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### ABSTRACT

*Women are a major force behind people's participation in life of society today. Kenya is a patriarchal society and the status of women is relatively low with gender inequality/inequity prevailing in many aspects of the society. The main aim of this study was to examine the influence of political culture on women participation in politics in Nairobi and Kajiado Counties. The study compared two counties in Kenya one from urban area (Nairobi) and the other one from a rural setting (Kajiado). The study used a descriptive survey design. Both quantitative and qualitative methods were used. A questionnaire and an interview guide were used. Random and purposive sampling, were used to select sample of the study. The study sampled a total of 240 respondents where 190 were female and 50 men since this was a study on women. The analysis of the collected data established that the current political developments did not favor women to contest certain elective posts, as the society viewed the aforementioned posts to be a reserve for their male counterparts. The analysis of the collected data indicated that it was clear that patriarchal structures within parties, state, and people's lives had deleterious effect on the level of political participation by women and that cultural stereotypes labeled against women continued to pervade the county of Kajiado to an extent that women were not viewed as equal to men. Despite the structures put in place by the Kenya's constitution, 2010, such as the two-thirds gender rule, the representation of women in leadership positions had been low. The study recommended that women should be supported financially and socio-politically as an approach to countering the contemporary political culture and that political parties ought to formulate internal structures, which would ensure that women played critical roles because the parties were the vehicles that propelled individuals into leadership.*

**Key Words:** Political Culture, Women Participation, Politics in Nairobi and Kajiado Counties

## INTRODUCTION

Assessing women's participation must also consider informal political activity, particularly at the community level (UNICEF, 2006), where women may be especially involved in social networks, women's organizations, and civil society, particularly where formal channels are less open to women. Such political participation may resemble political expression, including rights women possess, formally and informally, to express dissatisfaction within their political and social culture and to engage in all levels of the political process. Political participation may occur at the individual, household, and community, national, and international levels. Individual and household participation includes knowledge of the political system; domestic and spousal support for political engagement; participation in household economic, reproductive, and health-related decision-making; personal motivation for engagement in community-level organizations and civil society, and the desire to vote. Community involvement includes participation in village meetings and local campaigns, advocacy efforts for specific issues or legislation, and actual representation and leadership in local government (Feldman et al., 2015).

As argued by Afolabi et al. (2003), women constitute over half of the world's population and contribute in vital ways to societal development generally. In most societies, women assume five key roles: mother, producer, home-manager, community organizer and socio-cultural and political activists. Of these roles mentioned, the last has been engendered by women movements, attributed to historical gender discrimination and inequality. Hitherto the emergence of these movements, gender roles, was divided between the male and female sexes. These roles can be broadly classified into- the productive and the reproductive gender roles. Afolabi et al. (2003) continued to argue that whereas the productive gender roles

were mainly associated with the male sex, reproductive gender roles were exclusive to their female counterparts. This societal reality was deeply rooted in the cultural beliefs and values of societies in the world. Afolabi et al. (2003) observed "from those societies we might want to call most egalitarian to those which sexual stratification is most marked, men are the locus of cultural value. Some area of activity is always seen as exclusively or predominantly male and therefore overwhelmingly and morally important"

Women in India constitute nearly half the population of the country, but they are poorly represented in the various governance and decision making bodies. The position depicted through the 14 general elections so far reflects a low representation of women in Parliament, State legislatures, in political parties and other decision-making bodies. Women have occupied less than 8% of Parliamentary seats, less than 6% Cabinet positions, less than 4% of seats in High Courts and the Supreme Court. Less than 3% of the administrators and managers are women. The average percentage of women's representation in the Parliament, Assemblies and Council of Ministers taken together has been around 10% (UNIFEM, 2000). Women in India raised the issue of representation in politics first in 1917. At that time it was basically a demand for universal adult franchise and political participation. By 1930 women had gained the Right to vote, which initially benefited women from elite families.

The government of Rwanda has demonstrated political commitment at the highest level of leadership in pursuit of its goal of promoting gender equality in democratic governance and political decision -making. This commitment by the RPA government, which came to power in the elections following the 1994 genocide, is to transform Rwanda into a peaceful and prosperous country where the rule of law and human rights are respected. Rwanda's new constitution, adopted in

May 2003, reference CEDAW and commits to representation of women at least 30% (Jodi Enda, 2003). This quota has been met and surpassed, as women now hold nearly 49% of parliamentary seats, a greater proportion than in any other parliament worldwide. This could at least partially be attributed to the fact that women in government are now perceived by Rwandans as more approachable and trustworthy politicians than their male counterparts. They are also perceived as being better at forgiveness, reconciliation and post-conflict peace building (Jodi Enda, 2003).

In Kenya women, who form a majority of the population (52%), play an active and significant part in the development of the country. Kenya is a patriarchal society and the status of women is relatively low with gender inequality/inequity prevailing in many aspects of the Kenya society. Yet they remain marginalized and discriminated upon, a situation that is reinforced by existing laws and policies as well as prevailing social-cultural factors. In 2007, a constitutional amendment that would have created 50 special seats for women in parliament was thrown out due to lack of quorum to vote on it (Parliament Hansard, 2007). Some members of parliament have stated that creating special seats for women in parliament does not comprehensively ensure political equality between genders, arguing that women must strive to win more elective positions (Hansard 2007). But female candidates who have attempted this in Kenya face a lot of obstacles, lack of resources to campaign, inadequate information about electorate, lack of support from the political parties and even they are rejected by the community because of cultural factors that detect women to be subordinates.

The Constitution of Kenya 2010 (COK) recognizes women, youth, persons with disabilities and ethnic minorities as special groups deserving of constitutional protection. The COK espouses the rights of women as being equal in law to men, and

entitled to enjoy equal opportunities in the political, social and economic spheres. Article 81 (b), which refer to the general principles of Kenya's electoral system states 'the electoral system shall comply with the following principal - (b) not more than two-thirds of the members of elective public bodies shall be of the same gender. Article 27 goes further to obligate the government to develop and pass policies and laws, including affirmative action programs and policies to address the past discrimination that women have faced. The government is required to develop policies and laws to ensure that, not more than two-thirds of elective or appointive bodies shall be of the same sex. Despite Article 177 ensuring that Articles 81(b) and 27 (8) of the COK are complied with at the County level through the nomination of special seat members, the same is not guaranteed at the National Assembly and the Senate.

#### **Statement of the problem**

In Kenya, women constitute slightly over half have the total population and form a critical portion of enhancing democratization of political system in the country. However, available data indicates that they are inadequately represented in political positions in the government. The possible explanation for this scenario could be that gender issues in electoral politics have not received due attention and redress. This gives their male counterparts a head start. Women are always relegated to the peripheries of political leadership. Burdened with guilt, women are doubly marginalized first because they are women and secondly because they are politicians. Frequently, political information is withheld from women. For instance, in the 2002 general elections many women aspirants were locked out at the nomination stage. In their public and private lives, women have to struggle to articulate their desires and to find their own voices. For a long time, women have been seen as extensions of men: as people who cannot politically

stand on their own, but have to be propped by men (Kasomo, 2012).

From statistics presented on the Kenyan 2013 general election's results, only 16 women leaders were elected as Members of Parliament (MPs) out of 290 seats accounting for 5.52% (Godia, 2013). The political parties to the national assembly have nominated another five women. The senate has no elected woman except the 16 women nominated plus another two, one youth and one disabled also joining them. All the 47 governors are men as per the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission's (IEBC) final list (Godia, 2013).

The situation is worse in Nairobi County where only 5 women were elected on 4th March 2013 during the Kenya's General election. Out of the 85 wards in Nairobi County, women were elected only in four wards women but the assembly had more than 39 female nominated representatives.

In conclusion therefore, the above synopsis of the problem creates a ground to analyze the influence of political culture on women participation in politics in Nairobi and Kajiado Counties.

### **Research Objectives**

The main objective of this study was to analyze the influence of political culture on women participation in politics in Nairobi and Kajiado Counties.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Influence of Political Culture on Women Participation in politics**

A survey conducted by the Ukrainian Women's Fund among political parties represented in the Ukrainian Parliament showed a disagreement. On the one hand, political parties declare equal rights and opportunities for women and men as well as no internal discrimination of women; however, on the other hand, they account for the absence of women in their structures with the argument that

preference is given to the most professional and competitive candidates, who, they say, are men. In addition, the majority of surveyed political parties indicated nearly no interest in targeted training, increased participation or empowerment of women in their structures or activities (Fund, 2011).

Castillejo (2009) observes that Sierra Leone presents an interesting case of both the opportunities and challenges in strengthening women's political participation in contexts of post-conflict state building. While the country has made significant progress in recovering from a devastating conflict and re-building the state, it remains at the bottom of the Human Development Index. Moreover, Sierra Leone has extremely high levels of gender inequality and comes last in the 2007/2008 UNDP's Gender Development Related Index and third from last in the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development's Social Institutions and Gender Index, which measures gender equality. Kadaga (2013) points out that Patriarchal thought in particular limits opportunities for women participation in Uganda, especially in the political sphere where patriarchy deems subordinate and unsuitable for positions of leadership. An egalitarian culture fosters women's involvement in electoral politics, but hierarchical culture impedes it. How favorably or unfavorably the society views women's involvement in politics depends on where its culture lies in the egalitarian-hierarchical cultural spectrum. Women experience greater obstacles toward political office in societies where traditional attitudes reign, but modernization, value changes and the fading of cultural barriers, results in younger generations of women in post-industrial societies experiencing less resistance to entering political offices.

### **Political Parties as Determinants of Political Culture**

Jonyo (2013) observed that political parties that practice internal democracy and have transparent

nomination procedures offer the best prospects for women to emerge as candidates. In order to ensure more balanced representation, political parties in with presence in Nairobi and Kajido counties have adopted voluntary targets or quotas specifying a minimum number or proportion of women on their candidate lists, and may even alternate women and men on the lists. However, statistics in the county of Kajiado show that political parties do not give equal chances to women as men for the fear of reprisal from male voters who may end up rejecting women in the ballot as much as this is a legal requirement. For instance, in the county of Nairobi and Kajiado, no woman was given a ticket to contest for the gubernatorial or senator position from a major political party such as Orange Democratic Movement or The National Alliance.

The most common route to elected office is through political parties. Most candidates depend on parties for their nomination, their base of electoral support, and help during the election campaign, financial resources, and continued assistance after their election. While some candidates run for office independently of political parties, it is far more difficult to win election without the backing of a political organization, especially at the national level. Hence, women seeking an entrée into politics must usually turn to political parties. Political parties vary greatly in the extent to which they seek to promote women into leadership positions and to recruit women as party candidates, as well as in the extent to which they address political, economic and social issues of special concern to women. Since political parties often tend to be more open to nominating women as candidates for local elections, women may find it easier to start at this level and use it as a stepping-stone to national office (Jonjo, 2013).

Political parties in Kenya are not strongly founded on ideologies or philosophy but revolve around interests of personalities; ending up serving the personality ambitions to win elections and capture

state power. In most cases political parties do not adhere to their structural formation and operational procedures. This is exemplified in the emergency of new political parties with every election indicating no permanent systems, but interests. This leaves political parties with weak democratic and governance culture, which often works against gender inclusivity (CMD-Kenya, 2017). In Kenya, the most prevalent method of candidate selection is through the party primary system where registered party members determine who gets the party ticket. In pursuit of democracy, political parties have transitioned from the delegate system of candidate selection to the primaries system. It is however, not unheard of the political party elite to select candidates. In practice, it is often a combination of a number of these methods, depending on the party's nomination rules.

For the most part since parties shoulders the financial requirements for the primaries to take place, there are numbers of inadequacies that cause parties not to reach the standards required for credible primaries. In 2013 General Elections, only 28% of political parties invited the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC) to be part of their nomination process while 72 % did not. Of the 28 % that did majority had IEBC perform a supervisory role while only 6 % assisted party officials in conducting the nomination exercise (Ibid). Also the political parties hardly verify voting members using official membership registers. This leads to abuse of the process, for instance, through candidates verifying votes from other parties to increase their likelihood of clinching the party ticket. It also leads to a situation where opposing parties send their members to participate in the exercise of their opponents to ensure that the party ticket goes to a candidate that is weaker than theirs. Lack of controls at this level makes it difficult to identify and ascertain members of political parties and some voters are able to participate in nominations of more than one party. It is also not

uncommon for political aspirants to decamp for their main parties due to fear of perceived candidate preferences particularly in the party strongholds. This was observed in the last election of 2013 where candidates were unfairly granted the nomination ticket, the fallout led to these aspirants moving to smaller parties. In connection to this, vote buying and ballot stuffing during the party primaries claims create an unequal competition ground for the candidates (CMD-Kenya).

In terms of political party laws, Kenya has laws regulating how political parties must be organized and registered and dictating how they must operate. The operational provisions of the political party law can be extremely important in establishing the framework for women's political participation (Jonyo, 2013). For example, if parties are required to practice internal democracy and employ transparent nomination procedures through primary elections, all-party caucuses, locally based candidate selection or similar options, women will generally have a better chance of emerging as candidates; however, this has not been the case in Nairobi and Kajiado Counties where the major political parties deny women the opportunity to make it to the final poll by denying them party tickets in favor of men. In contrast, highly centralized parties that are tightly controlled by a few leaders or organized around well-known personalities usually men may be much less receptive to selecting substantial numbers of women as candidates (Nzomo, 2011).

Jonyo (2013) argued that political party laws might include provisions aimed specifically at enhancing women's political participation. For example, they may require parties to affirm their position on gender equality in the party constitution. They may mandate that party management and party policy committees be gender balanced. Political party laws, or in some cases election laws, may require a gender balance in candidate lists as well. Alternatively, laws may offer parties incentives such

as more free broadcast time or additional public funding if they include certain numbers of women among their candidates. New laws are often introduced in post-conflict countries, providing an ideal opportunity to incorporate these and other provisions aimed at ensuring equal political participation for women.

Mungai (2014) argued that many other laws could have a bearing on women's participation in the electoral process. Since political parties play an enormous role in selecting candidates and setting the political agenda for election campaigns, national laws on political parties are often central to women's participation. Women will enjoy greater opportunities if a country's laws stipulate that the internal functioning of political parties must be transparent and democratic than if party operations are highly centralized and controlled by a few party leaders. Campaign finance laws can assist or disadvantage women, depending on their provisions. Ballington and Matland (2004) pointed out that laws relating to freedom of expression, assembly and association, as well as laws on personal status, the family, citizenship and other such issues could also influence women's political participation. For example, discriminatory citizenship laws may prevent women but not men from passing on their nationality to their children, thus depriving them of the right to vote once they reach the age of majority.

Kenya women politicians as well as those working in civil society have to date been generally unsuccessful in shaping or setting the agenda in political Parties (Jonyo, 2013). Parties have historically been highly gendered institutions with male gatekeepers that incorporate women into party structures on a different basis from men. Although women play important roles in campaigning and mobilizing support for their Parties, rarely do they occupy strategic decision-making positions in Party structures or benefit from political parties resources for conducting election

campaigns (Jonyo, 2013). The selection and nomination processes within political parties also tend to be biased against women in that male traits are emphasized and often become the criteria for selecting candidates. Lack of internal democracy, undemocratic membership recruitment and absence of substantive elections in leader's recruitment, has been the rule rather than the exception. This democratic deficit within political Parties, has limited the recruitment and ascendancy of women to top positions in Party hierarchies (Nzomo, 2011). This in turn limited women's political exposure and visibility, thus denying them strategic political leverage for party nominations during national elections. Violence against women candidates and their supporters is a matter that cannot be left unsaid as a key characteristic that plagues the nomination process in our political parties.

The violence often ranges from societal, familial, economic and political threats that come in the form of harassment, intimidation and physical and sexual abuse, and it should be noted that for every reported case of violence there are dozens others that remain unreported (Mungai, 2014). In the last election it was not unheard of for a female candidate to clinch the nomination ticket and to have it taken from her through violent measures (Jonyo, 2013). This serve as a deterrent for the women who are actually willing to present themselves for political office and also acts as an unmoving stumbling block that only prevent transparency and accountability within party structures. Without deliberate strides to correct this, gender equity in political representation will remain a notion, actualized on paper and not in practice. In 2013 General Elections, their parties, to vie for the Gubernatorial Seat and 7 % for the Senator's Seat, cleared only 3 % of women and this translated to 0 % representation of women at this level of leadership. Equally, 6 % of women were cleared to vie for the Members of National

assembly (MNA) and Members of County Assembly (MCA) seats respectively and in the end 6 % of women clinched these seats (Jonyo, 2013). This may change under the new constitutional dispensation and legislations that seek to democratize and engender Parties and other governance institutions. Women now have an opportunity to use this legal mechanism to demand inclusion, engagement in and democratization of party decision making structures and processes. Centre for multiparty democracy's engendering of political parties program targets women in political parties and through them, all other women in the country through civic education and candidates' training programs. Centre for multiparty democracy also plays an important bridging role; mediating between political parties and other civil society organizations on gender issues pertaining to women's access, representation and influence in political parties, parliament and other political decision-making institutions (Nzomo, 2011).

### **Political Culture and the existing legal and Regulatory frameworks**

Githinji (2015) observes that women participate in politics not only by voting, but also by becoming advocates, activists, political party members and candidates. Political parties often control decisions about who will be nominated to run for office, what positions candidates will be given on party lists, and who will receive support during the campaign and after the election. Other structural challenges like cosmetic application of policy and legislative frameworks for promoting gender equality and women's political empowerment contributes to poor participation of women in politics. Affirmative action for gender equality provisions are listed in political party constitutions, manifestos and election regulations and procedures merely as a requirement or obligation and hardly as a commitment to the core values or the strategic objective. The political parties lack the goodwill to

implement existing legal frameworks, for instance, the two-third rule on gender equity. They share internal party leadership positions without regard to gender equity.

The role of political parties is therefore critical in determining the prospects for women aspiring in Nairobi and Kajiado counties. Political parties may also determine the extent to which issues of special concern to women become part of the national political debate and are given serious consideration in the work of the legislature. Kenya has undergone significant political changes in its history, including large-scale decentralization. This devolution of power from the central government to the counties and down to other grass root levels has come with large scale institutional and regulatory policy changes, and combined with parallel judicial systems, creates a complex environment in which women must and their way into and around. Willis (2015) contends that Kenya is committed to the principle of gender equality through numerous national and international commitments.

Kenya's new constitution guarantees equality between men and women and gender mainstreaming has been adopted as a policy to integrate gender perspectives into policy, planning and budgeting in Nairobi and Kajiado counties. Affirmative action has also been introduced in the Law on General Elections to ensure that at least 30 percent women are nominated on the list of parliamentary candidates to address the gender deficit in the politics of the country. For instance, the seat of women representative is preserved only for women candidates as a means of realizing the two-thirds gender rule. While women in the County of Kajiado actively contribute to the national and household economy through their productive and reproductive labor, they are still excluded from many decision-making structures and processes at the family, community and at the county level because the county of Kajiado is immensely a patriarchal society. In Kajiado County, women's lack

of representation in decision-making positions in the county has led to the development of economic and social policies that privilege men's perspectives and interests, along with the investment of national resources in their favor.

In support of the government's effort towards greater participation of women in public life, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) has initiated a project entitled "Women's Participation in Politics and Government." The project has several components, including an opinion poll on perceptions regarding women's social, economic and political participation, the collection and analysis of data on women's participation in politics and government and a series of workshops and roundtable discussions with relevant stakeholders. The Constitution of Kenya place no restrictions on the political participation and representation of women. The involvement of women in public life has been increasing, however their participation and representation in the national and county legislatures and across government institutions is still low. Muna, Stanton and Mwau (2014) infers that women's movement in Nairobi has an active engagement in politics; however, there has been a gap in women's political participation and representation in formal political structures such as holding critical party positions. While political parties are intended to articulate the interests of society, male domination and an entrenched patriarchal mindset of the leadership of political parties in Kajiado County is one of the key detrimental factors against women entering politics and influencing the political agenda of the parties.

The United Nations recognizes the need to protect and promote the right of women to participate in the electoral process, particularly in post-conflict countries. It is important to keep in mind, however, that electoral rights mean much more than simply the right to vote. Freedom of expression, assembly and association, and the freedom to take part in the conduct of public affairs, hold public office at all

levels of Government, and participate in the formulation of government policy are subsumed under this heading as well. United Nations international human rights instruments affirm that women are entitled to enjoy all these rights and freedoms on the same basis as men. Women's equal participation is therefore essential to the conduct of democratic elections. At the practical level, an election fails to comply with international obligations and standards unless the opportunity for full and equal participation by women is provided. For elections to be truly free and fair, women must have the same opportunities as men to participate in all aspects of the electoral process. Women should have an equal chance to serve at all levels within local and national election management bodies. Women should be engaged on an equal basis as election monitors or observers. Women should be able to participate fully in all aspects of political party operations. Women candidates and issues of special concern to women should be given fair and equal treatment in the media. Focusing on areas of the greatest potential impact can help ensure that women's participation in the electoral process is more than a pro forma exercise, and that free and fair elections fulfill their potential for contributing to the advancement of women, particularly in post-conflict situations (Mukhongo, 2015).

## **Theoretical Framework**

### **Feminist Theory**

Feminism as a social theory with the main objective of emancipating of women by removal of all legal constraints on the woman's ability to act as free individuals in a society based on economic and social competition as the final step in the creation of a perfect society. The movement entails rethinking the past and future in which women are seen as active agents of change. The theory thus recognizes avenues such as organizations that

enable women to take an active role in the process of change in the society. The feminists' movement is associated with the enlightenment doctrine of natural rights, which defines women's role in society. Feminism as a social movement dates back to the 16th century. The movement began as a resistance to women's oppression at their work places and denial of rights to suffrage. The theory recognizes the marginalization of women and therefore seeks to act as a shield against the marginalization. The variance in terms of participation in politics between the two genders is seen as shaped by the social environment as opposed to being natural. Indeed women organizations in Kenya emerged to enhance the socio-economic status of women and improve their political engagement. The emphasis here is therefore on the potential similarities between the sexes rather than the differences. The emphasis is thus geared towards ending the male prejudice and domination.

Feminist theory has three different strands whose main point of divergence is the source of the subordination and how to end the subordination of women. Liberal feminism follows a long history of championing for improved rights and opportunities for women; however, they neglect the existing organization of the society. Liberal feminists are concerned with concepts of justice and equality and assume that women suffer injustices because of their sex and are organized around campaigns for equality and redistribution. This strand however has a weakness in that the struggles do not seriously challenge the sources of inequalities between the sexes, and so do not recognize that relations between the sexes have specific power relations.

Radical feminists on their part are critical of the whole male dominated society. These theorists challenge the conventional assumptions by redefining the most intimate of human relations as

political rather than as private. They reject the liberal notion of getting justice within the existing social order, which defines everything in male terms. Radical feminists define women as universally oppressed, as sisters in oppression, in a world owned, controlled and physically dominated by men. Radical theorists therefore view the solution to women's empowerment as entailed in abolishing all the male structures in society and excluding men in women affairs. In essence, they seek to overthrow patriarchy. This variant of feminism would advocate for organizations run by women to champion women issues only even to the total exclusion of men. It gives recognition to organizations such as LKWV, FIDA, WPA/K and MYWO. But herein lies the weakness of radical feminism. It calls for separation between the sexes and it is oriented towards Westernism.

The Marxist strand of feminism focuses on power difference between the sexes. These theorists view women subordination as a class struggle between male and females and goes further to cluster the variance in participation to the access and ownership of wealth hence proximity to power. Marxist feminists see subordination of women through class lenses. They state that capitalism, which gives rise to economic inequality, dependence, political confusion and ultimately unhealthy social relations between men and women, is the root of women's oppression. Criticized as being too much of leftists, the Marxists view working class women as economically exploited in ways that the bourgeois women are not. To this extent, the Marxist feminists would advocate for women organizations that would eventually overturn the status quo at the national institutions such as parliament. The Kenya Women Political Caucus has as its main objective the enhancement of women access to political power.

Generally, feminist theory, irrespective of the various strands, posits that: existing relationship between male and female is structured in a manner that women are subordinated to men and this has to change; the paternal status of society that is perceived as normal and in which women have been subordinated has to be challenged; the challenge should be based on the notion that all human beings are equal and have the same potential. Feminist theory highlights the imbalanced political participation very well because it questions every aspect of power relations between men and women. Disparities in political participation are explained based on gender. It also gives suggestions on how women can improve the situation. In this respect, the theory is relevant in addressing the link between women organizations and women participation in politics.

This theory is appropriate in informing this study because it helps expound why women lag behind in political participation as opposed to their male counterparts. Secondly, it helps analyze the existence and operation of the women's organizations in public sphere by contextualizing their activities as a function of certain historical occurrences and hence proposes corrective mechanisms. In order to understand how the marginalization is being redressed the study looks at women's organizations as a mechanism of restoring justice to rectify historical injustices that have resulted to the marginalization of women. Therefore even though the general theoretical framework of analysis will be the feminist theory, the study will have a biased leaning towards the liberal feminist strand. This is more so because in analysis the hindrance to equitable participation. By emphasizing consciousness then action, the liberal strand helps the study seek to rethink the past with a possible solution, the solution based on penetration of the society that is male dominated, a

variance that is shaped by social environment rather than natural phenomenon.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The location of this study was Nairobi City and Kajiado Counties. This study adopted a descriptive survey design. The study was a comparative research design on the two counties (Nairobi and Kajiado counties). Qualitative method was employed to compensate for the loose ends that might have been caused by open-ended questions. The target population for this study was the registered voters in the Counties of Nairobi and Kajiado. This study employed purposive sampling to select respondents from Kajiado and Nairobi Counties. Data was sourced from the leaders of both counties and this included the governors, senators, and women's representatives in the national assembly, county assembly members, committee members, community's elders and recognized opinion leaders. The study utilized a questionnaire with closed and open-ended questions. The research objectives guided the researcher in generating items in the questionnaire. The secondary data was obtained from various documentations. These were mainly books, reports, and other documents from development organizations and government records as well as written articles on the researcher's interests in the two counties. Both quantitative and qualitative approaches were used for data analysis.

## **FINDINGS & DISCUSSION**

A sample of 384 respondents was used for the study. The researcher managed to collect 234 questionnaires, which were duly filled. The researcher questionnaires from the six key informants, which brought the total number, collected to 240 questionnaires. This represented a response rate of 61.5% of the sampled 390 respondents. The researcher sought to establish the gender distribution of the respondents. From the

analysis of the collected data, there were 190 female respondents who represented 79.2% of the total respondents. There were 50 male who represented 20.8% of the respondents that the researcher was able to collect data from. Out of the 240 respondents, no respondent had vied for the position of Presidency while five of the respondents indicated that they had vied or intended to vie for the position of the senator. Eight respondents opined that they intended to vie for the gubernatorial position. A relatively higher percentage (20.8%) of the respondents indicated that they either had vied or had the intentions of vying for the position of the Member of Parliament (MP). More women had vied or expressed intentions of vying for the position of women representative (33.3%) and this was mainly because this position was only available for women aspirants. Further, 40.4% of the respondents indicated that they either had vied or were intending to vie for the position of the Member of County Assembly (MCA). 12.1% of the respondents were below 29 years while 17.9% were 30-39 years. Respondents between 40 to 49 years were 25% while 50-59 years were 35%. Respondents above 60 years were 10% of the sample population. Majority (65%) of the respondents were Christians while the Hindus were 5.8%. A response rate of 18.8% indicated that they were Muslims while 10.4% indicated that they were not Christians, Hindus, or Muslims, which meant that they belonged to other religious backgrounds. The study sought to establish the level of education from the respondents. The analysis of the findings indicated that a majority had secondary education (31.7%) followed by 29.2% who had college diploma. Further, the findings showed that 25.4% of the respondents had university education while 10.4% had primary education while those without any education were 3.3%. 60.4% of the respondents were married, 30.4% were single whereas 9.2% were divorced. The analysis of the responses indicated that majority of

the respondents (41.3%) were employed while 20.8% were unemployed. Further, the analysis of the response rates indicated that 11.7% of the responses were retired, 16.3% were students, and 10% were homemakers. The analysis of the responses indicated that majority (25.8%) of the respondents had an income of Kshs. 21,000-30,000, 12.1% of the respondents had an income of 11,000-20,000, 20.8% had an income of 31,000-40,000, 14.2% had an income of 41,000-50,000, 23.3% had an income of above 51,000 whereas 3.8% had an income below 10,000.

### **The Influence of Political Culture on Women Participation in Politics**

This study provided findings on the influence of political culture on women participation in politics in Nairobi and Kajiado Counties. To this end, this study detailed how the political culture at the level of political parties influenced women participation in politics. Further, the chapter determined how the existing legal and Regulatory frameworks, which were part of the rules and procedures of political representations, affected the participation of women in politics. Political cultures matter because they shaped a population's political perceptions and actions. Governments could help shape political culture and public opinion through education, public events, and commemoration of the past. Political cultures vary greatly from state to state and sometimes even within a state (Romano, 2013). The study established that the cultural barriers in the County of Kajiado favored men and that women ought to take care of their families as the men went out to fend for their family and by extension undertake political activities. By the virtue of being involved at the family level, these women were disadvantaged in that they were not accorded their rights to an extent that this left them with fewer opportunities to acquire political experience.

The study sought to establish the influence of the patriarchal system on the participation of women in politics. It was found that women's voting was not free. More often, women were instructed by their husbands, in-laws or relatives to vote for a particular candidate not of their choice.

The study sought to establish how the socialization process affected women participation in politics. Socialization was cited as another challenge that hindered women's participation where majority of the respondents said so. In analyzing the responses, some members were of the view that women were socialized to be humble, to be led and not to be leaders; hence they only saw men at the front and women in the back seat to be led.

The study sought to establish whether political parties had any interest in targeted training, increased participation or empowerment of women in their structures or activities. The study established that political parties did not have the goodwill to empower women through training and involving women in decision-making.

The study sought to establish how the culture of egalitarian had been instrumental in enhancing the participation of women in politics. It was established that with equal opportunities, women were likely to realize economic empowerment, which was a direct predictor of political participation. The analyses of the responses showed that women who were in better financial standing were more likely to participate in politics compared to those without economic resources. Against this backdrop, the study established that there was a direct relationship between economic empowerment and women participation in politics.

The study sought to establish how the society's viewed on women's participation in politics and how it influenced the level of women participation in decision-making. The study found that the Nairobi political culture was very complex and in some ways contradictory entity which combined in

a particular way traditional elements with aspects of modern culture. However, the study established that there were a number of activities aimed at promoting equal rights and opportunities of women and men in Nairobi County, including promoting increased political participation of women.

The study sought to establish whether the few women who entered into politics were those of someone in their family had participated in politics, as this determined any political changes that would affect their chances to win or gain resources. The findings indicated that political gatekeepers tended to recruit from their own networks, and men tended to operate in male-dominated networks and, therefore, women would not easily get an opportunity to participate in politics even if they came from elite backgrounds.

The study sought to establish whether women inherited power from the family members such as father, brother, husband, or sister. The analysis of the data collected revealed that most women, who entered into politics more often than not, derived power from the family members. Further, the study revealed that women posed no political challenges to their male counterparts. Because of their subordinate status, women had less liberty, could make fewer claims on resources, and received little approval or encouragement for pursuing aspirations to power. Against this backdrop, the study revealed that for women climbing to economic or political power needed resources and support from men at each step in their ascent.

In general, the analysis of the collected data posited that cultural practices, patriarchal system, socialization process, political parties, lack of an egalitarian culture, society's view on women's participation, family political lineage, and women's inheritance of power from the family members were a hindrance to women participation in politics. In particular, the study established that cultural

barriers in the County of Kajiado favored men and that women ought to take care of their families while in the county of Nairobi, both men and women had equal responsibilities in terms of looking after their families.

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The study established that Politics was traditionally been a male domain that many women found it unwelcoming or even hostile. In the County of Kajiado, traditional or patriarchal values remained strong and as such, the community frowned on women entering politics. Consequently, women found it difficult to enter into politics, as the community often scorned on those who expressed their intention of vying for elective seats such as governor or senator. Against this backdrop, the analysis of the responses from Kajiado County indicated that majority of the women aspirants went for the position of women representative because other elective seats were deemed a reserve for them. The study's focus in Nairobi County established that because of the cosmopolitan nature of the city, individual's cultural predisposition did not necessarily influence their participation in politics.

The findings of the study established that the political arena in the county of Kajiado was organized according to male norms, values and lifestyles. The study revealed that both counties still embraced patriarchal systems, whereby men held power in all the important institutions of society. Further, the study established that the family as an agent of socialization influenced the level of women participation in politics as the women were socialized to take up some roles because other roles were a preserve of the male. This assertion was in tandem with Kadaga (2013) who argued that patriarchal thought limited opportunities for women participation in politics and that how favorably or unfavorably the society viewed

women's involvement in politics depended on where it's culture lay in the egalitarian-hierarchical cultural spectrum.

It was evident from the analyzed data that socialization provided the necessary ingredients needed by women to participate in the activities of the larger society. The analysis of the collected data established that an egalitarian culture fostered women's involvement in electoral politics, but hierarchical culture impeded it. Moreover, women were grossly under-represented at all levels of government and this was because of the hierarchical culture, which pervaded the counties of Nairobi and Kajiado. The findings from Kajiado County pointed out that the lack of women participation in politics was because of the way the community viewed women who entered politics. Responses from Nairobi County suggested that the perceptions of the community did not necessarily influence the level of women in politics. In other words, political culture in the County of Nairobi was very complex and in some ways had a contradictory entity that combined traditional elements with aspects of modern culture. The responses established that women were less likely to be encouraged to run and less likely to be considered as potential candidates when positions opened up. Against this backdrop, the study revealed that whether women were from politically connected families, it was not easy for the same families to encourage women to run for seats. The findings indicated that political gatekeepers tended to recruit from their own networks, and men tended to operate in male-dominated networks and, therefore, women would not easily get opportunities to participate in politics even if they came from elite backgrounds.

Further to the above, the analysis of the data collected revealed that most women, who enter

into politics more often than not, derived power from the family members. The study revealed that for women climbing to economic or political power needed resources and support from men at each.

### **Conclusions**

The researcher observed that patriarchal structures within parties, state, and people's lives had a deleterious influence on the level of women's political participation and this hinged on the fact that despite the structures put in place such as the two-thirds gender rule, the representation of women in leadership positions was low.

### **Recommendations**

The study recommends the implementation of the two-thirds gender rule would enhance women participation in politics, as more seats would be reserved for them both at the national and county level. Quotas could be effective. Evidence from around the world provided examples of where quotas had immediate and direct effect on women's participation.

### **Recommendations for Further Studies**

There is need to conduct a cross-sectional study to establish whether the new constitution that provided for the new legal and regulatory framework has been effective in realizing the two thirds gender rule. A cross-sectional study will provide insights as to whether the country has been able to make strides and realize gains, and how to consolidate the gains with an objective of forging for more gains. Further, studies should be conducted on how best to increase women representation, as political participation is not a means to an end, rather, political participation is perceptual in nature and as such women cannot be forced to participate.

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