

The extent to which Gender Based Violence influences the enforcement of Gender Policies on Women Empowerment in Narok County, Kenya

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DOI: 10.29322/IJSRP.9.12.2019.p9611

<http://dx.doi.org/10.29322/IJSRP.9.12.2019.p9611>

Abstract

Gender targeted policies are increasingly becoming part of everyday program before and during the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) period unto 2030. Many programs have been introduced to ensure enforcement of gender policies on women empowerment but despite government efforts to address the issues, women disempowerment is still endemic in Kenya especially in counties located in Arid and semi- Arid Lands (ASAL). The study was guided by cultural lag theory by William Ogburn. The purpose of the study was to establish the extent to which Gender Based Violence (GBV) influences the enforcement of Gender Policies on Women Empowerment in Narok County, Kenya. The study adopted the ex-post-facto survey and descriptive survey design. Samples were drawn using stratified, simple random, purposive and systematic sampling. Questionnaires, interview schedule and focus group discussions were used to collect data. Quantitative data were analyzed through descriptive statistics such as frequency percentages and correlation statistics. Qualitative data were transcribed and discussed based on established themes. The study found out that the policies made to empower women are there but they have not been enforced to empower women and remove them from poverty and traditional exclusion. GBV most of it cultural affected the enforcement of Gender Policies on Women Empowerment. Cultural factors influencing enforcement of gender policies on women empowerment were FGM, early marriage, culture, powerful traditional institutions, patriarchal society and male chauvinism. Other factors were restriction put on women, dependency on husbands and societal roles. The study recommends need to challenge believes that girls and women are of less social, economic and political value than men and full implementation of gender policies on women empowerment. The government should also provide a public space for women to challenge unjust behaviors and enhance policies that will assist women ascent into power. These findings are significant not only to policy implementers and government but also to the entire society to understand the place of women in the society. The study provides a baseline to policy makers and enforcers to put in place laws and enforce policies that protect women from abuse and humiliation.

Index Terms: Gender, Gender Based Violence, Gender Policies, Women Empowerment, Enforcement.

INTRODUCTION

Gender based violence most of it cultural is a human right issue affecting girls and women. According to UN (1998) violence against women should be understood within the context of women and girls subordination status to men

and boys in the society. Many cultures have beliefs, norms and social institutions that legitimizes women subordination, therefore perpetuating violence against women (Heise et al, 1990). According to Coalition on Violence against Women (COVAW 2017), violence against women has been acknowledged as a violation of basic human rights and a form discrimination against women, reflecting the prevalent imbalance of power between women and men.

Gender targeted issues especially those affecting women and girls are increasingly becoming a part of everyday programme. Global initiative include global convention and conferences by United Nations, continental convention for example African Union convention and national policies at countries levels. In the UN the commitment to gender equity and women empowerment can be traced to 1948 United Nation Charter and Universal Declaration of Human Rights which states that rights and freedoms will not be limited by a person's gender and established that, "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights". Since then milestones include, the 1975 Mexico city 1st women conference, the 1975 adaption of CEDAW, the 1980 Copenhagen 2nd women conference, the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action, the 2000 Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs 2015)

In 1946 the United Nations created the division of advancement of women (DAW) to champion women empowerment and gender equality in order to ensure women, being half of the world's population enjoy equal rights as well as living in dignity as equal citizens everywhere. The 1st world conference on the status of women by UN in Mexico City addressed key areas of gender equality, discrimination, integration and full participation of women in development. The 1980 Copenhagen 2nd women conference called for national measures to ensure women ownership and control of property as well as improvement of women, rights to inheritance and equal access to education and employment opportunities. The UN 3rd conference on women in Nairobi (1985) urged member states to take constitutional and legal steps to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women. It recommended for greater empowerment in regards to health, education and employment, equal participation and equitable representation at all levels of political process and public life. Beijing Platform for Action (1995) highlighted the necessity to ensure that gender equality is a primary goal in all social and economic development. MDG number 3 on gender equality and empowerment of women become an effective way to bridge gender gaps in all areas. Among the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs 2015) goal 5 aims to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls. The incorporation of this goal in the SDGs is a clear indication that some countries in the world were unable to achieve it during the time of MDGs.

African Union (AU) states are signatories of the UN General Assembly Land Mark Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) which was adopted in 1979. The AU commitment to gender equality and advancement of women is rooted in African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights. The commitment is reinforced by Protocol to African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (Maputo Protocol (2003), Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa 2004 and AU Gender Policy 2015. The AU gender policy focuses on closing the equality gap between men and women and particularly addressing gender inequalities which have resulted into women disempowerment and feminization of poverty. The policy offer opportunities for

empowerment of women, guarantee protection against violence as well as ensure their participation in public and economic life.

Kenya is a signatory to many international and regional treaties in support of gender equality and women empowerment. The country has put in place various policies, plan and programs aimed at addressing gender gaps and empower women which include the Kenya National Gender Policy, Affirmative Action, the 2010 constitution, presidential directives and legislations and most recently vision 2030. The policies are in consistence with the government commitment to implement the National Plan of Action based on the Beijing Platform for Africa. The national gender policy is supposed to provide a framework for advancement of women and approach that would lead to greater efficiency in resource allocation and utilization to ensure empowerment of women. The guiding principles of the policy include women rights, gender fairness and justice, equity in treatment of women as well as equal opportunities to access national resources and promote economic empowerment of women.

The Affirmative Action targets women development as a creative measure to equalize opportunities and access to relevant training to be provided to improve knowledge, skills and attitudes toward gender equality. In public service the affirmative action was made to ensure adequate women participation in the civil service and increase proportion of women in civil service senior management. The 2007 Political Party Act provided for 50 percent chance women representation in party nomination. The 2010 constitution sought to cure the old age problem of marginalization of women by ensuring women share equal opportunities and including women in decision making and the government.

The 2030 goal on equality aims to attaining gender parity and fairness in delivering justice and reducing social inequalities. The vision 2030 for gender, youth and vulnerable groups is on equity in power and resources distribution between sexes, improvement of livelihood for all vulnerable groups. Specific strategies involve increasing the participation of women in all economic, social and political decision making process, starting with high representation of women in parliament, improving access to business opportunities, health and education and minimizing vulnerabilities through prohibition of retrogressive practices such as FGM, early marriage and child labour.

Though the laws and policies have been in place for decades women are not fully enjoying the human dignity and opportunities they fully deserve. Extensive discrimination against women continue to exist all over the world. According to OECD (2016) Development center despite several laws that demand gender equity in matters of ownership and inheritance, women are often discriminate against. Although the government of Kenya has shown a lot of efforts to ensure equality and women empowerment, gender imbalance remain a major problem in all areas of the economy. In the political arena very few women are elected. Kenya is particularly weak compared to other countries in the area in terms of political empowerment of women, for instance Rwanda which serves as an ideal example in regard to equity in representation (Africa Development Form VI, 2008).

Kenya in terms of Gender Inequality has an overall GII of 0.651(Draft 7th Human Development Report). This is however, not equal everywhere as there are regional disparities with counties located in Arid and Semi- Arid Lands (ASALs) having high Gender Inequality Indices. Narok County is found in ASAL and the Maasai community living in the

county are not readily giving in to current changes in the world despite all efforts being undertaken by various groups. The female gender in Narok County are a product of a society that over time since independence in 1963, education and empowerment of women have taken a slow pace. Achievement of MDG number three is weak in Narok which is a dominant pastoral area where leadership amongst women is low. The county reflects gender-based disadvantages in three dimensions - reproductive health, women empowerment and the labour market. MDG number three has also lagged behind with women literacy at 31 percent compared to men at 69 percent (Narok County Profile 2013).

Documentary source on similar studies and policy documents from national and international sources demonstrate that, even if the laws and policies are there they remain a vaguely worded statement as they have not been implemented to protect and empower women especially in rural areas where majority of the affected women live. Many challenges reign hampering a coordinated effort to enforce laws that protect women and gender policies on women empowerment.

THEORITICAL PERSPECTIVE

The cultural lag theory by William F. Ogburn (1964) was the underlying theoretical perspective of the study, focusing on the fact that all parts of culture do not change at the same pace. According to Ogburn cultural lag occurs when one or two parts of culture that are correlated change before or in a greater degree than the other parts. When change occur in material culture of the society non-material culture must adapt to that change. William Ogburn argues that within a society as a whole change takes place in the material and the adaptive non-material culture (belief systems and institutional practices)

Cultural lag refers to the notion that culture takes time to catch up with technological innovations. Different rates of change in material and non-material culture accounts for this lag and social problems and conflicts are caused by this lag. In this sense Ogburn (1957) conceptualized cultural lag as a failure of ideas, attitudes and aspects of institutional practices to keep pace with changes in adaptive culture.

The theory of cultural lag states that a period of maladjustment occur when the non-material culture is struggling to adopt to new material conditions. The Maasai woman is caught in between two opposing forces and in most cases choosing to identify with her long standing traditional culture which resist change hence not able to advance socially, economically and politically. The Maasai woman ends up academically and professionally handicapped thus unable to compete favorably with males.

METHODOLOGY

The focus of the study was restricted to implementation and enforcement of gender policies on women empowerment in Narok County. Narok County is found in ASAL and most women in ASAL are affected by outdated traditions that restrict their advancement (Limangura 2000). Further to this counties in ASAL have high Gender Inequalities (Ministry of Devolution and planning 2013).The study population comprised of 864 teachers and 111925 female students in public primary schools, 351 government officers, 546 Village elders and 169220 households. Samples were drawn using purposive, simple random sampling, stratified sampling and systematic sampling. In this

study, ex-post facto and descriptive survey design were adopted to establish the extent to which Gender Based Violence influencers the enforcement of Gender Policies on women empowerment in Narok County.

Data was collected by use of questionnaire, interview schedules and focus group discussions. Secondary data was obtained from literature review, which comprised of documentary sources on similar studies and policy documents from national and international sources. Questionnaire were administered to students, Principals and teachers. Interviews were conducted to all government officers and women and village elders were put in focus groups Data collected was analyzed quantitatively by use of descriptive statistics and qualitatively transcribed and discussed based on established themes. Data collected brought a wide range of views, opinions, attitude and values from which similarities were extracted and comparisons made

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Social Demographic Information

Data from Narok County education office in 2016 indicate that the county has 537 male teachers, 234 female teachers and among the 33 curriculum support officers only 9 were female. Most of the administrators were males with a few women in lower administrative post. This is a clear indication that government offices are dominated by males. The respondent had varied age and most of the teachers and top Government Officers had a bachelor’s degree and a few had a master’s degree. Majority of the chiefs and Assistant Chiefs had primary and secondary education thus they had very little knowledge of the laws and policies that protect and empower women. Majority of the teachers and government Officers had served in the county for over 5 years so they had good knowledge of the Maasai culture. Majority of the mothers had never been to school, quite a number had primary education and a few had secondary education. Majority of the parents were livestock farmers due to the pastoral nature of the Maasai community.

Findings on Gender Based Violence and enforcement of Gender Policies on Women Empowerment

Table 1: Government efforts to enforce gender policies on women empowerment

| Statement | SA | A | UD | D | SD |
|---|-----------------|---------------|---------------|-----------------|------------------|
| Kenya National Gender Policy | | | | | |
| Women are able to access finances for advancement There is fairness and justice in the treatment of women | 15.79 21.05% | 1.05% 2.11 | 8.42% 0.0% | 11.58% 6.32% | 63.16% 70.53% |
| Affirmative Action | | | | | |
| 40%-50% of public service are women | 13.68% | 7.38% | 1.05% | 4.21% | 73.68% |
| Political Party Act 2007 | | | | | |
| 50% of political parties nomination are women | 9.47% | 2.11% | 0.0 | 0.0% | 88.42% |
| The 2010 Constitution | 5.26% | 0.0% | 3.16 | 1.05% | 90.53% |
| The constitution has helped to improve the traditional exclusion of women | | | | | |
| Vision 2030 | | | | | |
| Alleviation of poverty in ASAL has been achieved | 20% | 1.05% | 0.0% | 4.21% | 74.74% |
| Women have access to business opportunities | 41.05% | 9.47% | 0.0% | 3.16% | 46.32% |
| Women have benefited from Women Enterprise Fund | 37.89% | 6.32% | 5.26% | 3.16% | 47.37% |
| Women have benefited from Social Protection Fund | 18.94% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 8.42% | 72.64% |
| Young women have benefited from the Youth Fund | 24.21% | 3.16% | 2.11% | 4.21% | 66.32% |

Focus group discussion with women revealed that women had not benefited from the Kenya National Gender Policy which enables women to access finances for advancement and ensures fairness and justice in the treatment of women. They further added that women are always treated inferior to men, are discriminated in all areas and had difficulties in accessing financial resources as men carry their identity cards and everything they do should be in consultation with their husbands. Focus group discussion with the elders indicated that women are provided for by their husbands and there is no need for them to seek financial support from institutions. On fairness and justice on treatment of women the village elders did neither agree nor disagree with the statement but stated culture of the community gives the male gender supremacy over the female.

On the affirmative action that allows women to access top leadership position and get 40%-50% of public service position, the women involved in the study stated that it is impossible for women to rise to top leadership position as leadership in the community belongs only to the male gender and they are in a better position to get jobs in government offices. Women lack education and skills and are looked down on. The village elders stated that women are like children and cannot make good leaders as they can easily be deceived.

The study also sought the opinion of teachers on enforcement of Gender Policies on women empowerment. On the Kenya National Gender Policy, 63.16% of the teachers strongly disagreed that women have access to finances for advancement and 70.53% strongly disagreed that there is fairness and justice in the treatment of women. On the Affirmative Action 73.68% of the teachers strongly disagreed that 40%-50% of public servants are women. On the Political Party Act (2007) 88.42% of the teachers strongly disagreed that 50% of the political party nomination are women while 90.53% strongly disagreed that the 2010 Constitution had helped to improve the traditional exclusion of women. On Gender policies in Vision 2030, most of the teachers (74.74%) strongly disagreed that alleviation of poverty has been achieved in ASAL and 46.32% strongly disagreed that women have access to business opportunities while 41.05% strongly agreed on the same. The study also sought the opinion of the teachers on whether women in the community had benefited from the funds in Vision 2030 made to empower them. The results showed that 47.37% strongly disagreed that women in the community had benefited from Women Enterprise Fund while 37.89% strongly agreed on the same. Findings indicated that 72.64% strongly disagreed that women in the community had benefited from the Social Protection Fund, while 66.32% strongly disagreed that young women had benefited from the Youth Fund.

The study sought the opinion of government officers on whether women had benefited from the Kenya National Gender Policy that allows women access finances. All the government officers strongly disagreed that women are able to access finances for advancement because they are dependent on men. They also added that it was difficult in such a patriarchal community for women to obtain fairness and justice. On the Affirmative Action the opinion of government officers clearly stated that it was very difficult to implement it due to the patriarchal nature of the community where leadership among women is almost a taboo and also due to high level of illiteracy among women.

On the political party Act, the government officer stated that party leaders had knowledge on the Act but no party was willing to nominate women as no one would vote for them. The government officers strongly disagreed that the 2010 constitution had helped to improve the traditional exclusion of women. They also added that the government has been unable to ensure equal participation of men and women in government and so far the one third gender rule has not been implemented. On Vision 2030 the government officers disagreed that the funds have been used to alleviate poverty in ASAL as a large population was still living in poverty. The government officers stated a few women had benefited from the Women Enterprise fund and none had benefited from the Youth Fund and the Social Protection Fund. For those who have been able to access the funds they have not been able to improve their life because no education was given on how to use the funds to improve their lives.

Table 2: Factors hindering women from being Empowered Socially, economically and politically

| Statement | | SA | D | UD | D | SD |
|---|----------|---------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| FGM denies girls and women education necessary for economic and political empowerment | Girls | 206 53.23% | 30 17.57% | 1 0.26% | 46 11.89% | 66 17.05% |
| | Teachers | 27 28.42% | 29 30.53% | 14 14.74% | 10 10.53% | 15 15.79% |
| Early marriage prevents girls and women from acquiring education, training and development skills | Girls | 262 67.70% | 29 7.49% | 9 2.33% | 5 1.29% | 82 21.19% |
| | Teacher | 59 62.11% | 21 22.11% | 10 10.53% | 3 3.16% | 2 2.11% |
| Traditional institution elevate men over women | Girls | 269 69.51% | 69 17.83% | 3 0.78% | 23 5.94% | 23 5.94% |
| | Teachers | 54 56.84% | 33 34.74% | 5 5.26% | 3 3.16% | 0 0.0 |
| Custom and beliefs legitimizes women subordination | Girls | 231 59.69% | 92 23.77% | 6 1.55% | 25 6.46% | 33 8.53% |
| | Teachers | 46 48.42% | 36 37.90% | 5 5.26% | 3 3.16% | 5 5.26% |
| Culture of the community does not allow women to participate in decision making | Girls | 179 46.25% | 51 13.18% | 6 1.55% | 65 16.80% | 86 22.22% |
| | Teachers | 44 46.32% | 35 36.84% | 4 4.21% | 11 11.58% | 1 1.05% |
| Traditional beliefs and customs makes women to be dependent on men | Girls | 249 64.34% | 82 21.18% | 3 0.78% | 26 6.72% | 27 6.98% |
| | Teachers | 50 52.63% | 41 43.16% | 2 2.11% | 1 1.05% | 1 1.05% |
| Customary laws, beliefs and customs of the community discriminate women | Girls | 299 77.26% | 25 6.46% | 6 1.55% | 13 3.36% | 44 11.37% |
| | Teachers | 73 76.84% | 2 2.11% | 1 1.05% | 7 7.37% | 12 12.63% |
| Traditional ideas about roles of women restrict their advancement | Girls | 227 58.66% | 84 21.70% | 23 5.94% | 33 8.53% | 20 5.17% |
| | Teachers | 56 63.16% | 27 28.42% | 4 4.21% | 4 4.21% | 0 0.0% |
| Domestic workload prevents women from engaging in productive activities | Girls | 205 52.97% | 89 23.0% | 8 2.07% | 43 7.8% | 59 13.1% |
| | Teachers | 40 43.5% | 33 35.9% | 6 6.5% | 11 12.0% | 2 2.2% |

The findings of the study indicated that 54.23% of the girls strongly agreed that FGM denies girls and women education necessary for economic and political empowerment. Group discussion with women involved in the study were also in agreement with the statement. Most of village elders disagreed with the statement that FGM denies girls and women education necessary for economic and political empowerment as FGM is only a rite of passage. 28.42% of the teachers strongly agreed that FGM denies girls and women education necessary for economic and political empowerment, while 15.79% strongly disagreed with the statement. The government officers were also in agreement with the statement that FGM denies girls education necessary for economic and political development because after FGM some girls reject formal education and others are forced to drop out of school and are married off by their parents. Further the government officers stated that education given to girls prior to FGM is mainly on gender roles and women subordination. According to the study findings FGM is a tool used by traditionalist to degrade women status in the community. It denies girls and women education necessary for Social, economic and political empowerment.

Most of the girls, 67.70% strongly agreed that early marriage prevents women from acquiring education, training and development skills. Group discussion with women involved in the study were also in agreement with the statement and the village elders agreed on the same. Most of the teachers (62.11%) strongly agreed that early marriage prevents women from acquiring education, training and development skills. The government officers also agreed with the statement and added that early marriage had played a major role in inhibiting women progression both socially, economically and politically.

The study also sought to find out whether traditional institutions elevate men over women. The results indicated that 69.51% of the girls strongly agreed that traditional institution elevate men over women. Women involved in the study also agreed with the statement and added that traditional institution prevents women from ascending to leadership positions. The village elders agreed that traditional institutions elevate men over women and added that leadership among men is God given and women have to be contented with societal roles of taking care of the family. Most of the teachers (56.84%) strongly agreed that traditional institutions elevate men over women. The government officers also agreed on the same and stated that traditional institution look down on women and treat them like children.

On whether customs and beliefs legitimize women subordination 59.69% of the girls strongly agreed on the statement. Women involved in the study agreed with the statement that customs and beliefs legitimizes women subordination as from early age women are taught to be submissive and obedient to their husbands and their role in the society. Any woman who tries to challenge these beliefs and customs is met with violence and is rejected by the community. The village elders agreed on the same and added that women are property of their husbands and will always be inferior to men. Most of the teachers 48.42% strongly agreed that customs and beliefs legitimizes women subordination. The government officers were also in support that customs and beliefs legitimize women subordination as it was very evident in public Barraza were women sit on the ground as men and young boys take the seats, also women are not allowed to talk while standing in front of men and even in dowry negotiations women are not involved. As one of the curriculum support officer stated ***“when I was appointed as a head teacher I could***

not stand in front of the parents to address them, the chairman of the school stood to shadow me so that I could address the parents”.

On the statement that culture of the community does not allow women to participate in decision making 46.32% of the girls strongly agreed with the statement. Women involved in the study were also in agreement with the statement. The village elders agreed on the same and retorted that women are most likely to make wrong decisions and cannot be trusted. Most of the teachers 44.32% strongly agreed on the same. Results from interviewing the government officers were also in agreement with the statement that culture of the community does not allow women to participate in decision making. This was very evident in elections where no single woman was elected and in the families and society where men make all the decisions.

Further findings on whether traditional beliefs and custom makes women to be dependent on men. The findings indicated that 64.34% of the girls strongly agreed with the statement. Women involved in the study agreed with the statement and added that they depend on their husbands in all areas including making arrangement for their daughter's marriage, deciding for whom to vote for and even keeping their identity card. The village elders agreed that women are dependent on men and it is normal, cultural and God given. Results from the teachers indicated that 52.63% of the teachers strongly agreed that customs and beliefs make women to be dependent on men. The government officers also agreed with the statement. According to the study finding women are depended on men in decision making and everything they do it has to be in consultation with their husbands. Therefore, even if opportunities are made available to women they are prevented from exercising their full rights to this opportunities because of their dependency on men and discriminations operating in the society.

On the statement that customary laws, beliefs and customs of the community discriminate women 77.26% of the girls strongly agreed on the statement while 76.84% of teachers also agreed on the statement. Women involved in the study strongly agreed that customary laws, beliefs and customs of the community discriminate women and they have to adhere to this beliefs and customs as that is how they have been socialized and also due fear of being rejected. The village elders disagreed with the statement saying that they are only made to preserve their traditions and uphold their values. The government officers agreed with the statement and added that most of the laws are discriminative. According to the study findings gender discrimination has been legitimized by the society thus limiting women advancement.

The study further sought to find out whether the traditional idea about the role of women restrict their advancement and the findings indicated that 58.66% of the girls strongly agreed with the statement. Women involved in the study stated that most of their time is always taken by domestic chores. They further added that they have to be home early to count the animals as they get home from grazing and ensure they are all in and look for any that is missing. The Village elders agreed that the traditional role of women is domestic. Majority of the teachers 63.16% strongly agreed on that traditional idea about the role of women restrict their advancement. The results from interviewing the government officers were also in support of the statement and further stated that women roles have been restricted to reproduction and taking care of the family.

Further findings of the study indicated that 52.97% of the girls strongly agreed that domestic chores prevent women from engaging in productive activities while 42.11% of the teachers also agreed with the statement. Women involved in the study also agreed that domestic workload prevents them from engaging in other activities as they spend many hours fetching water and looking for firewood. In some cases, the women also look after cattle. The village elders added that women should stay home and care for the family property. The government officers were also in agreement with the statement and added that the area is dry and there is scarcity of water so women spent many hours looking for water. According to the study findings societal roles of women restrict their advancement. Even if opportunities are presented to women the nature of their reproductive responsibilities and burdens of domestic chores which are mostly intensive and time consuming mostly prevent women from equal access to opportunities compared to their male counterparts.

Table 3: Relationship between GBV and Enforcement of Gender Policies on Women Empowerment

| Correlations | | Influence of Gender based Violence on enforcement of Gender policies on women empowerment | Gender Policies |
|---|---------------------|---|-----------------|
| Influence of Gender based Violence on enforcement of Gender policies on women empowerment | Pearson Correlation | 1 | .466** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | .000 |
| | N | 387 | 387 |
| Gender Policies | Pearson Correlation | .466** | 1 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | |
| | N | 387 | 387 |

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

GBV had a positive, statically significant and high correlation coefficient on enforcement of gender policies on women empowerment ($r=0.466$, $p\text{-value}=0.000$). GBV was confirmed to have a highly positive and significant correlation coefficient with the enforcement of Gender Policies on Women Empowerment in Narok County.

Opinion of teachers and government officers on factors hindering women from being empowered economically and politically

The researcher sought the views of teachers and government officers on the factors hindering women from being empowered socially, economically and politically. On factors hindering women from being empowered socially most of the teachers mentioned discrimination put on women in education and cultural practices that forces girls out of school. Interview with government officers showed that social empowerment among women is faced with many barriers such as gender based discrimination resulting into parents being reluctant to invest in girls’ education and resources of the family being spent on the boys’ education as security for old age. The government officers added that most girls do not complete education in the county. According to the study findings most women in the county

are unable to access education so they are absorbed into the society with no education, skills and knowledge needed for empowerment.

On economic empowerment the teachers mentioned illiteracy among women, restriction put on women by their husbands and the community and lack of funds. The government officers mentioned illiteracy among women as the main factor hindering women from being empowered economically. Other factors mentioned in the interview with government officers were societal roles, lack of capacity to get loans, lack of skills to use the funds, funds made to empower women had not reached the rural areas and corruption in distribution of funds. Based on the study findings illiteracy affects economic empowerment of women as they lack skills thus living them with few choices in their life. Narok County is dry and frequently affected by drought thus there is scarcity of water. Women spend many hours looking for water, firewood and food. The responsibilities and burdens of domestic chores are mostly intensive and time consuming thus preventing women from equal access to opportunities compared to their male counterpart. Lack of funds and corruption in distribution of empowerment funds affected women economic empowerment. Even if the funds were available women could not access them due to restriction put on them by their husbands and also lack of skills to make use of the funds.

On factors hindering women from being empowered politically the teachers indicated main factors as patriarchal society, male chauvinism, powerful traditional institutions that look down on women and illiteracy among women. Interview with government officers who are key informant and involved in implementation of policies revealed factors such as:- illiteracy among women, lack of support from the community, social stigmatization, harassment by counterparts, patriarchal society and male chauvinism. The community disregards the female gender and overlooks the fundamental rights accorded to the female gender. Further to this the government officers indicated failure by government to implement the affirmative action, the one third gender rule and political party act hindered women from being empowered politically. Consequently women are locked out from political representation and participation in decision making in the family, community and the country as a whole. This was very evident in Narok County where most of the administrative posts and teaching post were held by the male gender and no single woman was elected in all the elective posts apart from the women representative. Women are looked out of decision making especially in areas that affect them.

Opinion of Teachers and Government Officers on approaches the government should use to ensure full enforcement on Gender Policies on Women Empowerment

The study sought the views of teachers and policy implementers on approaches the government should use in order to implement gender policies on women empowerment. On women empowerment economically the views included improving women literacy through adult education, providing funds, educating women on the available funds, educating women on available financial resources, providing women with loans without collaterals, ensuring women acquire business and financial skills, making water available and marketing their products.

On women empowerment politically the approaches mentioned were educating women on their rights, educating the community that women can also make good leaders, educating men on women rights, implementing the

affirmative action, respecting and preserving women dignity, protecting women from abuse, violence and humiliation, full implementation of the constitution, enforcing the one third gender rule and political party act, enforcing Family Protection Act and Sexual Offences Act and protecting women from traditional institutions. Further suggestions were that women should be given a public space to challenge unjust behaviors and a leader's voice. Activities suggested by teachers and government officers that could assist women ascent into power were voter education, facilitating capacity building, training female candidates and civic education.

CONCLUSION

From the findings, it was indicated that the policies made to empower women have not been implemented to redeem women from poverty and traditional exclusion especially in rural areas where majority of the affected women live. GBV most of it cultural hindered the enforcement of gender policies on women empowerment. Cultural factor influencing enforcement of gender policies on women empowerment were FGM, early marriage, culture that discriminate women, powerful traditional institutions, patriarchal society, male chauvinism, restriction put on women, dependence on husbands and societal roles. Traditional institutions, customary laws and beliefs played a great role in restricting women advancement. FGM and early marriage hindered women from acquiring education necessary for social, economic and political empowerment. Other factors that restricted women advancement were poverty, lack of funds, corruption in distribution of funds, illiteracy among women and lack of skills and knowledge needed for economic and political empowerment.

The study therefore concludes that illiteracy played a key role in hindering women from being empowered socially, economically and politically. Illiterate women lack skills thus living with few choices in their life and have no knowledge of their rights. Although the situation of women continues to improve, women remain disadvantaged in most areas of the economy and decision making. Therefore, the study concluded that even if opportunities are availed for women they are prevented from exercising their full rights to these opportunities due to restriction put on the by their family and the community.

The study recommends that involved parties should work toward improving women literacy, educating women on their rights and protecting women from GBV mostly cultural. Government and other stake holders to support setting up systems that reduce women work load by giving them domestic services such as water supply. Making funds available and ensuring they reach the intended group especially in rural areas, devolving the funds and educating women on available financial resources, providing women with loans without collaterals, ensuring women acquire business skills and marketing their products.

Participation of women in the political process require a process of mental liberation of the society that remain predominantly patriarchal. The study recommends the government to fully implement gender policies on women empowerment such as the 1/3 gender rule in parliament, Political Parties Act, the 2010 constitution, Kenya National Gender Policy, and all the pillars of Vision 2030. The study also recommends that education and awareness programs from all concerned parties including the media, NGOs, and the government to be put in place to help women understand their place in the society. Protecting women from abuse and humiliation, advocacy against Gender

Based Violence and providing public space for women to challenge unjust behaviors. To assist women to ascent into power the study recommends activities to be undertaken such as voter education, facilitating capacity building, training of women candidates, civic education and giving female candidates a leader's voice.

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