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The Influence of Education on Female Leadership in Universities in Kenya

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Abstract- Gender is used globally as a tool of planning, segregation and sometimes discrimination. Education is an enabler of universal socialization which can also be used to facilitate or prevent certain positions in life. In contemporary times development policies echo inclusivity and universality but culture continues to interface the extent to which this is attained. The study aimed the Influence of Education on Female Leadership in Universities in Kenya. This also was to boost the constitution two third gender rule implementation. The target population was 300 out of which 169 was sampled. The respondents were selected using stratified random sampling methods for both male and female senior staff. Data was collected using questionnaires and interviews. The data was analysed with the SPSS software in which was presented in descriptive tables. The findings from the study revealed that women are indeed under-represented in the leadership of universities in Kenya influenced by education, culture, and gender. As found in the research both public and private universities showed an aggregate mean of 3.55, SD0.46 and 3.56 SD0.47 in education. The recommendations made were: There should be full implementation of policies that have been put in place to empower women in all sectors of development, particularly the provisions in the constitution that prohibit appointments of more than two-thirds from either gender.

Key Words: Education, Female Leadership, Universities & Kenya

1. INTRODUCTION

Green's *American College Presidents* (1998) present a figure on the highest educational background of presidents in North American universities. In 1998, 58.7 % of presidents held a doctorate. According to the theory of social capital, education and training are forms of human capital and they are keys in women's career trajectories Seibert et al., 2001; Umbach, (2003). Umbach (2001) reported that individuals with the most professional experience and the highest level of education became presidents in every institutional type. Education is often the first step in a career path. A qualitative study of 10 women presidents Madsen, (2008) captured the important role of education. Those women recalled that their college education was critical for them because they had opportunities to become involved in student organizations and were able to sharpen their leadership skills.

Studies of women leaders in Asia have yielded similar findings. Ismail and Randi's (2006) study of 39 women faculty in Malaysia showed that women's career mobility was often dependent on their objective career experiences (types of schools and degrees) and subjective career experiences (early exposure to learning and parental

support). In another study of women professors in universities in Hong Kong, Lam, (2006) found that early education might not directly relate to women's career mobility but it shapes women's personalities, which later help women in overcoming possible obstacles in their career in higher education.

In addition to early education, women faculty members benefit from graduate education to achieve professorships. Ismail and Rasdi (2006) discovered that in countries where women with doctorate degrees are scarce, experiences in graduate schools, especially overseas, will benefit women by providing more access to local, national, and international networks. Literature on women's career advancement in Asia has discussed the role of a college education for women in building their career path. However, more studies need to focus on leadership training for women who already hold top administrative positions.

Muthoni, (1999) observes that because of Social discrimination seventy percent of illiterate people in Kenya are women, with many girls kept at home to work while their brothers go to school. According to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) 1995 report, out of the developing world's 900 million illiterate people, women outnumber men two to one, and girls constitute the majority of the 130 million children without access to primary school. Further, because population growth has superseded the expansion of women's education in some developing regions, the number of women who are illiterate has actually increased.

International Labour Organization (ILO) report of 1998 drew attention to implications of government's reductions on educational budgets. Cuts to education results in fewer girls and women attending classes and higher dropout rates for girls. Structural adjustment and economic restructuring programmes reduced educational and work opportunities for women. This had implications for women's opportunities to accede to management-level posts, given the importance of education in helping to create a new concept of power, less stereotyped, less focalized on hierarchical aspects and more open to women.

In a study carried out by Kamau (2006), women interviewed attribute limited access to doctoral studies as a main hindrance to their career advancement in universities, yet without a doctorate there is no hope of rising to seniority in the universities. Obtaining a doctorate for women in Kenya is usually much more challenging than it is for men especially because the country does not have very well established doctorate programmes; they are also in limited fields. The best option is to study abroad which is a major challenge to women given their social roles as wives and mothers. The only option is for women to study locally, which presents a new challenge of combining career, family and studies as negotiating for a study leave is not easy. Funding for doctoral studies is one issue that has discouraged many women, as funds are not easy to access.

Odhiambo (2006) observes that in Nyanza province out of the top a hundred students in the year 2005 Kenya certificate of primary education (KCPE) results, only one was a girl. This kind of imbalance in primary education results to imbalance in advanced education, which consequently results, to imbalance in appointments.

The educational programs that prepare women as future educational administrators must realize the unique needs of women and challenges which need to be addressed in leadership preparation programs. This include learning how to alter negative female perceptions, enhancing decision making skills and working effectively among cultural and political systems Brown and Irby ,(1996). Educational system in Kenya has done little to alter the educational and career expectations for girls as they go through the education system. It is as if girls and boys are not exposed to the same educational curriculum due to inequalities seen when it comes to educational and career expectations. The curriculum of education challenge boys and subdue girls when it comes to career aspirations. They became women with no aspirations to move up because their aspirations are channeled to less rewarding and domestic oriented careers from a young age, Wanjama, (2002). Career choices departments in school should direct students to career choices with minimal gender bias.

II: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

2.1 Research Design

The study used comparative study research design. The design allowed for a wide range and generalized study covering a number of related items. According to Oso and Onen (2005) in a case where the number of organizations that can be investigated are few, a small sample is available and an in-depth analysis is necessary. Research design is appropriate since the purpose of the study was to determine the influence of women leadership in universities in Kenya.

2.2 Study Area

The study was carried out in selected private as well as public universities in Kenya (Figure 3.1). There are thirty two private universities any thirty one public universities in Kenya (Commission for University Education, 2015). Among the selected private universities were Catholic university of eastern Africa in Nairobi County and university of Eastern Africa Baraton in Nandi County. University of Eldoret in Uasin Gishu County and Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology in Kakamega County were selected as the sample of public universities in Kenya.

2.3 Target Population

Population is the aggregate of all that conforms to a given specification Mugenda & Mugenda,(2008). It is a large collection of individuals or objects that is the main focus of the study query and have similar characteristic. A target population refers to the entire group of individuals or objects to which the researchers are interested in generalizing the conclusions. The population of the study comprised of 300 senior management staff chosen randomly in both selected private and public Universities' main campuses in Kenya. The respondents in the study were both men and women occupying management positions as well as senior academic posts in the selected universities. They included Vice Chancellors, Deputy Vice-Chancellors, Deans of Schools, Registrars, Deans of students, Directors of institutes, heads of academic departments and senior academic staff. The university managers were selected using purposely random sampling.

2.4 Sampling technique

Sampling is the selection by systematic procedure of research subjects out of larger population relevant to the research project Kerlinger,(1983). The basic idea of sampling is that by selecting some elements in the population, conclusions about the entire population can be drawn. The reasons for sampling in this study were to lower the cost of the study and enhance greater accuracy.

The sampling design comprised a combination of stratified random sampling, simple random sampling and purposive sampling techniques. The researcher used stratified sampling technique to cluster both private and public universities in Kenya.. The researcher randomly selected from each strata since simple random sampling provide equal chance to every strata to be included in the study. To avoid biasness, the researcher wrote small papers which had 'yes' inscriptions according to the number of university categories (private or public) in the sample size to be assessed while "no" inscriptions were also mixed. Whenever a "yes" was chosen the university was considered and where a no was selected the university was disqualified from the study.

Purposive sampling was to ensure that the selected universities met the selection criteria. All the universities had to be chartered to be selected. This ensured only the universities that met the Commission for University Education (CUE) requirements and regulations were selected for the study. Purposive sampling technique was further considered when sampling the respondents who were both male and female in senior leadership positions in the selected universities.

2.5 Sample size and sampling techniques

The study targeted 300 men and women in leadership positions in both public and those in private universities assumed to have put in place structures and policies that enhance gender equity in university management. For descriptive survey, the minimum recommended sample size is 30 per cent in each strata Leonard and Renee (2009). In this study, the institutions comprise a total of 300 subjects which is within the minimum to cater for attrition. The calculated sample size in the study is 169 respondents. According to Omiti and Nyanamba (2007), this sample is statistically representative enough of the population of both men and women in leadership in higher institutions. The selected sample involved those that are in the position of heads of departments, directors, deans of Faculties/Schools, Registrars, Deputy Vice-Chancellors and Vice-Chancellors of public and private chartered universities in Kenya. This cadre of university managers was important in this study because they were in decision making positions as managers in their respective universities as decision makers, seen as crucial in providing the much needed information on policies on recruitment and promotion. They would also provide information on the interventions put in place by the respective universities to enhance gender equity. Table 1 indicates the population of both men and women in leadership positions in selected universities in Kenya where the sample size was drawn.

Table 1.1: Showing Sample Size

Name of university	Total No. of individuals in senior position	Sample size
Masinde Murilo university of science and technology (public)	114	64
University of eastern Africa Baraton (Private)	37	21
Catholic university of eastern Africa (Private)	123	69
University of Eldoret (public)	26	15
Total	300	169

N=169

The sample size is the portion/ subset of population. Patten (2004) suggests that a researcher should first consider obtaining an unbiased sample and then seek a relatively large number of participants. Patten (2004) provides a table of recommended sample sizes. A table of recommended sample sizes (n) for populations (N) with finite sizes, developed by Kothari and Morgan (2002) and adapted by Patten (2004), was used to determine estimated sample size. In line with their table, and for purposes of this study, the researcher used an estimated number of both men and women population size in leadership N = 300 and thus a sample size was calculated n = 169.

According to Morgan (1970), formula for determining sample size calculation is as seen in the table in the appendices, the sample size of the total target population (300) and the sample size was 169 respondents. To obtain a stratified random sample, the population was divided into strata according to institutions as shown in Table 3.1 above after which the sample was obtained. The table for Morgan and Krejcieet *al.*, (1970) at the appendix: II shows how the population and the sample size was calculated.

Sample Size formulae

$$n_i = \frac{n \times n_j}{N}$$

n_i = Sample size of the cluster (university).
 n = Sample size of target population derived from Morgan
 n_j = Population of each cluster (university)
 N = Target population

$$= \frac{114 \times 169}{300}$$

$$= 64$$

2.6 Research Instruments

An interview guide was constructed and administered in form of self-administered questionnaires. The nature of the questions were both open and close ended for the purposes of open views and discussions from the respondents.

2.6.1 Questionnaire

The questionnaires were constructed and administered. The nature of the questions were in form of structured and close ended questions where by a Likert scale of measurement was used on closed ended questions The instruments of research was divided into three sections: A, B and C. Section A dealt with a bio-data on issues such as gender, age and the years of service. Section B comprises of variables while section C was an interview guide where respondents gave their opinions.

2.6.2 Key informant interviews

This refers to person to person verbal communication whereby the researcher gathered information through direct verbal interaction with the respondents. Instead of written responses, the subject gives the needed information verbally in a face to face relationship where the ideas were exchanged. The questionnaire covered both independent and dependent variables. In contrast, the formal interviewer had full freedom to make suitable alterations in the questions to suit a particular situation. The term of confidentiality was addressed to assure that the information collected was treated with required confidentiality.

2.7 Validity and Reliability

Prior to collection of data the instrument was validated. The validity of the questionnaire is concerned with how accurate and correct the instrument was during data collection. The purpose of the validity was to provide accurate and useful information. The researcher used a standardized instrument to measure the intended content in terms of coverage, presentative-ness and balance of the total domain. This was obtained through a mathematical value called content validity index (CVI).

Reliability of the instrument was tested according to Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS) correlation index, the two variables thus factors influencing women leadership was correlated. A pretest was carried on 19 women in leadership universities within selected Universities, which have the same characteristics as other universities. According to Cronbach's alpha, a minimum reliability alpha of 0.7 is regarded as a reliable value Ochieng, (2009).

Table 2.2: Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.865	33

A CAC of 0.865 was obtained and thus the instrument was considered reliable according to (Amin, 2005).

2.8 Data Collection Procedure

The researcher acquired an introductory letter from the Director of post graduate which she took to the field where the study was conducted to seek permission. After permission was granted the researcher made appointments for the days to collect the data from the selected universities. The researcher conducted the interviews and questionnaires to all respondents. Appointments were made with respondents to seek consent and time of interview. All respondents were briefed before administration of the questionnaires and interviews. This gave the researcher an opportunity to give clarifications about the objectives of the study and to establish rapport.

2.9 Data Analysis

After data collection, the raw data was fed into the computer for the purpose of analyzing it through the SPSS software. Quantitative data was presented using descriptive statistics Pearson correlation was used to determine the relationship of each parameter since the variables in this study were more than one. Qualitative results were presented in thematic flow in relation to the research objectives. Some data from the respondents was written just as presented to attain utmost accuracy and originality.

III: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Influence of education in female leadership positioning in universities in Kenya

Table 4.2 illustrates the differences between survey participants from the two categories of university namely public and private universities for the statement regarding the influence of education in female leadership positioning in universities in Kenya.

The findings from table 4.2 suggest that there is high level of educated women on leadership positions. It is evident with the result which indicated an aggregated high mean of 3.56 with Standard Deviation of 0.47 from respondents from private universities and mean of 3.55 with Standard Deviation of 0.46 from respondents from public universities. The mean difference was -0.01 with no significance difference. From table 4.2, two items were most important as they were rated very high. They had statement posted as “Women lack professional confidence and have low self-esteem and Women’s education is very low so they cannot access management positions”. Eleven items were rated high while ten items were rated as moderate. The findings agreed with the verbal qualitative data gathered which was recorded as from both men and women who were in leadership positions as follows; to the question what extent does education influence women leadership they had the following to say

“Yes, planning for my PhD puts me in a better position to be the head of department. Yes, creating an income so that I can support my family members and life goes on; by meeting some of the assignment as a dean, I set for myself a goal; since I was appointed the head of this department, my income added on and so far I have constructed an house, because my husband and I were renting; this days I even enjoy doing men’s responsibility like paying house rent and school fees; I think education places women at a better chance to become leaders and we actually perform just like men and even better. I have managed to get a loan from the nearby microfinance and started an income generating project though I am busy with office responsibilities”

The research findings suggest that there is high level of educated women on leadership positions. This coincides with findings of Seibert *et al.*, (2001) and Umbach (2001) who indicated that education has impact on the career advancement of women. Illiteracy or lack of education can prevent women from holding leadership positions. Increase in post –secondary enrolment among females have been the result of changing roles and expectations of women in society and a growing interest among women in professional careers (Nieva & Gutek, 1981). In Kenya women have steadily become the majority of the undergraduate population in degree granting institutions (UNIFEM, 2010). The findings differ from Ismail and Rasdi (2006) who pointed out that Even though women’s enrolment in postsecondary education has improved they still continue to occupy the low cadre jobs and that women with doctorate degrees are scarce.

Table 3.1 Influence of culture on female leadership in Universities in Kenya

Items Rated/k	Public Univer- sity		Private Uni- versity		Aggregated Mean	mean differ- ence
	mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Fewer opportunities for women in edu- cation	4.31	0.2	4.29	0.2	4.30	0.02
World male dominance	4.27	0.56	4.26	0.56	4.27	0.01
Women in authority not recognized	4.1	0.45	4	0.45	4.05	0.1
Men are seen as decision makers	4.03	0.17	4.05	0.17	4.04	-0.02

Discrimination against girl education	4.01	0.07	4.05	0.07	4.03	-0.04
Fear of isolation	4	0.81	4.1	0.81	4.05	-0.1
Motherhood	3.9	0.47	4	0.47	3.95	-0.1
Men get social support	3.47	0.84	3.46	0.84	3.47	0.01
Inequality in higher education management	3.46	0.12	3.47	0.12	3.47	-0.01
Discrimination against women in the church	3.44	0.76	3.42	0.76	3.43	0.02
Society condemns women to subordinate status	3.31	0.33	3.32	0.33	3.32	-0.01
Women lack social networks	3.3	0.67	3.31	0.67	3.31	-0.01
Women are not culturally prepared for leadership	3	0.14	3.1	0.14	3.05	-0.1
Aggregate Mean and SD	3.74	0.43	3.76	0.43	3.75	-0.02

Legend: 4.20-5.00., (Very High), 3.40 -4.19, (High), 2.60- 3.39 (Moderate), 1.80- 2.59 (Low), 1.00- 1.79 (Very Low)

IV: Conclusion and Recommendation

4.1 Conclusion

The level of education on women leadership in universities in Kenya were found to be high; social cultural influence on women leadership was moderate coinciding with findings of Seibert *et al.*, (2001) and Umbach (2001) who indicated that education has impact on the career advancement of women but differing with Ismail and Rasdi (2006) who pointed out that women continue to occupy the low cadre jobs irrespective of their levels of education.

4.2 Recommendations

Based on the research findings the researcher made the following recommendations: The government should come up with the law that describes promotions and balance between genders in institutions.

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