.

### 4.12 Political Barriers to Upward Mobility

The politics of an area influences other sectors of life either directly or indirectly. The influence can either be negative or positive. In order to establish political barriers, male and female principals and deputy principals gave the following results as presented in figure 4.19.

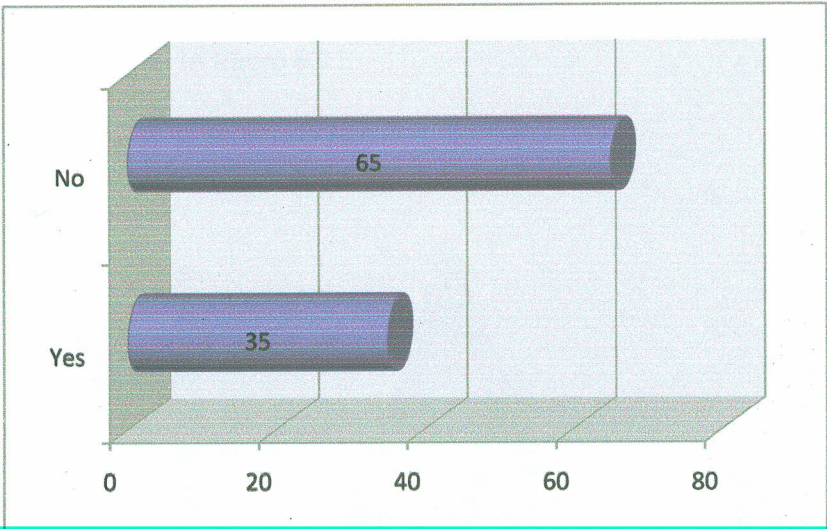


**Figure 4.19 Principals and Deputy Principals on Resistance from Political Leaders**

Figure 4.19 shows that majority of the respondents (67%) have never faced any resistance from political leaders while 33% recorded otherwise. They said that the area Members of Parliament recommend transfers of some teachers while others had the final say in the awarding of bursaries, scholarships and leadership positions. Some always criticized development projects within the school thus intimidating them as head teachers and the in-charge of the institutions. The situation was attributed to low representation of women in the August House to voice the interest of women in other fields. This agrees with the views of Kariuki (2010) who states that the tenth parliament (2007-2012) has the highest number of female legislators in Kenyan history. However, the percentage of female legislators which is

only 10.4% Female participation in political processes is limited in several ways, mostly through voter registration processes and voting rules.

Political affiliation was a political related issue that played an important part as far as mobility is concerned. Asked whether political affiliation was a factor of promotion, the responses were as presented in figure 4.20.



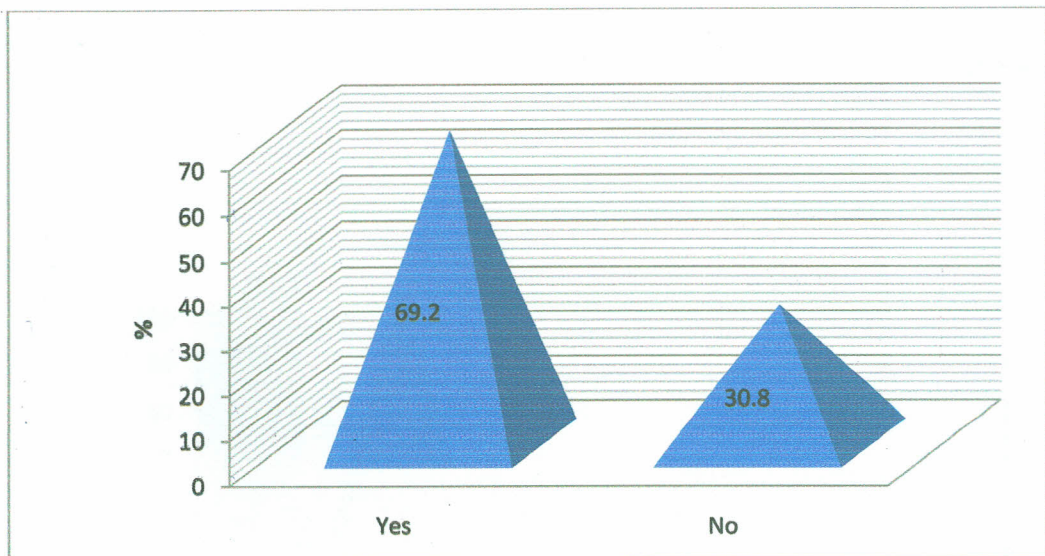
**Figure 4.20 Political Affiliations versus Mobility Aspiration as Perceived by Male and Female Principals**

Figure 4.20 indicated that majority of the respondents (65%) said that their political affiliation did not work against their mobility aspiration while 35% said it did. It is evident the majority did not think that political affiliation played a role in career mobility. However the 35% cannot be overlooked. Their opinion was shared by Mwaniki (2002) in his study on 'Obstacles to women participation in the management of secondary schools in Nakuru district' who said that at the school level, some women principals had to contend with civic and parliamentary representatives who were opposed to their being school administrators. He further says that some of them had even been ejected from their positions for not having the

blessings of the political leaders. Since the political climate of an area seemed to dictate the direction of many other aspects of life, it posed a problem to the upward mobility of women teachers to administrative positions.

#### 4.13 Socio- cultural Influence on Career Mobility

In a society where traditional beliefs are deeply entrenched in every aspect of life the roles and place for the man and woman are clearly defined. The following paragraphs presented the findings as displayed in figure 4.21.

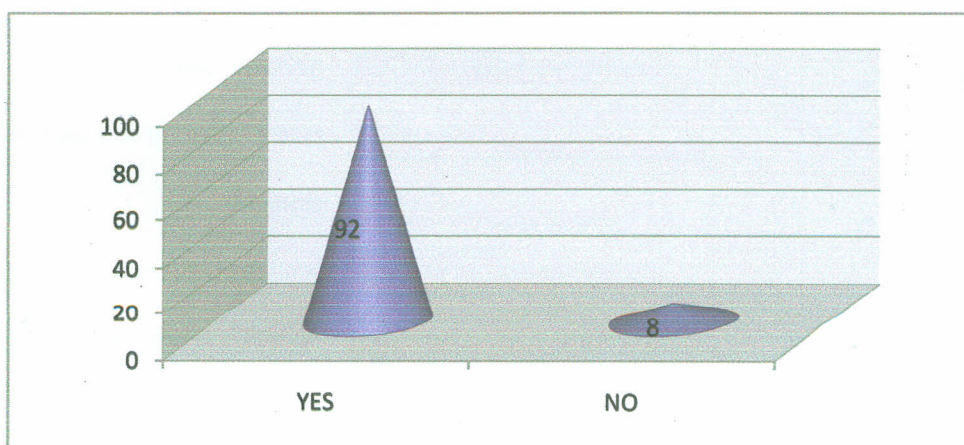


**Figure 4.21 Respondents' Perception of Socio- Cultural Hindrances to Upward Mobility among Women**

Figure 4.21 shows that majority of the respondents (69.2%) indicated that cultural socialization was a hindrance to upward mobility of women while 30.8% indicated otherwise. Reasons advanced by those who said it did were that most communities did not value women and they were subject to the opinion of men. Women were also assumed to be incompetent and therefore were not possible leaders. This agrees with the view held by Rajuili (2007) who stated that the majority of the women were relegated to second place by their society. Even

the women themselves were socialized to believe that they were subordinate to men, thus the lack of aggressive behavior in attaining the top positions. Kariuki (2010) concurs with this in her report on Women Participation in the Kenyan Society by stating that women hardly exercise their freedom of movement or association and as a result cannot participate in the nation building process. Among the Loita Maasai, for example, women are not allowed to address men at a public baraza. Some women must even adopt subservient positions when speaking to their own spouses.

The study also sought to find out the opinion of the respondents on whether there was underrepresentation of the women school administrators in the county. The findings were as presented in figure 4.22.



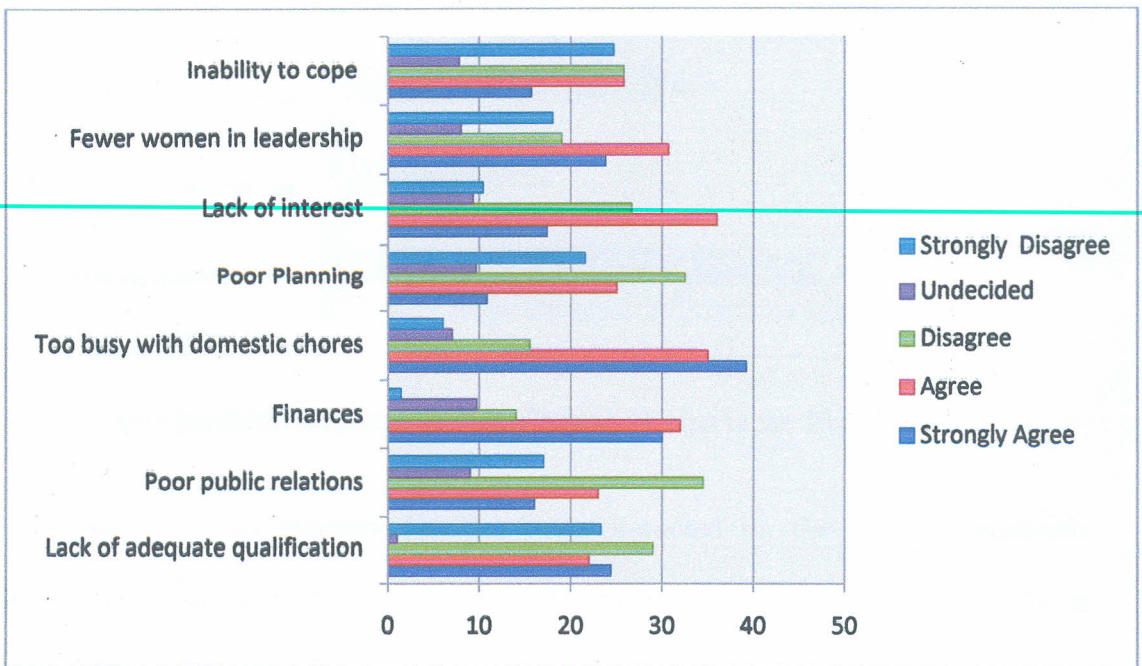
**Fig4.22 Respondents' perception on Under-representation of Women in School Administration**

Majority of the respondents (92%) as indicated in Figure 4.22 said there was under representation of women from the ministerial headquarter to the local County while 8% said the under representation was not there. The respondents explained that most positions were held by the male as they dominated most positions and that women were not aggressive enough. The lack of aggressiveness was evident in the number of female teachers who were

satisfied with their current positions or were not interested in rising above the position of a H.O.D.

#### 4.14 Other related Barriers to Administration

Other than the identified themes, the study wanted to find out if there were other issues that could have led to the underrepresentation of women at the top administrative level. These barriers are presented in figure 4.23

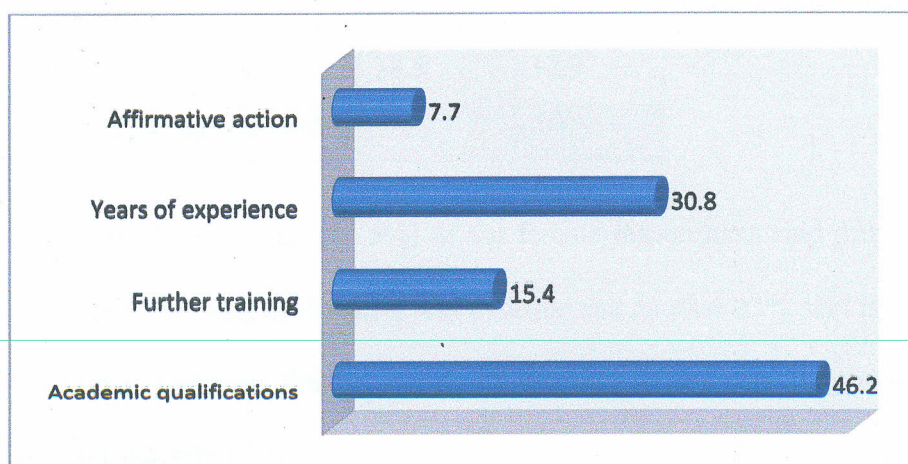


**Figure 4.23 Female respondents on other factors affecting women career advancement**

In the above Figure 4.23 it's evident that majority of the respondents (39.2%) indicated that they strongly agreed while 35% indicated that they agreed that women were too busy with domestic chores while 36% were of the opinion that lack of interest affected women in their career advancement. Regarding finances, 32% indicated that they agreed while 30% strongly agreed that finances were another factor that affected women's upward mobility.

#### 4.14.1 Knowledge of criteria for Promotion

One of the objectives of the study was to establish factors that influence teachers' career advancement. It was therefore necessary to investigate whether the teachers were aware of criteria used in promotion of teachers. These were: affirmative action, work experience, further training and academic qualifications. The results were presented in figure 4.24.



**Figure 4.24 Female teachers response on knowledge of Criteria for Promotion**

Figure 4.24 indicates that majority (46.2%) were promoted on the basis of academic qualification, 30.8% on years of experience, 15.4% on further training and only 7.7% on affirmative action. Education officers pointed out that more emphasis is put on all the above factors during all procedures of promotion. They also indicated another area that great importance is placed co-curricular activities where unfortunately female teachers score very dismally. The same sentiments were expressed by Matasyoh, (2006) who says that the criteria for promotion that was initially pegged on academic qualification later spread to areas of co-curricular activities such as drama, music and games.

**Table 4.4 Female and Male responses on rating their promotion to current position**

The study sought to find out the rate of promotions for the male and female teachers as presented in table 4.4

	Female%	Male %
<b>Very timely</b>	7.7	29.6
<b>Timely</b>	23	32.7
<b>Over due</b>	23	19.5
<b>Long over due</b>	38.5	12.9
<b>Very long over due</b>	7.8	5.3

Table 4.4 shows that majority (38.5%) of the female respondents said promotion to current position was long overdue, 23% said it was overdue and another 23% said it was timely while 7.7% each said it was very timely. Another 7.8% said it was very long overdue. The male respondents on the other hand, presented the following results: 29.6% said their promotion was very timely, 32.7% said it was timely, 19.5% over due, 12.9 long overdue and 5.3% said it was very long overdue. To compare the situation with that of the male teachers, it was obvious that the majority were satisfied with the length of period they had taken from one job group to another. This is evident that the majority of the female teachers had overstayed at one level. This situation could lead to apathy and discouragement among the teachers.

This seems to agree with the opinion of Rajuili (2007) who notes that normal employment practice of promotion does not apply to women as to men. Pregnancy remained a real problem to women and in most cases the entire period of child bearing is lost not because women are incapacitated but because they are less desirable especially to male bosses.

#### **4.15 Suggestions for the Way Forward in Ensuring More Participation of Women in Educational Administration**

The study also sought opinions from the respondents on their suggestion of the way forward to ensure participation of female teachers in secondary school administration. Among the suggestions was that the promotion of women in administrative positions should be based on performance and qualifications first and foremost and other qualifications only to be considered as an added advantage. Some also felt that there was a need for practical implementation of the affirmative action even in the education sector so as to accord female teachers their rightful share of leadership. There was also a need to enforce the existing government policies. A majority of the respondents were of the opinion that women should be empowered and an opportunity of training and equipping women be created. Sensitize women through seminars and other open forums.

It was also suggested that the society should be educated so as to consider women as equal partners to their male counterparts and to create awareness among girls through role models from within their communities. Women were called upon to work hard in academics to acquire better grades and should attend capacity building courses and implement what they learn carefully in order to be at par with their male counterparts.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

#### Introduction

In this chapter the results of the study are summarized and recommendations made thereafter.

#### 5.1 Summary of the Study

In almost all parts of the world, women have had limited success in penetrating into the middle and top administrative positions. Kenya has similar trends of having few women at the top. The major focus of this study was to investigate barriers to upward mobility of female teachers in administration of public secondary schools in Bungoma West of Bungoma County.

Since there are very few women holding senior administrative positions in Kenyan public secondary schools in Bungoma County, the purpose of the study as stated in chapter one was to find out the factors that militate against their entry into top positions.

The study was guided by four objectives: to establish the factors that influence female teachers' career advancement; to establish the extent to which social cultural factors influence career advancement; to investigate whether gender issues and stereotypes are limitations to progression of women and finally to determine possible solutions to the identified barriers.

The study was guided by the radical feminist theory that was concerned with the marginalization of women. Related literature from earlier studies, books and other publications was reviewed.

Purposive sampling technique was employed in sampling the respondents to participate in the study. The respondents were selected from among Education officers, principals, deputy principals, H.O.Ds and teachers. Research tools were constructed and these included questionnaires for teachers, H.O.Ds and deputy principals. Questions for interview schedules for principals and Education officers were constructed. Piloting was carried out for the purpose of testing the validity and reliability of the research instruments. This was then followed up by the actual research. The questionnaires were distributed and face to face interviews conducted. Out of the 104 questionnaires distributed, 98 were returned. Only 4 were wrongly filled. 12 out of the 13 principals sampled participated. Collected data was then analyzed and presented in form of bar graphs, pie charts and tables.

The factors identified for investigation in relation to career upward mobility of women to administrative positions comprised of gender, age, work experience and academic qualifications and professional development. The study also looked at the socio cultural background of the respondents and the influence it had on career mobility. The study sought to examine barriers that stood in the way to the upward mobility of female teachers. The barriers were both intrinsic and extrinsic.

Personality characteristics that contribute to one's promotion were also looked at. Despite having the qualifications, few of the women had applied for the vacancies. Gender stereotype factors which are associated with traditional roles and society's views were also revealed.

## **5.2 Summary of the findings**

The study revealed that most of the respondents were female due to the nature of study and also the unwillingness of the men to participate. Majority of the respondents (84.5%) who

participated were between 21-53 years old. On marital status majority of the respondents for principals and deputy Principals and for H.O.Ds were married. Only a small number of the respondents (30%) were single or widowed. None of the respondents recorded to being divorced.

In line with the objectives that guided this study the specific findings were as explained in the following paragraphs:

To establish the factors that influence female teachers' career advancement; to this objective, the results of this study showed that academically the women were almost at par with their male counterparts especially at the minimum requirement of Bachelors of Education. However, most women had not taken time to further their education due to family responsibilities. Their work experience was also not a barrier although the majority of the ladies did not favour workshops or seminars citing them as interruptions of their daily routine.

The advancement of female teachers from one job group to another took a longer time. This was a barrier considering that the requirement of the Ministry of Education and the T.S.C is that one has to be on job group 'N' to qualify for a position of a secondary school principal. The female teachers cited some discrimination, intimidation, discouragement and lack of interest as reasons for this situation. Although some of the female teachers had qualified as par the advertisements, they had not even ones applied for that promotion. Some feared the responsibility of taking up the whole administrative role. They were contented as heads of departments, giving them recognition and little power over the other teachers but not the full responsibility of running the school. Other personal barriers such as lack of assertiveness and complacency were reasons why other teachers did not pursue top leadership roles.

In response to the second objective which was to establish the extent to which social/ cultural factors influenced career advancement, it was evident that the majority of public secondary school administrators were male. Women constituted less than half of the number of male administrators. This is despite the fact that there are many mixed secondary schools for boys and girls the majority being headed by male administrators. The study revealed that for married women in particular, family responsibilities had a direct influence on their chances of career mobility. Where there was a conflict of interest of domestic responsibilities and career development, the former was given the first priority with many feeling that they could not sacrifice the welfare of their family for career mobility. Their career advancement was also affected by career breaks like maternity leave or relocation to accompany their spouses to other areas.

The third objective that guided this study was to find out how far gender issues and stereotypes limited career advancement among women. The findings revealed that gender was looked at as a problem for the women and therefore few men wanted to associate with gender equity matters. The local society was affected by traditional attitudes that viewed women as home- makers and not professionals. This is why they were best only as classroom teachers, a duty that was considered more flexible for a mother and a wife. Women who were seen to have defied this faced hostility from the male colleagues. The socio- cultural background made any aggressive woman to be looked at as an intruder in the men's world. This was the reason behind the stereotype of what female administrators were and were not. On the other hand, the women themselves were socialized early in life to accept that any other role was secondary to their role as home- makers. Even in this 21<sup>st</sup> century, there are some who thought of a woman's position as that of a submissive person under the traditional leadership

of the male. Thus, the male administrative role is accepted to be natural unlike that of a female.

Last but not least, the fourth objective of the study was to determine possible solutions to the identified barriers. It was therefore necessary to examine the problem from all spheres of influence starting with the political angle that influenced all other activities of man's life. For a long time women have been politically misrepresented in Bungoma county just as is the case in many other counties. It is regarded as a male dominated world and this kind of political climate has affected many other areas of leadership including school administration. Most of our respondents who indicated that politics affected career mobility were female. Some female administrators already in office cited cases of transfers or forceful removal of female principals who did not have the support of local politicians. Some indicated that the bone of contention was the Community Development Fund (CDF) and the unavailability of this fund to either sort out the school fee deficit or help in carrying out development projects within the school. The female teachers suggested total detachment of politicians and political matters from school activities so as to avoid harassment on female administrators and administrators to be.

Although female teachers were aware of the criteria for promotion to administration, these positions continued to elude them. The findings revealed that this was brought about by both intrinsic and extrinsic barriers. In order to overcome these, suggestions such as female teachers have to take up the responsibility of advancing themselves career wise and society too had an obligation to change their socio- cultural attitude were given.

### **5.3 Conclusion**

The findings in 5.2 above show that to a large extent, the hindrances placed in the path for women's career upward mobility result from a social mindset that maintains that males are physically and constitutionally superior to females. That attitude is learnt and entrenched over many years as a result of socialization. It is made up of a complex of cultural, biological and psychological principles, all feeding on and re-enforcing each other to the extent of influencing women's perception by men and also by self.

In analyzing the research findings, one comes to the conclusion that the marginalization of women is linked with those cultural stereotypes that dictate that women excel in the non-academic pastoral aspects of education. This conclusion is based on invalid data and is regrettably passed on uncritically from generation to generation. Persons who operate with this framework tend to be arrogant and will maintain their 'superiority' at all costs.

Secondly, and as a result of such entrenched attitudes, legal interventions such as Gender Equity Bill are of limited use in advancing the cause of ordinary women in the teaching profession. I must hasten to concede that legal interventions and affirmative action strategies have benefitted just a fraction of women in the teaching profession. The plight of women in the middle and lower levels has not changed much. The status quo could be due to the many structural barriers mainly extrinsic but also intrinsic hindrances that act as self-fulfilling prophecies.

### **5.4 Recommendations**

i) Women should seek information on the criteria used for promotion that is available in various institutions of learning and Education offices and make use of that information to

advance to administrative positions. Stakeholders should take the lead in helping build legitimacy of women's knowledge of criteria used for promotion and capabilities by being committed to the idea of educating women and encouraging them to attain the required qualification and to make use of it.

ii) Women should rise above their traditional role and family responsibilities. They should be prepared to take up more leadership roles and stop sacrificing their career mobility for family responsibilities. The society as a whole should be educated to change their attitude towards women leaders. This will enable women to be integrated as active participants in promotion of education and development.

iii) Women should attend empowerment seminars held in the county to motivate women to compete actively for leadership positions. For women to prosper, society must do more to unshackle them from traditional beliefs, prejudices, stereotypes and biases that still regard women as inferior beings fit only to stay at home as housewives and mothers. Hence, there is need for all concerned to have a positive attitude towards women who aspire to become leaders.

iv) Women should be more aggressive in career development. What also needs to be done is to redefine and renegotiate the role and function of women with regard to how they can positively contribute to society's prosperity through positions of leadership in the education profession. These demands for interventions in the form of mentoring, workshops, seminars and in-service training that are geared specifically towards empowering women and especially those that have the potential to make it to the top as secondary school head teachers.

## 5.5 Suggestions for further Research

This study was focused only on the administrative, the socio-cultural and political factors that hinder female access to administrative positions in secondary schools in Bungoma East of Bungoma County. Further research is recommended in several other areas such as:

- i) Research can be carried out to determine the barriers to the full participation of women in higher education management.
- ii) Research can be carried out to establish why most women in Kenya shy away from decision making and leadership positions as a whole.
- iii) Research can be carried out to determine how the multiple roles that women engage in hinder them from full participation in political and decision making positions in Education.
- iv) Research should be carried out to determine the strategies for changing cultural attitudes to create more supportive environments for women in higher education management.

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## APPENDIX 1: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS & H.O.Ds

The researcher intends to carry out a research on barriers to upward mobility of female teachers to administrative position in Bungoma County. This questionnaire is intended to help in an investigation on determinants of women participation in career advancement. Any information you give will highly be appreciated and will only be used for the purpose of this study. You are assured of utmost confidentiality.

Kindly fill in the questionnaire as honestly as possible.

### SECTION A

1. Gender: Male ( ) Female ( )

2. Indicate your position in the school \_\_\_\_\_

3. your age in years

25 – 30 ( ) 31 – 40 ( )

41- 50 ( ) 51 and above ( )

4. What is your marital status?

a) Single ( ) b) Married ( ) c) Widowed ( ) d) Divorced ( )

5. What is your academic qualification?

Technical teacher ( ) S1/ Diploma ( )

Graduate (B.E.D) ( ) Graduate (M.E.D) ( )

Others

(specify)

6. Indicate your current job group?

i) K ( )

ii) L ( )

iii) M ( )

iv) N ( )

v) P ( )

Any other (specify)

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7. How long have you served on your current job group?

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8. What is your teaching experience in Years?

1- 5 ( )

6- 10 ( )

11- 15 ( )

21- 25 ( )

Above 25 ( )

9.i) Have you attended any in- service course?

Yes ( )

No ( )

If yes, how often do they interfere with school work?

Always ( )

Sometimes ( )

Rarely ( )

Not at all ( )

ii) Do you have any experience in co-curricular activities?

Yes ( )

No ( )

iii) Briefly give your opinion of the role co-curricular activity in students' development and career growth.

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**SECTION B**

10. My head teacher's gender is

Male ( )                      Female ( )

11. What gender of administrator do you like to work with?

a) Headmaster ( )      b) Headmistress ( )

ii) Briefly explain your experience

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Do you think the sex of a teacher affects professional growth?

Yes ( )                      No ( )

ii) If yes, briefly outline the reasons

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Which is the highest position you wish to attain as a teacher in your career?

i) Class teacher ( )      ii) Head of department ( )  
iii) Deputy Head teacher ( )      iv) Head teacher ( )

Any other \_\_\_\_\_

What challenges do you face as you work towards attaining your goal indicated above?

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To what extent do the following affect women in career advancement? Indicate

SA= Strongly Agree    A = Agree    D- Disagree    U- Undecided    SD= strongly disagree

		SA	A	U	D	SD
1	Lack of adequate academic qualification					
2	Poor public relations					
3	Finances					
4	Too busy with domestic chores/traditional role					
5	Poor planning					
6	Lack of interest					
7	Fewer women in leadership					
8	Inability to cope with schooling, stress					

Briefly explain answers in the above table

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b) As a head of department:

1- 3 yrs ( )      4 -6 yrs ( )

7- 9 yrs ( )      10 yrs and above ( )

c) As a deputy Principal:

1-3 yrs ( )      4- 6 yrs ( )      7-9 yrs ( )

## SECTION B: ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

6. What criterion was used in your promotion to your current position?

Academic qualification ( )      Years of experience ( )

Further training ( )      Affirmative action ( )

If any other, explain.

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i) How would you rate your promotion to your current position?

Very timely ( )      Timely ( )

Overdue ( )      Long overdue ( )

Very long overdue ( )

Briefly explain your answer

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ii) Do any government policies pose a threat to women mobility to administrative posts?

Yes ( )      No ( )

If yes, explain.

---

iii) Is cultural socialization a hindrance to upward mobility among women?

Yes ( )

No ( )

If yes, explain.

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iv) Does gender have a bearing on matters of professional advancement?

Yes ( )

No ( )

v) What role has stereotyping played in career progression of both male and female?

Explain

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12. Is there gender bias in the promotion of teachers in your County?

Yes ( )

No ( )

13. Do you experience role conflict between your traditional and professional roles?

Yes ( )

No ( )

Explain

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14. Is there under representation of women from the ministerial headquarters to the local County level?

Yes ( )

No ( )

Explain

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---

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15. In your opinion, do men and women have the same constitutional rights in Kenya?

Yes ( )                      No ( )

Explain

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---

16. Have you ever faced gender violence as a school administrator?

Yes ( )                      No ( )

Explain

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---

17. Are ones biological traits a hindrance to senior administrative responsibilities?

Yes ( )                      No ( )

Explain

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---

18. Have you ever faced any resistance from local political leaders?

Yes ( )                      No ( )

Explain

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19. Does your political affiliation work against your mobility aspirations?

Yes ( ) No ( )

20.i) How do the media portray other women who hold administrative positions?

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ii) In your opinion, how does this impact promotions and women aspiration?

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21. Briefly explain your coping strategies to any of the barriers encountered.

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22. Suggest the way forward in ensuring more participation of women in educational administration?

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### APPENDIX 3: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR PRINCIPALS

1. What is your age bracket?

25-30 yrs ( )

31- 36yrs ( )

37-41 yrs ( )

42-47 yrs ( )

48-52 yrs ( )

above 53 years ( )

2. What is your marital status?

Single ( )

Married ( )

Any other (specify)

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3. What is your academic qualification?

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4. What is your work experience?

a) As a classroom teacher \_\_\_\_\_

b) As a H.O.D \_\_\_\_\_

c) As a deputy principal \_\_\_\_\_

d) Any other (specify)

---

5. How did u ascend to your current position?

a) By merit

b) Academic qualification

c) Further training

d) Affirmative action

6. How would you rate your promotion to the current position?

- a) Very timely
- b) Timely
- c) Overdue
- d) Long overdue
- e) Very long overdue

7. Who is your mentor? \_\_\_\_\_

8. Do ministerial policies pose a threat to women mobility to administrative positions?

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9. How often do you undergo in-service training?

- a) Very often
- b) Often
- c) Seldom
- d) Not often
- e) Never

10. School category

- a) Girls boarding
- b) Girls' day
- c) Girls' day and boarding
- d) Mixed day
- e) Mixed boarding

11. Total school enrolment \_\_\_\_\_

12. Number streams \_\_\_\_\_
13. Number of teachers by gender Male \_\_\_\_\_ Female \_\_\_\_\_
14. Number of departmental heads by gender: Male \_\_\_\_\_ Female \_\_\_\_\_
15. Are there some policies set by the ministry of Education which hinder your upward mobility?
16. Do men tend to occupy all key administrative posts in your county?
17. Have you faced any resistance from the male teachers support staff workers?
18. Is your cultural socialization an obstacle to upward mobility?
19. In your opinion, do you think stereotyping of women interferes with their promotion?
20. Do you experience role conflict between your traditional and professional roles?
21. Is there under representation of women from the ministerial headquarters to the county level?
22. In your opinion, do men and women have the same constitutional rights?
23. Have you ever faced gender violence in your capacity as a school administrator?
24. Does your traditional orientation work against your aspirations?
25. What strategies have you employed to cope with those barriers you encounter?
26. What suggestions would you give to ensure women participation in administration?

## APPENDIX 4: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR THE DISTRICT EDUCATION OFFICERS

Introduction: The researcher intends to carry out a study on barriers to upward mobility of female teachers to administrative positions. Your resourcefulness will be important to this study. The information you will provide here is intended for the purpose of this research and will be treated in strict confidence.

1. What is your highest academic qualification?
2. For how long have you been working in the current position?
3. Did you ever work in the education sector as a teacher? If so, for how long and what was your highest rank held?
4. How many teachers and supervisors are there in your County?
5. What is the current enrolment in your County?
6. Number of principals/ head teachers by gender: Male \_\_\_\_\_ Female \_\_\_\_\_
7. Has the government allocated funds to finance in-service programmes in your district in these financial years (2011/2012)?
8. How much money have you received for this purpose?
9. Has there been any increase or decrease in the amount allocated to your district in this financial year in comparison to the previous financial year (2008/2009)?
10. What was the amount allocated in the financial years (2009/2010)?
11. What criterion is used in the promotion of teachers to administrative positions?
12. Are there any concessions made as per the affirmative action?
13. From statistics, how do women respond to administrative advertisements posted?
14. What is the public opinion on women administration in your county?

15. Are there any cases of violence against women that have come to your attention?
16. In your opinion, is there under representation of women in the senior positions of administration in your county?
17. What impact has the traditional orientation had on women's career progression?
18. Are there notable conflicts between women traditional roles and professional roles?
19. What mentorship/ campaign programmes do you have in place in your county?
20. Give suggestions on how women would be more involved in administration.

### APPENDIX 5: TIME SCHEDULE

MONTH	ACTIVITY
JANUARY-APRIL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Develop and write the proposal</li><li>• Conduct literature review</li></ul>
MAY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Typing first draft of the proposal</li><li>• Typing second draft of the proposal</li></ul>
JUNE-JULY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Piloting instruments</li><li>• Production of research instruments</li><li>• Data collection</li></ul>
AUGUST	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Data analysis</li></ul>
SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER	Typing project/ report <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• First draft</li><li>• Second draft</li><li>• Final draft binding and submission</li></ul>

## APPENDIX 6: BUDGET

ACTIVITY	RATE	KSHS
<b>Proposal development:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Literature review</li> <li>• Transport</li> <li>• Typing first draft</li> <li>• Photocopying costs</li> </ul>	15 days @ 200 15 days @ 150 60 pages @ sh. 20 60 pages @ sh. 3x2	<b>3000</b> <b>2250</b> <b>1200</b> <b>360</b>
<b>Piloting</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transport-Within</li> <li>• From and to Nairobi</li> <li>• Lunch</li> </ul>	-5 days @ 200 -1500 x 2 7 days @ 200	<b>1000</b> <b>3000</b> <b>1400</b>
<b>Data collection</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transport</li> <li>• Lunch</li> <li>• Analysis</li> </ul>	20 days @ 200 + 3000 20 days @ 200 3 days @ 2000	<b>6000</b> <b>4000</b> <b>6000</b>
<b>Project writing</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Typing</li> <li>• Photocopying</li> <li>• 1<sup>st</sup> draft</li> <li>• Final draft</li> <li>• Binding</li> </ul>	70 pages @sh. 20 70 pages @sh. 3 x2 70 pages @ 40 70 pages @ 20 x 5 copies 5 copies @ 450	<b>1400</b> <b>420</b> <b>2800</b> <b>7000</b> <b>2250</b>
Miscellaneous expenses	10,000	<b>10,000</b>
<b>TOTALS</b>		<b>53,080</b>

REPUBLIC OF KENYA



# NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

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Our Ref: **NCST/RCD/14/012/621**

Date: **21<sup>st</sup> May, 2012**

Joy Bunyasi Walucho  
Kenyatta University  
P.O BOX 43844-00100  
NAIROBI

## **RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION**

Following your application for authority to carry out research on "*Barriers to upward mobility of female teachers in administration in public secondary schools: A case of Bungoma West, Bungoma County, Kenya*" I am pleased to inform you that you have been authorized to undertake research in Western Province for a period ending **30th June, 2012**.

You are advised to report to **the District Commissioner and the District Education Officer of Bungoma West District** before embarking on the research project.

On completion of the research, you are expected to submit **two hard copies and one soft copy** of the research report/thesis to our office.

**DR.M.K.RUGUTT, PhD, HSC**  
**DEPUTY COUNCIL SECRETARY**

Copy to:

The District Commissioner  
The District Education Officer  
Bungoma West District

**THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT:**

**Prof./Dr./Mr./Mrs./Miss/Institution**

**Joy Bunyasi Walucho  
Of (Address) Kenyatta University  
P.O BOX 43844-00100  
NAIROBI**

**Has been permitted to conduct research in**

**Location  
Bungoma West District  
Western Province**

**On the topic: Barriers to upward mobility of  
female teachers in administration in public  
Secondary schools: A case of Bungoma West,  
Bungoma County, Kenya**

**For a period ending: 30<sup>th</sup> June 2012**

**Research Permit No. NCST/RCD/14/012/537**

**Date of issue: 21<sup>st</sup> May 2012**

**Fee received: KSH. 1000**



**Applicant's  
Signature**

**Secretary  
National Council for  
Science and Technology**