

**CHALLENGES IN PARTICIPATION OF RURAL WOMEN IN LOCAL
DEVELOPMENT IN KENYA: A CASE STUDY OF LUGARI DISTRICT,
KAKAMEGA COUNTY**

BY

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DECLARATION

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This Thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other university.

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my late brother Arthur Ekisa Oduma for being an inspiration and source of encouragement.

ABSTRACT

In Africa women play an instrumental role in the society. Available studies indicate that 70% of the work in society is undertaken by women. In comparing the lives of the inhabitants of the poorest communities across the Developing World, Kenya not an exception, it can be observed that virtually everywhere, women are the most affected. They are faced with the challenge of being poor and malnourished, lack proper reproductive health services, clean water, sanitation and other benefits. Furthermore, the glaring gender disparities in major decision-making institutions, illiteracy and lack of property ownership all contribute to their inability to participate effectively in Development. The main objective of the study was to assess the challenges of rural women in local development in Kenya using Lugari District as a case study. The specific objectives were: To identify the activities involved by women, to examine the benefits accruing from their participation in local development activities and to explore appropriate ways of enhancing their participation in local development activities. This study was based on Feminist Theory propagated by a civil right movement which sprung in 19th century in United States to fight for the rights of women. The Research design used was case study. From a target population of 200 using cluster and Simple random Sampling, a sample size of 50 was determined. Data collection techniques employed were questionnaires, Documentary analysis and direct observation. Data analysis was done by use of Descriptive statistics. Results obtained were presented by use of pie charts, bar graphs and frequency tables. The findings revealed the following: women still faced challenges which included, low education levels, inaccessibility to finance and lack of landownership. In light of the findings it was recommended that a clear policy should be enacted to ensure equal access of land among men and women, secondly, there is need to offer bursaries to needy and intelligent girls, improving agriculture and offer subsidies and finally the need to enhance female representation in leadership positions.

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DEFINITION OF TERMS

Agency: Is the capacity to make meaningful decisions or choices

Development: According to Todaro (2000), Development is a multidimensional process that involves changes in social structures, popular attitudes and institutions as well as the acceleration of economic growth,

Empowerment: Is the capacity to manage one's own life whether as an individual or as a group

Integration of women: To bring women into a community on terms equal to other members:

Participation: An act of taking part in an activity or event.

Participatory Development: Is the process through which stakeholders' influence and share control over development initiatives.

Participatory types: The various ways of taking part in an activity or event.

ABBREVIATIONS

AIDS: Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome

ARVs: Antiretroviral Drugs

CD: Community Development

CIRDAP: Center for Integrated Rural Development for Asia and Pacific

EFA: Education for All

EIA: Environmental Impact Assessment

GBV: Gender based Violence

HIV: Human Immunodeficiency Virus

NGO: Non-Governmental Organizations

UNEP: United Nations Environmental Program

UNESCO: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

UNRISD: United Nations Research Institute on Social Development

USAID: United States Agency for International Development

WID: Women in Development

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview

This chapter addresses key issues that form the basis of the study, namely; the background to the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, Research questions to be examined, justification of the study and finally, significance of the study.

1.2 Background to the Study

Participatory development is a process through which stakeholders can influence and share control over development initiatives and over the decisions and resources that affect their lives, hence the involvement of women in the design, planning and implementation of development projects is of paramount importance. As a key objective of participation, empowerment brings about a more equitable sharing of power, increasing the political awareness of disadvantaged groups and supports them in taking actions that are deemed necessary and allows them take control of their future.

Essentially empowerment can be conceptualized as the capacity to manage one's own life whether as an individual or as a community. This involves influencing and changing public policy that may adversely affect the freedom of choice towards becoming master of one's life. According to Chambers (1993), empowerment entails enabling the poor and powerless to take control over their lives and secure a better livelihood with ownership and control of productive assets as one key element.

Decentralization or devolution of responsibility to local people as a form of empowerment enables them operate their own innovations find their own solutions and determine their own pathways. Empowerment is essentially a political process that seeks to redistribute power in favour of the poor and the disadvantaged. It involves the relinquishing of power from personalized and institutionalized monopoly of power into the hands of the stakeholders of any given undertaking (Mulwa, 2008).

It can be noted that enumerable studies have been undertaken on empowerment globally over the centuries, this was most basically centered on women empowerment notably “women in development” in the 1970s. This was basically a term coined by Washington based Network of Female Development Professionals (Tinker, 1990). On the basis of their own experience in the overseas missions they began to challenge trickle down theories of development, arguing that modernization was impacting differently on men and women. Instead of improving women’s rights and status, the development process appeared to be contributing to a deterioration of their positions. Drawing on such evidence, this movement postulated that women’s disadvantaged position can in principle be eliminated by breaking down the stereotypes, for example, by giving girls better training and more varied role models, by introducing equal opportunity programs and anti-discriminatory legislation or by freeing labour markets (Connel, 1987).

By the late 1970s, some of those working in the field of development were questioning the adequacy of focusing on women in isolation, which seem to be the dominant feature of the women in development approach (WID) (Tinker, 1990). Although an analysis of women’s subordination was at the heart of the WID approach, the essentially relational nature of their subordination had been left largely

unexplored. As noted above the WID identified women's lack of access to resources as the key to their subordination without raising questions about the role of gender relations in restricting women's access to resources in the first place. The work that was underway within various social science disciplines suggested the importance of power, conflict and gender relations in understanding women's subordination. Many writings did emerge afterwards in the distinction between biological sex and social gender; feminist anthropologists gave increasing attention to the cultural representation of sexes, the social construction of gender identity and its determining influence on the relative position of men and women in society. "Maleness" and "femaleness" were understood as the outcome of cultural ideologies, rather than of inherent qualities or physiology (Moore, 1988).

The value of symbolic analysis of gender, it was argued, lies in the understanding of how men and women are socially constructed, and how those constructions are powerfully reinforced by the social activities that both define and are defined by them (Moore, 1988), status and power differentials between men and women therefore could not easily be ignored or viewed in isolation from their perspective positions within the relations of production. This transition from women in development to gender and development was indeed critical to the empowerment process of both the men and women, hence, facilitating their social and economic development. In recent decades the empowerment process has taken prominence and significance and hence focuses more on women who continue to face a number of challenges and difficulties, ranging from unemployment, lack of access to financial services and Human immune deficiency virus and Acquire immuno-deficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS) pandemic, domestic violence, poor access to education and lack of political representation that

threatens their livelihoods. Hence the need to empower the women economically in order for them to participate fully in the societal development thus the significance of this research studies. The study seeks to explore the empowerment process and how it is beneficial to the welfare of women in the development of the society and the nation at large.

Although much research has been done in the said area, much still needs to be done, for example, the women needs have not been addressed effectively, unemployment among the women remain a great problem. For instance, women continue to be subjected to archaic cultural practices such as, female genital mutilation, early marriage, thus perpetuating their miserable and subordinate positions in society, hence, impeding on their level of development.

Furthermore, it can be underscored that gender issues, empowerment and socio-cultural relation between men and women are core and transverse all aspects of life and work of humanity. The value and necessity of putting gender relations at the centre of the development discourse and the fight against poverty is critical to any development undertaking. In Lugari District, despite sensitization, a few communities still have many beliefs that hinder the advancement of women, for instance, relating to property ownership, control and access to productive resources, sharing of household chores and selling of the farm produce. Women generally have a heavy workload and work for longer hours than men. When the income of the household is not properly utilized, this discourages the women and the family may lapse into poverty (Lugari District Development Plan 2008-2012).

It is therefore important to demonstrate how essential the notion of empowerment is in understanding how poverty is perpetuated and its effects on women. In addition it

is also crucial to understand the specific dynamics implemented by the women in order to enhance empowerment which sometimes calls to question the adopted development models. In view of the above, it necessitates this study.

The above scenario and perception of empowerment is not peculiar to the Kenyan communities, in particular, Lugari District in Kakamega County. The concept of empowerment is basically viewed in terms of the elevation of women's capacity to improve their socio-economic status and make informed choices hence uplifting their livelihoods. It also focuses on the affirmative action to ensure that women are equally represented in all spheres of development. In the study area, women continue to face a number of difficulties and hold subordinate positions, hence by empowering them they would be able to participate fully in National Development, improve their socio-economic status and satisfy their desired needs.

Moreover, it can be noted that women constitute over 50% of Kenya's population but majority of them are illiterate and poor. A number of them are still affected by harmful cultural practices, for instance, female genital mutilation and early marriages. In addition women are affected by land redistribution rule. As the women lost access to and control of land they became more economically dependent on men, hence were dominated and had to adhere to the norms, values and regulations as dictated by the male members of the society (Kariuki, 2012). In District land ownership is indeed critical to development and self-sustenance yet women lack ownership. In most cases women own property via marriage, hence this leads to a scenario where unmarried women live as squatters in their family land as men are perceived to be heirs of their fathers property, this impoverishes women hence the need to empower them. Furthermore, in Kenya women have statutory rights to inherit land, however

male domination and customary practices constraints the degree to which women are able to exercise this right. Women's access to land typically is derived through male relations, who own and control land (FIDA, 2013).

Although the constitution offers equity and equality in land ownership it further increases women poverty given that it fails to recognize land as a social-economic factor that governs the lives of Kenyans and instead lumps land with other aspects of property. Further, the Constitution of Kenya protects private property regardless of how it was acquired leading to increased exclusion and poverty of women in a patriarchal society where men are the absolute owners with absolute rights over any transactions concerning the property. In addition to this, legislation and policies in Kenya regarding land management have not been harmonized with international provisions. An example is the 'equality clause' in the *Constitution of Kenya*, which is restricted by article 82(4), making exemption with respect to adoption, marriage, divorce, and devolution of property at death. There is conflict between Constitutional provisions on gender equality vis-à-vis customary practices that discriminate women even when implementing the *Succession Act*. According to the Federation of Women Lawyers formal statute law in Kenya potentially gives married women property rights. The legal situation is an emerging one, and is still not entirely clear entirely relied on common law principles. These principles imply that even in customary marriages, women have equal property rights in matrimonial property. Problems arise in dividing up matrimonial property on divorce or separation especially where the property is solely registered in the husband's name. The Law of succession has discriminatory provisions such as a woman forfeits her interest in the husband's estate if she remarries whereas the reverse does not apply for a widower. It is note worthy that the ability of a woman to

claim property rights under either Married Women's Property Act or succession law depends on her ability to establish her married status.(FIDA,2013). This situation is an impediment to their full participation in the development process and the growth of the Society and Nation.

This scenario is not peculiar to women in Lugari District, Kakamega County. Women in this Region continue to face a number of challenges which includes: female genital mutilation, early marriages, lack of political representation, lack of finance to enable them improves their wellbeing and the inferior position they hold in society. In Lugari District, Kakamega County women are perceived as children incapable of making independent and informed decisions, thus their voice is not heard and their needs identified. It is with this background that this study is important. Hence, there is need to enact policies that would integrate women needs and put women at the centre of the development process (Kariuki, 2012).

The above scenario experienced by women in Lugari District of Kakamega County forms the basis of the study and calls for a paradigm shift in the development process. This change in approach in the development discourse would ensure that women are equally empowered; hence enabling them to participate fully in the development process and improve their livelihoods.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

In Africa women play an instrumental role in the society. Available studies indicate that 70% of the work is undertaken by women in spite of the limited resources and knowledge. In comparing the lives of the inhabitants of the poorest communities across the Developing World, Kenya not an exception, we would discover that

virtually everywhere, women experience the harshest deprivation. They are faced with the challenge of being poor and malnourished, lack proper reproductive health services, clean water, sanitation and other benefits. Furthermore, the glaring gender disparities in major decision-making institutions, illiteracy and lack of property ownership all contribute to their inability to participate effectively in Development. This scenario is not peculiar to women in Lugari District who face many challenges and continue to hold inferior position in society. Hence, the need for affirmative action in order to integrate women needs in National Development and ensure Gender Parity and equity in resource utilization, thus enhancing women participation in the development process. The study therefore sought to examine the challenges faced by women as they participate in local development activities in the District.

1.4 Study Objectives:

The main objective of the study is to examine the challenges of rural women in local development in Kenya using Lugari District in Kakamega County as a case study

Specific objectives;

- i) To identify the activities involved by women in the study area
- ii) To examine the benefits accruing from their participation in the local development activities.
- iii) To determine challenges faced by women in their participation in local development activities
- iv) To explore appropriate ways of enhancing their participation in local development activities in the District.

1.5 Research Questions

Research Questions examined in the study were:

- i) What challenges do women face in their participation in local development in Lugari District?
- ii) What activities are women involved in the District?
- iii) What are the benefits of their participation in local development in the District?
- iv) What are the most appropriate ways of enhancing women's participation in local development in the District?

1.6 Justification of the Study

This study was important because it sought to examine the challenges in participation of rural women in local development in the District in an attempt to come up with solutions. With empowerment process being zeroed down to the women, this study is justified because it would seek to strengthen and allocate more resource to the women to enable them participate effectively in Development. Furthermore with the increase in unemployment rates among the women in study area, this study is justified because it would seek to address this problem. Women being the centre of societal development and being the majority, their voices is usually not heard and they continue to be left in the periphery of the development process. In Lugari District, for instance, women are perceived and grouped together with children; they are confined to performing household chores and reproductive roles as opposed to men whose work is perceived as public. This study would seek to bring a full understanding of the

social roles performed by men and women and their significance to societal development and wellbeing, hence their roles should be complementary.

1.7 Significance of the Study

It is anticipated that the data drawn from this study can be used as a guide in drawing up programmes, policies and activities for enhancing women participation in societal development with an interest in eradicating poverty in Lugari District. It is hoped that programmes and activities based on the researched data can lead to improved gender balance and empowerment of the women in social, economic and political participation. Hence, the women should be seen as equal partners in development. This study were guided by the Feminist Theory. (Mcnay and Pond, 1980).

1.8 Scope of the study

This study focused on the challenges in participation of rural women in local development in Lugari District. The study was conducted among 200 women from 50 women groups selected from all the four locations of the District with data being collected by the researcher through Questionnaire, documentary analysis and direct observation.

1.9 Theoretical Framework

This study was based on the Feminist theory whose account of women's employment depicts women earnings not as "pin money" but as a significant element in the family budget and as integral to their roles as mothers. Thus financial necessity is an important element in married women's participation in the labour force, in the sense that women's earnings may lift families out of poverty where men's wages are low and at all income levels desired living standards are now commonly built around two

incomes, that is, that of the women and the man in the household. This theory is important in this study because by examining the challenges facing women in the district proper measures would be put in place aimed at empowering women financially or social, making them independent and hence contributing in equal measures to the wellbeing of their families. (McNay and Pond,1980).

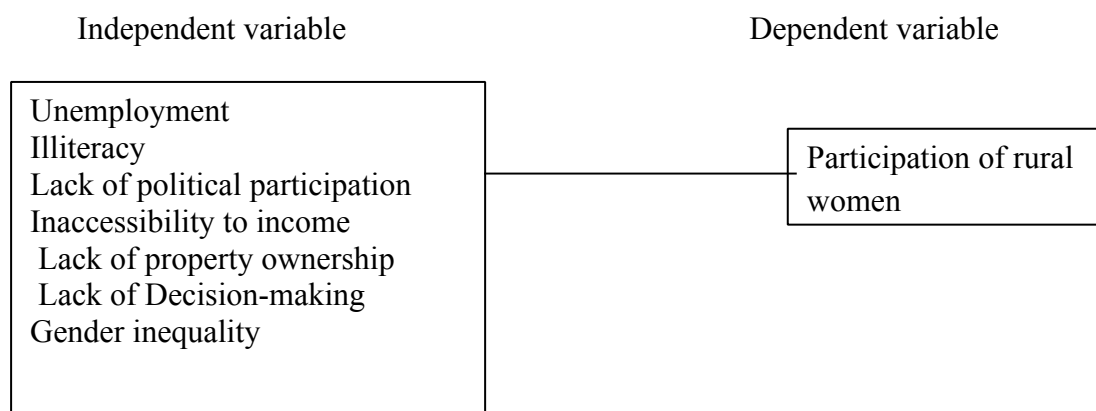
This theory was important and applicable to the study because it brings to our attention how improved socio-economic status of women would impact on the wellbeing of the family and society. It is in accordance with what is generally stated about women participation in development and the significance of women employment that this theory is used. In this regard women in Lugari District continue to hold subordinate positions as their roles is confined to reproduction, childcare and household chores, this impedes their development and growth. Furthermore, because many women are housewives and hence lack decent employment, they depend entirely on their husbands for the provision of food, clothing, education of their children, housing ,Healthcare amongst others. This makes them develop a dependency syndrome that is more disastrous to women's wellbeing in the family. This would not be the case if such women are employed and earn an income because this scenario would reduce their dependence on their husbands and give women a measure of autonomy, independence and freedom. Thus the empowerment of women is critical to societal development and wellbeing (Ibid.).

Based on the above theory, the empowerment of rural women for local development, particularly, in Lugari District is significant because it enables women to satisfy their basic needs, such as food, shelter, Healthcare, education, and ultimately transcend to satisfying other higher level needs, such as love and belonging, self-respect and

personal growth. The successful satisfaction of such needs would not be possible if people are not empowered be it economically, socially or politically. It is after all the needs have been fulfilled that human beings would focus on satisfying societal needs, thus resulting to the growth and prosperity of the society and the nation at large (Mulwa,2008).

1.10 Conceptual Framework

In the conceptual framework, it can be underscored that participation of rural women being a dependent variable is influenced by the challenges faced. These are; illiteracy, lack of political participation, inaccessibility to income, gender equality and decision making and unemployment amongst others. The framework postulates that all these factors directly affect the involvement of women in local development. Hence, empowerment of women can be realized if all the challenges are taken care of or surmounted.



CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Overview

This chapter covers a synthesis of the literature pertaining to the challenges in participation of rural women in local development, in particular, the participation of women in the development process. A review of literature on the existing definition and various conception issues related to measures taken to ensure the involvement of the women in the development process is presented. This includes an evaluation of literature on the effects of women participation in the development of the society and the measures taken to improve their participation. In addition, this chapter also covers issues such as, reasons, purpose and methods of measuring and evaluating empowerment processes and framework for understanding and measuring empowerment

2.2 Concept of Participation

Often the term participation is modified with objectives resulting in terms such as, community participation, citizens' participation, public participation and popular participation. The oxford English Dictionary defines participation as "to have a share in or take part in" thereby emphasizing the rights of individuals and choices that they make in order to participate. Oakley and Marsden (1987), define participation as a means to educate citizens and increase their competence. It is a vehicle for influencing decisions that affects the lives of citizens and an avenue for transferring political power; however, it can also be a method to co-opt dissent, a mechanism for ensuring the receptive, sensitive, and even accountability of social services to the consumers.

According to Westergard (1986) in Oakley and Marsden (1987), participation is defined as a collective effort to increase and exercise control over resources and institutions on the part of groups and movement of those excluded from control. This definition points towards a mechanism for ensuring community participation. The World Bank's Learning Group on participatory development (1995), defines participation as a process through which stakeholders influence and share control over development initiatives and the decisions and resources which affect them.

A descriptive definition of participatory programmes could imply the involvement of a significant number of persons in situations or actions that enhance their wellbeing such as, their income, security or self-esteem (Oakley, 1991). Furthermore, the ideal conditions contributing towards meaningful participation can be described in three aspects which are:

- What kind of participation is under consideration?
- Who participates in it?
- How does participation occur?

According to Oakley and Marsden (1987), community participation is a process by which individuals, families and communities assume responsibility for their own welfare and develop a capacity to contribute to their own and the community's development. Hence, participation refers to an active process whereby beneficiaries influence the direction and the execution of development projects rather than merely receive a share of project benefits. According to Bamberger (1986), there are five objectives of community participation, these are:

- Sharing project costs: Participants are asked to contribute money or labour during the projects implementation
- Increase project efficiency: Beneficiaries consultation during project planning or involvement in the management of project implementation or operation
- Increase project effectiveness: Greater beneficiary involvement to help ensure that the project achieves its objectives and that benefit go to the intended group.
- Building beneficiary capacity: either by ensuring that participants are actively involved in planning and implementation or through formal and informal training and consciousness raising activities.

Increasing empowerment: Defined as seeking to increase the control of underprivileged sectors over the resources and decision affecting their lives and their participation in the benefits produced by the society in which they live. it should be underscored that participation is an important aspect in the development process in any given society, in particular, the participation of women, thus participatory development is a process through which stakeholders can influence and share control over the decisions and resources that affects themselves. Hence, involvement and participation of women in development projects, particularly in the formulation, planning and implementation of projects in Lugari District would improve their livelihood and foster a sense of ownership. Participation has the following objectives:

Empowerment: Is often a key objective of participation because it brings about a more equitable sharing of power, increasing the political awareness of disadvantaged

groups and supporting them in taking actions that allows them to take more control of their own future.

Capacity building; It can be underscored that people learn best by doing things for themselves hence if assisted to plan and manage their own outcomes are more likely to meet their real needs and improve their social status. Finally participation ensures effectiveness of the development projects and programs. If people have a genuine stake in a development activity and are actively involved in decision making they would give a greater commitment, hence shared objectives are likely to be met (European commission,2004).There are indeed different levels of participation which includes, information sharing which is the minimal level of participation and often consist of little more than keeping people informed second, consultation which entails a two way flow of information, third decision making which is a scenario where participation involves individuals or groups in making decision, hence they have the authority and responsibility to take action (European Commission, 2004). Finally the highest level of participation is achieved when people take it upon themselves to initiate new actions, thus indicating a significant level of self-confidence and empowerment (Ibid).

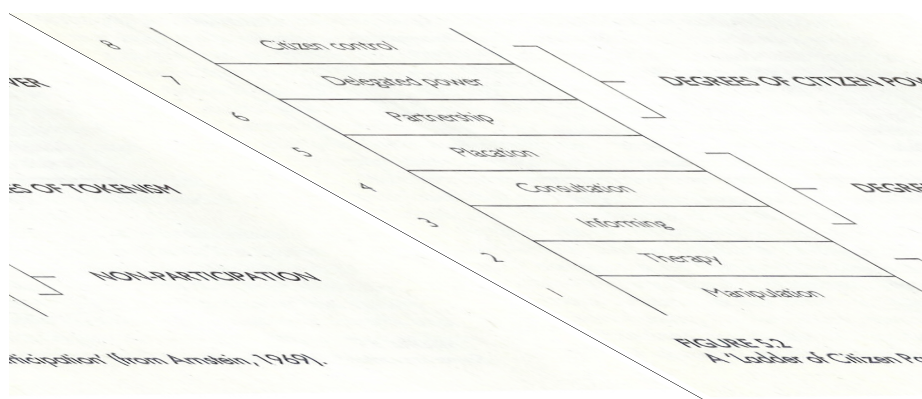


Figure 2: A ladder of citizen participation

The figure above illustrates ladder of citizen's participation as thought out by Arnstein, (1969). As illustrated above the lower level of the ladder, that is, Manipulation and Therapy describe levels of "non- participation". Informing and Consultation, progress to levels or a scenario that allow the have- nots to hear and to have a voice. Placation is simply a higher level of participation because the ground rules allow have- nots to advice, but retains for the power holders the continued right to decide. Citizens can enter into a Partnership that enables them to negotiate and engage in trade- offs with traditional power- holders. At the topmost level, that is, delegated power and Citizen Control; have- not citizens obtain the majority of decision- making seats, or full managerial power.

It is important to note that participation in the development process takes various forms and occur in varying intensities depending on the nature of roles and responsibilities of the people and groups involved. Community members or groups may simply be required to contribute labour or some cash inputs or be represented on a managerial or decision making responsibilities and authority. The nature and scope of the project will influence the level of participation that is practical and possible, as will be a realistic assessment of skills and capacity among participating communities and groups. In this regard there are indeed different types of participation as espoused by Dearden *et.al* (2003), these are:

a) Passive Participation: People participate by being told what is going to happen or has already happened. It is unilateral announcement by an administration or programme

management without listening to people's responses. This is normally with blue print plans or projects with the Government or certain organizations. In this case citizens

participation is passive, for instance, the building of a cattle dip would be initiated without actively involving communities in the design, planning and implementation of such projects hence denying a sense of ownership to local people which in effect affects sustainability and survival of such projects. In order to ensure that projects are effective and sustainable there should be real and active participation of the local communities, the felt needs of the local people needs to be catered for as opposed to perceived needs, thus for any endeavor to be successful and reap benefits, the communities need to be consulted and actively involved.

b) Participation in Information Giving: People participate by answering questions posed by extractive researchers and programme managers using questionnaire surveys or similar approaches. People do not have the opportunity to influence proceedings, as the findings of the research or programme design are neither shared nor checked for accuracy (Dearden *et.al*, 2003). This is not an authentic participation because the local people only give information about their situation and decisions about the implementation of projects are left to project managers, Government officials and Non-Governmental Organizations. This form of participation could be when the Government in collaboration with other organization for instance the church would want to initiate a child support programme. In such an instance there is need to carry out a needs assessment or baseline survey research in order to know the situation of the local people and the viability of such a programme.

c) Participation by Consultation: People participate by being consulted, and external agents listen to views. These external agents define both problems and solutions, and may modify these in the light of people's responses. Such a consultative process does

not concede any share in decision making and professionals are under no obligation to take on board peoples' views (Dearden *et.al*,2003).

d) Participation for Material Incentives: People participate by providing resources, for example, labour, in return for food, cash or other material incentives. This was the case with the Kazi kwa vijana initiative which was rolled out by the Kibaki Government with an aim of creating employment for the youth, as such the young people did provide the labour but were not involved in the process of learning and their potentialities were not fully utilized as this initiative ended without being of much benefit to the youth as they were left unemployed. It is very common to see this called participation, yet people have no stake in prolonging the development activities when the incentives end (*ibid*).

e) Functional Participation: People participate by forming groups to meet predetermined objectives related to the programme, which can involve the development or promotion of externally initiated social organization. Such involvement does not tend to beat the early stages of programme cycles or planning but rather after decisions have been made elsewhere. These institutions tend to be dependent on external initiators and facilitators but may become self-dependent. An example of such form of participation is a scenario where women did form various groups in order to access loans or finance especially from the women trust fund. This initially was seen to be a Government initiative that aimed at empowering women and eliminating poverty, but later there was much benefit as women became independent and started many projects that indeed improved their well-being.

f) Interactive Participation: People participate in joint analysis, which leads to action plans and the formulation of new local groups or strengthening of existing ones, furthermore this form of participation entails active involvement of the local community in the design, planning and implementation of programmes, this ensures that people have a sense of ownership of such initiatives, and participate towards their sustenance and continuation.. These groups take control over local decisions, so people have a stake in maintaining structures and practices. A case in hand is the various constituency development projects in Lugari District, for instance, the building and expansion of schools such as Mwamba primary school which did benefit from such funds with a special unit that caters for people with disabilities being introduced.

g) Self- Mobilization: People participate by taking initiatives independent of external institutions to change systems. Such self-initiated mobilization and collective action may or may not challenge inequitable distributions of wealth or power. It is worth noting that, values that reflect real participation, that is, empowerment, collaboration, building trust, and respecting people's ability to solve their own problems. Such values are fundamental in building local ownership and commitment to successful development progress, express, share, enhance and analyze their knowledge (Dearden *et. al* (2003).

There are indeed various theories of participation that have been put across, these are:

i) Civic voluntarism model

Which is the most well known and widely applied model of political participation in political science. It was originally referred to as the resource model and focuses on

three factors that hinders people from becoming political activist, these are: lack of resources, lack of psychological engagement with politics and finally being outside the recruitment network that brings people into politics (Oakley and Marsden, 1987).Resources in this model is defined as time, money and skills and competencies, while the psychological engagement aspect is defined in terms of an individual sense of political efficacy, the recruitment network aspect is defined as a request for participation that come to individuals at work, in church or in organization, especially those that come from friends, relatives and close acquaintances.

ii) Rational choice model.

This theory played an important role in the analysis of political participation ever since Downs work, that is, *An economic theory of democracy* (1957).This theory is based on the following premises: (i) that, a rational man is the one who can always make decisions when confronted with a range of alternatives,(ii) he ranks all the alternatives facing him in order of his preference in such a way that each is either preferred to, indifferent to, or inferior to each other and finally, that a rational man always chooses from among the possible alternatives that which ranks highest in his preferences ordering and always makes the same decisions each time if faced with the same alternatives (ibid).

iii) Mobilization model

This model asserts that individuals participate in response to the political opportunities their environment and to the stimulus from other people. Put simple, some people participate because opportunities for them to do so are greater than for other people. The opportunities to participate are linked to the resources available

since individuals with high socio-economic status are likely to have access to political parties, interest groups and campaign organizations than are low status people, because such institutions are more commonly found in affluent communities (ibid). It is worth noting that participation in the development process and politics is not uniform across the population and communities, as such an interaction between resources and opportunities makes some people to be involved and participate more.

2.2.1 Community Participation and Development

The community development approach emphasizes self- help, the democratic process and local leadership in community revitalization. Most Community development work involves the participation of the communities or beneficiaries involved. Thus, community participation is an important component of community development and reflects a grassroots or bottom- up approach to problem solving. In social work, community participation refers to “the active voluntary engagement of individuals and groups to change problematic conditions and to influence policies and programs that affect the quality of their Lives or the lives of others” (Oakley and Marsden, 1987).

One of the major aims of community development is to encourage participation of the community as a whole. Indeed, community development has been defined as a social process resulting from citizen participation. Through citizen participation, a broad cross- section of the community is encouraged to identify and articulate their own goals, design their own methods of change, and pool their resources in the problem-solving process .It is widely recognized that participation in government schemes often means no more than using the service offered or providing inputs to support the project. This is contrasted with stronger forms of participation, involving control

over decisions, priorities, plans, and implementation; or the spontaneous induced or assisted formation of groups to achieve collective goals (Esman and Uphoff, 1988).

The most important and complicated issue bearing on local level planning and development is community participation. Effective community participation may lead to social and personal empowerment, economic development, and socio-political transformation (Kaufman and Alfonso, 1997). Yet there are obstacles which impede on effective participation of societies and individuals in the development process, such as, the power of central bureaucracies, the lack of local skills and organizational experience, social divisions, and the impact of national and transnational structures (Ibid, 1997). There are various approaches to community participation, these are:

2.2.1.1 United Nations Research Institute on Social Development Approach

The most important and original aspect of UNRISD is the focus on people power and organization of disadvantaged groups, bypassed in development. The significant factor in this approach was not that it concentrated on the poorest of the poor but that it emphasized questions of power and organization and also viewed the allies and adversaries of the hitherto excluded as included in the scope of investigation (Oakley and Marsden, 1987). In view of this a case in hand would be in Iugari District where efforts have been made to include the most disadvantaged population of the society, particularly women, who continue to be discriminated against and lack decision-making powers and access to reproductive resources, such as land. As a remedy for their inferior positions, certain measures have been undertaken to empower women and improve their socio-economic status, this includes the introduction of funds to eradicate poverty amongst the women under the “njaa marufuku” initiative by the Agricultural sector in the district, the disbursement of the women development fund

which enabled women to venture into various projects aimed at improving their livelihoods amongst others. All these efforts are indeed geared towards uplifting and empowering the less fortunate members of the society that would otherwise be excluded in the development process.

2.2.1.2 Norman Uphoff's Team: Framework on Participation

In 1976, USAID asked the interdisciplinary Rural Development Committee at Cornell University to come up with some practical concepts and measures of community participation in development (Uphoff and Cohen, 1997). The committee focused on Participation and its framework. In fact, they gave a new thrust to old Community Development (CD) approaches (Oakley and Marsden, 1987). The four kinds of participation they identified are: decision- making, implementation, benefits, and evaluation. Even if these kinds of participation are distinguishable, there are usually connections and feedback among them; for example, participation in decision making is likely to contribute to participation in benefits. The more there is of any one kind, the more participation there is in total (Uphoff and Cohen, 1997). Uphoff also emphasized that those who participate and how they participated was important to consider because it determined whether there was participation, and of what kind. Just Saying, “there was participation” does not tell us very much. We want to know who Participated, why they participated, and how they participated (Ibid, 1997).

In the same vein it is indeed critical to understand the importance of involving all stakeholders, in particular, the local people in any development endeavor. The local community should be involved in the identification, planning and implementation of projects and sharing of benefits accruing from such endeavor. For instance, in Lugari District, women were involved in various projects, such as rearing of dairy cows and

goats, horticulture and running small business. All these ventures were introduced and funded by the Government and Non-governmental organizations. As such there were frequent visits by the Government official to check on the progress of such projects and ensure that they are sustained. A case in hand was the dairy goat rearing project, all the efforts by made to evaluate and see the success, challenges and benefits of such projects.

2.2.4 Self-reliance and Self- help Approach

During the development decade of the 1960s, self- reliance and self- help projects became the order of the day. This trend was further developed by the social worker S. Tilakratna of Sri Lanka in his participatory rural development strategy, which aimed at combining the best of Community development and UNRISD ideas. According to Tilakratna, the idea of People's participation in development meant improving the potential of the previously neglected rural poor, enabling them to make decisions for their own welfare. In Oakley and Marsden (1987), the main components of this developmental process are participation in taking initiatives to identify unmet needs, and self- reliance, hence, breaking away from dependencies that suppress the creativity of the poor. It is evident and indeed important to understand that participation as it relates to development is a process that includes a set of activities and takes place through different stages. Thus, participation in development projects needs to be understood based on the following elements:

i) Identification of Appropriate Stakeholders

The public involvement of stakeholders in development projects is widely recognized as a fundamental element of the process. Timely, well- planned, and well implemented public involvement programs have contributed to the successful design,

Implementation, operation, and management of proposals (UNEP, 1996). For Instance, the range of stakeholders involved in an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) project typically includes:

- a). The people, individuals, or groups in the local community
- b). The proponent and other project beneficiaries
- c). Government agencies
- d). Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs)
- e). Others, such as donors, the private sectors, academics, and so forth

In the district different stakeholders have emerged to facilitate the success of various projects. For instance, community members, particularly, women have collaborated with Non-Governmental organizations, like Heifer International, community based organizations and Government ministries, especially the ministry of Agriculture in ensuring the success and sustainability of development projects, in particular, dairy keeping. As a result there was ownership and sustainability of the project by the local community.

ii) Needs Identification and Goal Determination

Participation of the masses in development activities implies enhanced capacity to perceive their own needs. Through participation, local people identify their needs as well as the relevant goals of a program. By participating in decision making and implementation activities, local people help project officials identify (a) needs, (b) Strategies to meet those needs, and (c) the necessary resources required to implement the various strategies (Yadama, 1995). For example, community participation will be discouraged if environmental issues are given priority in agendas without addressing

issues such as poverty, homelessness, health, and other basic necessities perceived to be more important by the any community. For example, in Lugari District, the implementation of dairy goat rearing as a project by the Heifer international (Non-Governmental Organization specializing in animal production), to women was informed by the needs of women in the District, poverty being an issue, there was need to start a project that would address this, hence, dairy goat keeping was identified as the best way of combating poverty.

iii) Information Dissemination

This is a one- way flow of information from the proponent of the development Project to the public. The proponent should provide sufficient relevant information about the project such as the benefits of the project to the beneficiaries, the costs of Implementation, the potential for financing and implementation, and possible risk factors. The proponent must allow sufficient time for individuals to read and discuss the information provided, and listens to the views held by individuals as well as to issues and problems. Lack of transparency often fosters mistrust and misunderstanding between project authorities and local communities (UNEP, 1996).

iv) Consultation

Consultation involves inviting people's views on the proposed actions and engaging them in a dialogue. It is a two- way flow of information between the proponents and the public. Consultation provides opportunities for the public to express their views on the project proposal initiated by the project proponent. Rigorous planning and implementation of projects should be undertaken only after considerable discussion and consultation. Consultation includes education, information sharing, and negotiation, with the goal being a better decision making process through

organizations consulting the general public (Becker, 1997). This process allows neglected people to hear and have a voice in future undertakings. Depending on the project, various methods are used during consultation such as public hearings, public meetings, general public information meetings, informal small group meetings, public displays, field trips, site visits, letter requests for comments, material for mass media, and response to public inquiries. The knowledge of local people should be recognized and they should be enrolled as experts in designing development projects. Participants should be encouraged to articulate their ideas and the design of the project should be based on such ideas.

In view of the above, it should be underscored that in the District efforts have been made to ensure the involvement of women in various projects that have been initiated by certain Non-Governmental organization and community based organizations, such as Heifer International and Technoserve. As a matter of fact various seminars and workshops have been done with the aim of training women on good farming practices, for instance, on how to rear healthy chicken and goats, before rolling-out the project. Nonetheless, women still face a number of limitations in terms of the availability of resources, in particular, finance and the capacity to sustain certain projects when the donors exit.

v) Genuine Interests

Participation depends on people's legitimate interests in the project or development activities. Therefore, participation needs to be considered as an active process, meaning that the person or group in question takes initiatives and asserts an independent role (Oakley and Marsden, 1987).

vi) Public Involvement in Decision Making

The project should encourage a maximum number of people in the participation of development projects. Such involvement should give the participants full Inclusion in designing, organizing, and implementing activities and workshops in order to create consensus, ownership, and action in support of environmental change in specific areas. It should include people and groups rather than exclude any individuals. Public involvement is a process for involving the public in the decision making of an organization (Becker, 1997). Participation actually brings the public into the decision-making process. White (1989) stressed community involvement in management of marine protected areas. According to him, public involvement can take place at several stages in the establishment and management of marine protected areas. These stages are: (a) the recognition of a need; (b) discussions with interested parties and Integration with the community; (c) baseline studies and monitoring; (d) education; (e) Core group building and formalization of reserves; and (f) enforcement.

vii) Accountability

The requirement of accountability applies to all parties involved in the project, such as project management, external organizers, and traditional leaders, as well as any emergent leadership from the ranks of the poor and the disadvantaged (Esman and Uphoff, 1988). Furthermore, it should be noted that the agencies involved in project management and implementation are procedurally and periodically answerable to the people in the project area, as well as the citizens of the country in general. All people should be aware of their roles in the project and the planning of activities of the project. Accountability of concerned community members must be ensured, particularly after the decision is taken. In the District accountability to ensure sustainability and continuation of various projects has been undertaken in various among them being record keeping.

viii) Repeated Interaction

Often there is interaction at the beginning of the project but no dialogue or any other form of interaction occurs during the project. This ultimately creates a big gap between the proponents of the development projects and the communities. Consequently, the local people abandon a project based on such an idea. Therefore, it is suggested that there should be ongoing communication throughout the Project period.

ix) Ownership and Control

Participation plays a major role in people's management of their own affairs. Ownership and control of resources have a profound impact on participation in development projects. Oakley (1991) emphasized four areas to be worked toward in a participatory coastal resource management program: greater economic and social equality, better access to services for all, greater participation in decision making, and deeper involvement in the organizing process resulting from the empowerment of people. Hence, in order to ensure continuity of projects and programmes, especially in Lugari District, the involvement of women in the designing, planning and implementation of such projects give them a sense of ownership, hence ensures that programmes and projects are sustained.

x) Sharing Benefits

It is evident that without sharing the benefits of the project, participation is a frustrating process for the poorer people. Oakley and Marsden (1987) note that there should be a fair and equitable distribution of benefits, as well as redistribution of goods and services, to enable poorer people to get a fairer share of Society's wealth and to participate fully in the development process. The Centre on Integrated Rural Development for Asia and the Pacific (CIRDAP, 1984), a regional rural development

organization in South Asia, mentions that participation entails three distinct processes: first, the involvement of the people in decision making; second, eliciting of their contribution to development programs; and third, their participation in *sharing the benefits* from the development process. Thus it is important to underscore that in order to enhance women's effective participation in the development process, particularly in Lugari District, equal sharing of benefits accruing from development activities is crucial.

xi) Partnerships

Partnership in development processes allows stakeholders to work, talk, and solve problems with individuals who are often perceived as the masters. Instead of demonstrating the relationship as a worker- client tie, the parties involved should agree on working in partnerships. It should be underscored that people or communities work as equals in programmes and share the benefits and cost accruing from the development initiative. Oakley and Marsden (1987), identified a set of principles for collaboration in a variety of settings and situations. These include nonintrusive collaboration, mutual trust and respect, a common analysis of what the problem is, a commitment to solidarity, equality in the relationship, an explicit focus on process and the importance of language. Thus in order to ensure effective participation of individuals and communities in development activities, particularly in Lugari District, the need to work as partners and involve each other in project formulation, planning and implementation is of at most importance.

xii) Environmental Legislation

The environment is considered as an integral part of development, since any Impacts on an individual's environment also impacts on well- being or welfare. It has been shown that the lack of environmental legislation in developing countries limits

environmental protection (Oakley, 1991). This ultimately creates considerable environmental problems in the name of development in third world countries. Therefore, lack of legislation to protect human rights as well as the environment may impede public participation in development projects. It should be underscored that community participation is an important aspect in the development process in any given society, in particular, the participation of women, thus protecting the environment particularly in Lugari District, would ensure that women activities and programmes are not interfered with.

2.3 Challenges to Women Effective Participation in Development

It is worth noting that women do face various challenges that hinder their participation in development, this includes, lack of Empowerment, illiteracy, inaccessibility to financial services, retrogressive cultural practices amongst others. Being a key objective of participation, empowerment brings about a more equitable sharing of power, increases the political awareness of disadvantaged groups, in particular women, and supports them in taking actions that would allow them to take control of their own future. Hence, targeting practitioners engaged in analysis of projects and policies that have empowerment component is indeed crucial and essential to understanding community or groups empowerment (Alsop and Nina, 2005). Empowerment of women is critical and important in order to achieve societal and national development, it entails:

2.3.1 The recognition of Women's Rights and Freedom.

Women's rights and freedom are as important in terms of socio-cultural, economic and political status, as those of men. Women's rights guarantee that they are not to be discriminated on the basis of their sex. Yet women worldwide do not enjoy the same

legal and political rights as their male counterparts. In Ethiopia, for instance, women are considered to be of lower status and command little respect relative to her brothers and male counterparts. As soon as she matures, she starts caring for younger siblings, helps in food preparation, and spends long hours hauling water and fetching firewood. As she grows older, she is valued for the role she will play in establishing kinship bonds through marriage to another family, thereby strengthening the community status of her family. She is taught to be subservient, as a disobedient daughter is an embarrassment to her family.

Low status characterizes virtually every aspect of girls' and women's lives. Given the heavy workload imposed on girls at an early age, early marriage without choice, and a subservient role to both husband and mother-in-law, girls and women are left with few opportunities to make and act on their own decisions (Pathfinder international, 2007).

Moreover, it should be underscored although women constitute the majority of Kenyan population many of them are illiterate and poor. A number of them are still affected by customs and traditions that are detrimental to their wellbeing and progress. Furthermore, women are the most affected by the land redistribution rule in the sense that, as they lost access to and control of land they became more economically dependent on men, which led to them losing decision making power in the family, hence their subordination. (Section 14 of the children's act No.8 Laws of Kenya).

It is worth noting that during the Pre-colonial period Kenyan communities were governed by council of elders. The role of women and girls was to farm the family

land, harvest, care for the children, maintain the homestead and tend to their husbands. Thus women were not supposed to speak in public meetings which were a preserve of men and their rights to property ownership and decision making both at the family and societal level was curtailed. During the Colonial period women were affected by the land redistribution experience and land alienation. This was because women lost access to and control of land and became more economically dependent on men. This led to an intensification of domestic patriarchy reinforced by colonial social institutions. Land alienation reduced the economic independence enjoyed by women by compromising their economic productivity. As colonialism continued in Africa, the perceived importance of female Agricultural contributions to the household diminished as their vital role in food production was over shadowed cash crop cultivation (children act, No 8 Law of Kenya).

Finally, in the post – colonial men became more superior to women. A patriarchal order emerged, where the male dominate the female. This order suppresses women restricting the full development of their potential by preventing them from exercising their rights. After independence in 1963, the lucky girls who managed to go to school were those whose parents were involved in mission works and had interacted with the Christian missionaries during the conical period. Many girls were not sent to schools and were instead married off as early as 12 years old. As a result some communities like the Maasai and Samburu are still struggling to get rid of the practice of early child marriages. All these remain to be challenges that need to be eradicated (Kariuki, 2012).

In addition, deep-seated cultural beliefs especially in Kenya allow women very limited roles. Many people still believe that women's natural roles are limited to being

wives, mothers and homemakers rather than co-workers in national building and counterparts in business and politics (Kahiga, 2010). Widespread believe that women are intellectually inferior to men limits women's education to learning domestic skills. Well educated, upper class men controlled and occupied high positions in society while women are relegated to inferior positions in society, their roles confined to household chores (ibid). Until the 19th century, the denial of equal rights to women attracted occasional protests and little attention from society (Kahiga, 2010). Because most women lacked the educational and economic resources to challenge the prevailing social order, they generally succumbed to inferiority as a way of life. As a consequence, civil right movements sprung up, particularly in the United States which campaigned for the right of women to vote and participate in the political process in the mid 19thCentury (Kahiga,2010).

It should be noted further that representation of both men and women in decision making process is critical for effective implementation of policies that affect the general population; this includes participation in governmental organs, civil positions and senior government positions amongst others. Overall a negligible number of women is represented in senior and middle level policy formulation and implementation processes despite the substantial number of women in communities. This form of structure contributes to the limited gender sensitivity in policy process including roles and needs of women (Gok, 2008).

The above scenario is not strange to Africa and Kenya in particular. Many civil right movements and Non-Governmental organizations have emerged to champion the rights of the girl child and women. This attests to the need to empower women in order for them to participate fully in national development and benefit from the fruits

accruing from such a process. Hence, a woman who is free and liberated from the bond of retrogressive customs, tradition and belief systems is enabled to participate effectively in the development process

2.3.3 Improved Socio-economic Status

The United Nations decade for the advancement of women proclaimed in 1975 set in motion a process which led to the increase awareness of women's contribution not only to the sustenance but also to the development process. However this recognition has not been accompanied by equal improvement in the lives of women. The global economic crisis, the sluggish performance of the national economy, made worse by the structural adjustment programmes, have had an impact on the gains made in improving standards of living and in advancement of women issues in the development process. In this regard women have had to bear greater share of responsibility of caring for their families.

Furthermore, the declining economic performance, poverty and the erosion of cultural values have also resulted in increased incidence of crime and violence against women (National Gender and Development Policy, 2000). Since 1963, National and sectoral policies have had different impacts on women and, more often than not have overlooked gender concerns. Hence the need to enact policies and measures that would ensure the entrenchment of women issues in the development process and enabling them to participate fully in decision making, improve their socio-economic status and participate in national development (National Gender and Development Policy, 2000).

According to the 2009 population census, women constitute slightly more than half of the Kenyan population; in addition to this the population is also composed of forty two communities with diverse socio-cultural traditions, norms and practices. However despite their cultural diversities and differences there exists a strong similarity in regard to their perception of women. Women are perceived to be dependent on men and the roles accorded to men carry a higher status compared with those of women. This situation is further compounded by negative stereotypes. This scenario thus affects women's efforts and participation in societal development (National Gender and Development Policy, 2000).

In this regard, the challenges that Kenya faces as a Nation is how to create an enabling environment which recognizes the potential, roles and responsibility of women in the societal development and utilize strategies that will address the socio-cultural barriers that contribute to gender disparities and inability of women to realize their full potential and participate effectively in Nation building.

Moreover, it is estimated that women head 38% of agricultural operation in Kenya. However in many areas of the country social and cultural constraints persist that hinders their participation and inclusion in decision making at the family, community and institutional levels. Major decisions affecting women's participation in agriculture and food production are therefore made without their participation. In addition, tradition and social practices also deny women the right to property ownership. This puts women at disadvantaged position in seeking access to credit, agricultural inputs, marketing outlets and the opportunities accruing from membership of agricultural co-operatives. In most cases, access to credit, training and improved production technique is linked to access to land ownership; women cannot therefore qualify for

any credit that is tied up with collateral requirements, which are often based on land title deed (National Gender and Development Policy, 2000).

Furthermore, traditions and cultural practices governing land and livestock ownership, access and control over resources and benefits accruing from agricultural production severely limits women's capacity for increasing production. In addition, their multiple roles in reproduction, maintenance and production constitute a heavy workload and places serious limitation to the women's roles as care takers and homemakers. Hence, it is indeed essential to improve the livelihood of women by providing them with resources and widening the democratic space, hence include them in the political process thus enabling them to participate effectively in development.

The above scenario is not peculiar to women in Lugari District, who continue to be put in the periphery of Development. Many women lack voices in major decisions affecting the family and their wellbeing, do not have access to ownership of land, livestock and other valuables. This impedes their access to credit and other financial resources. Hence, the empowerment of women in terms of property ownership and access to credit and other financial services is of importance both in improving their socio-economic status and enabling them participate effectively in the Development process.

2.3.4 Health and Women.

Health is indeed a major issue among the women in Kenya. Apart from the traditional health problems like malaria, Tuberculosis and Sexual Transmitted Diseases, the rapid spread of HIV and AIDS and drug abuse is indeed an issue of major concern. Our learning institutions, tertiary and public universities are not left behind because the

most affected persons are university students. In addition, reproductive health is an issue of critical importance among the women thus should be addressed. This hinges on female pregnancy and abortion, HIV and AIDS, and spread of Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STI). As such there is need for the provision of facilities that offer preventive and curative health services to the women. Furthermore, information as regards reproductive health should be made available apart from offering voluntary counseling and testing to women (Kariuki, 2012).

In Lugari District HIV/AIDS is a major development challenge in which the affected use the little available resources to treat opportunistic infections. The infections also make the economically productive persons thus impacting negatively on development. According to Lugari District Development Plan 2008-2012, although HIV/aids prevalence has reduced from 6.2% in 2005 to 5.3% in 2007, women remain the most affected at 7.6% while male prevalence is 3.9%. The high prevalence of HIV/AIDS in Lugari District is due to the proximity to the Eldoret-Malaba Highway and the high incidences of poverty (Lugari District Development Plan 2008-2012). According to the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics Report of 2008, 1,759,975 persons representing 57.27 percent of the population in Lugari live below poverty line. The causes of poverty in the District include the poor state of roads, poor marketing systems, high cost of farm inputs and low prices of farm produce amongst others.

The prevalence of HIV/AIDS in Lugari calls for the sensitization of the community to support and care for those infected, the provision of Voluntary Counseling and Testing centers, increased supply of ARVs drugs, increased funding to more organizations to enable them supply the infected people with food supplements and to start income generating activities for the affected. Thus, it should be underscored that

a healthy woman is able to participate effectively in development, hence improving her lifestyle and enhance the development of the entire society.

Furthermore, the need to bring quality reproductive healthcare and family planning services to women particularly in rural areas is of paramount importance. Many communities in Kenya, Lugari District not an exemption, women enjoy little independent decision making on most individual and family issues including, the number of children to have, the use of family planning and when to stop having children. Harmful traditional practices such as female genital mutilation and early marriage, forced marriages, wife inheritance amongst others impose huge negative impact on women's reproductive health (Pathfinder International, 2007). In view of the above, it is of paramount importance to provide quality reproductive healthcare to women, particularly in Lugari District, this will enhance their participation in the development process. Hence, a healthy woman ensures the existence of a healthy Nation.

In addition there are indeed various barriers that stand on the way and is an obstacle to women's' participation in development. These include:

Political barriers; where women are barred from competing for political offices. For instance, competing for senator or councilor because their roles are seen to be private thus entails reproduction and taking care of children as opposed to the public roles undertaken by men.

Social barrier; includes cultural impediments such as the practice of passage in some communities for instance, the Marakwets, Maasai and Kisii. Such practices like Female Genital Mutilation, stigmatizes and traumatizes the young girls for life. In

Lugari District, the social norms prohibiting women from owning and inheriting property, subjugates them, hence perpetuating poverty among women. Other consequences includes early marriages and school drop outs among young girls. This social, cultural and traditional practices and unfounded norms deny women various opportunities to effectively participate in development. This cultural norms forms a major challenge in many communities which still regards the place of women as being in the kitchen and raising children as part of their reproductive role. This kind of socialization makes it hard for some men to share one platform with women. Consequently women are locked out of political representation, hence lacking participation in decision making forums. By joining politics, women in such cultures are considered as breaking rules that govern gender roles.

Economic Barriers; it should be noted that most women lack entrepreneur skills and have no idea on how to successfully run a business. This renders them economically handicapped and without the means to educate themselves on business practices. Moreover, other women simply lack the capital to finance their projects. Because of their restricted movement many women who run business from their homes are blocked from economic activity by lack of market access. For instance, the Maasai women are known for their expertise in making beautiful beadwork, however, they lack the market in which to sell their products, they also lack marketing skills, the same scenario is experienced by women in Lugari District. Hence, the need for women empowerment. This entails empowering women by providing them with relevant information, the provision of education and financial services to enable them to be independent and carry on their affairs with confidence (Kariuki, 2012).

Gender inequality in education: International report, for instance, EFA Global monitoring report (UNESCO, 2003), indicate that at the national level, Kenya has virtually attained gender parity in enrolment at both primary and secondary level. However close scrutiny reveals that a serious gender disparity in enrolment exists in various regions infavour of males with regard to access, retention, completion, performance and transition. The gender gap widens as one goes higher the education ladder. In addition, it is evident that gender disparities are particularly large in access to and performance in technical subject, such as mathematics and science, and in higher education. Although gender disparities infavour of girls in enrolment, survival, completion and transition do appear in some regions, there are indeed few women in technical professions and key governance and management position, both in the wider society and the education sector in particular(Gok,2007).The above scenario can be attributed to:

Gender insensitive school environment which includes the attitude of the key stakeholders in the school, such as administrators, teachers and students. Many incidences of sexual harassment and gender-based biases have been reported. Other aspect of the school environment that can be gender insensitive includes school infrastructure and amenities, such as water and sanitation, availability of sanitary towels for girls amongst others (Gok, 2007).

Inadequate schools; The demand for primary, secondary and tertiary education especially with the introduction of free primary education, is higher than the country's current facilities and resources can accommodate, resulting in issues of quality of education which affects girls more than boys.

HIV/AIDS and lack of life skills: Due to both biological and socio-cultural factors, including gender-based violence, girls and women are more vulnerable to HIV infections than men or boys. In addition, women are more affected by HIV/AIDS pandemic since they often become caregivers for their sick parents, relatives and siblings. Generally, most girls lack life skills and thus are not well prepared to protect themselves from HIV or cope with its impact. Furthermore, women and girls have multiple gender roles to play, such as reproduction and household chores and production roles which leave them with little time for active participation in education apart from religion or its misinterpretation acts which acts as a barrier to girl's education, thus perpetuating their marginalization in society (Gok, 2007).

It is worth noting that the challenges that hinder efforts to address gender in education are many and diverse hence, the need for a clear and comprehensive policy framework to guide programming for gender equity and equality.

Furthermore it is worth noting that women face major socio-economic obstacles which include: The feminization of poverty and unemployment, the dual burden of multiple roles in domestic and professional front and lack of political training. It should further be noted that women in Kenya face the challenge of balancing between work and family responsibilities. On average women work for 12.9 hours a day compared to 8.2 hours for male counterparts (Gok,2008).Time spent by women in attending to household tasks leaves them with limited time to engage in enterprise and other ventures that would be in most cases be located away from the homestead (Gok,2008).

Women's major concern is survival and they spend much of their time trying to meet the basic needs of families. This makes it particularly difficult for women to

participate in political life. This is why economic empowerment of women, along with education and access to information is an important way to take women from the constraints of the household to full participation in politics and political elections and hence the development of the society and the entire Nation.

The aforementioned attributes of women involved in the development process is indeed critical to effective participation of women in the development process and is indeed not peculiar to women of Lugari District in Kakamega County and the entire Nation of Kenya, as a matter of fact many communities need to be empowered in order to participate effectively in the development of their societies. Hence, political, socio-cultural and economic empowerment is indeed important to ensure the improvement of the wellbeing and livelihood of women not only in Lugari District, Kakamega County but the entire Nation. In Kakamega County, for instance, the women face a number of obstacles that impede on their active participation in the development process, this range from inability of economic means among the youth to sustain themselves, cultural attitudes and traditions that does not recognize the right of the women and the girl child, early marriages and female genital mutilation.

In conclusion it should be underscored that the roles played by men and women in a society, the rights of women to make decisions and act independently, and their treatment by the males around them all have an immediate influence on the quality of reproductive health care available to them. Demand for quality care must and will come from women, but resources are only as good as women's rights to use them. Gender responsive programs should recognize that practices such as FGC, early marriage, abduction, rape, lack of access to and control over resources, and the absence of decision-making and negotiation power all negatively affect women's

reproductive health and rights. Because many women have limited control over their sexual lives and contraceptive use, integrating gender issues into reproductive health and HIV/AIDS program interventions becomes critical. Active male involvement in reproductive and family care-giving enhances responsible parenthood and reduces gender based violence that affects women's reproductive health and rights. To accelerate the process and realize Pathfinder's goal of gender equality, more work has to be done to provide women and girls with access to education and information. Women and girls continue to need economic support, as poverty exacerbates their isolation, and earning power enhances their community and family status. Progress also demands that entire communities take individual and collective measures against gender-based violence and harmful traditional practices (Pathfinder international, 2007).

2.4 A Framework for Understanding and Measuring Empowerment

If a person or a group is empowered they possess the capacity to make effective choices that is, to translate their choices into desired outcomes and actions. The capacity to make an effective choice is primarily influenced by two sets of factors; the agency and opportunity structure.

Agency is defined as an actor's ability to make meaningful choices – ability to envisage options and make a decision on one of them. On the other hand, opportunity structure is defined as the formal and informal context within which actors operate. Working together, agency and opportunity structure give rise to different degrees of empowerment for example, a farmer in Lugari District, Kakamega County, may choose to take a bank loan to finance an irrigation system but the process for obtaining the loan is complicated. Being incapacitated to read and understand all the

terms and conditions; as well as tedious process of completing several forms, the farmer finally offered all his land as collateral and obtain a lawyer to verify that he owns a title to the land. It should be noted in this case that the farmers choice was well informed and the endeavour was economically viable but the opportunity structure in this case (the regulations concerning procurement) was an obstacle in his ability to make his choice effective (Alsop and Nina, 2005)

Similarly, a woman in Lugari District, Kakamega County in Kenya chose to send her daughter in school but she faced opposition from her husband who saw education as a poor investment. She was also discouraged by the school staff that adhered to the dominant social maxim that educating girls is a waste of time because their value lies in their roles as wives and mothers. This woman's capacity to make an effective choice was limited by any formal structure yet there is no legal law or defined roles that prohibit girls from enrolling in formal education; instead she confronted an informal social element of the opportunity structure.

2.4.1 Agency

Agency or the capacity to make meaningful decisions or choices can be measured hence asset endowments are used as indicators of agency. These assets can be psychological, informational, organizational, material, social, financial or human. Some assets are easier to measure than others for example; it is easier to quantify human assets (such as skill and literacy) than psychological assets (such as the capacity to envision) or social assets such as social capital. The indicators drawn from country experience demonstrate that quantifying all types of assets is manageable however; collecting certain types of data requires a mixed-methods approach (Alsop and Nina, 2005).

Understanding the complex interaction among the assets also presents challenges for example, if the endowment of a single asset such as ownership of land can affect a person's ability to make meaningful choices. In addition, an actor's or groups command over one asset can affect the endowment of another asset for example education (human asset) often gives an actor greater access to information and at times improves his or her capacity to think of an alternative option. In this scenario hence all three assets be it psychological, social, economic or informational contributes to a person's capacity to make meaningful choices (Alsop and Nina, 2005). Furthermore in order for women to be empowered, she needs access to material, human and social resources necessary to make strategic choices in life. Not only have women been historically disadvantaged in access to material resources as, credit, property and finance, but they have also been excluded from social resources like education and knowledge of some business. Hence ignored for resources to empower women, they must be able to use them for a purpose that they choose. Kabeer (1996), uses the term agency to describe the process of decision making, negotiation and manipulation required for women to use resources effectively. Women who have been excluded from decision making for most of their lives often lack the sense of agency that allow them to define goals and act effectively to achieve them. However these goals also can be heavily influenced by the values of the society which women live in, thus replicating rather than challenge the structures of injustice.

The above scenario is critical to the development of individuals and the entire society. Access and ownership of assets such as land especially among youth and women of Lugari District; Kakamega County would enable them be independent, have a voice

in societal development and make meaningful choices leading to their full and effective participation in development and improvement of their livelihood.

2.4.2 Opportunity Structure

As demonstrated earlier, an actors' opportunity structure is shaped by the presence and operation of formal and informal institutions or rules of game. This includes laws, regulatory framework and norms governing people's behaviour. The presence and operations of formal and informal laws, regulations norms and customs determine whether individuals or groups have access to assets available to achieve desired outcomes (Alsop and Nina, 2005).

Hence measuring opportunity structure involves analyzing the presence and operation of formal and informal institutions. Collecting and analyzing data requires a mixed methods approach. For example, information on the presence of particular legislation can be drawn from secondary sources but data on the actual operation of that formal institution with a particular community would likely require interviews with a number of respondents. Because understanding social norms often involves gathering personal or sensitive information, it will likely require a mix of interviewing techniques both questionnaires and semi-structured interviewing. Further, it is important to take preliminary results back to key stakeholders for verification and discussion in order to address anomalies that might be present (Alsop and Nina, 2005).

2.4.3 Degrees of Empowerment

Agency and opportunity structures are hypothesized or seen to associate with the degree of empowerment a person or a group experiences (Ibid). Measurement of

assets and institutions provides intermediary indicators of empowerment. Direct measures of empowerment can be measured by assessing:

- Whether an opportunity to make a choice exists.
- Whether a person actually uses the opportunity to choose.
- Whether the choice resulted in the desired results or outcomes.

It should be noted that in assessing the degree of political empowerment of women, we need to gather information on whether the opportunities for political participation exists, such as whether elections are held and if so whether women attempt to vote and whether they actually vote.

The use of choice therefore involves measuring whether or not a person or a group takes advantage of an opportunity to choose. For instance, if a school exists, does the woman from Lugari District in Kakamega County in Kenya choose to send her daughter there? In this case, the woman's choice can be explained by analysing the association between her opportunity structure (measured by the presence and operation of institutions both formal and informal).

The achievement of choice is a measure of how a group or an individual is able to achieve their desired outcome. If for instance, the woman in Lugari District has the option of sending her daughter to school and if she makes that choice, does her daughter actually attend school? It should be underscored that a certain degree of empowerment at one level does not necessarily reflect same degree of empowerment at other levels. As demonstrated, individuals and communities empowered at the local

level are not necessarily empowered at the national level or district level (Alsop and Nina, 2005).

In view of the above it is important that communities, groups and individual are empowered at all levels to ensure greater achievement of their desired goals and the attainment of the development process. The women and the youth, Lugari District, in particular, should be put at the centre of development in order to improve their livelihoods. Economic empowerment through Micro-finance institutions, the youth fund and women fund is indeed critical (Alsop and Nina, 2005).

2.5 Ways of Enhancing Women's Effective Participation in Development

Participation of women in the Development process is critical to the prosperity and growth of any society, hence the involvement of non-state and state actors to ensure that women are not left behind in this process and that their needs are integrated in the Government development plans. Hence, the most appropriate ways of ensuring women's participation in Development includes:

2.5.1 Education and Socialization

According to Chege and Fatuma, 2006, education can be defined as the process by which members of a community are from childhood prepared, initiated and trained for their roles to be responsible members of society. In any given society, education of an individual begins at birth and ends at death since human beings acquire knowledge, experience and judgment throughout their lives. The purpose of education is to inculcate the community's values, norms and tradition to individuals and teach them to be productive members of society, further; education also trained individual

members in specific skills, for instance, in metal work, medicine, rainmaking art and music. Intensive formal education was carried out at puberty, among the Maasai, for instance, a young initiate was taught ethnical traditions, customs, belief and taboos. An adult male was given information on his future role as husband and member of the community and was told how best to conduct himself in relation to enemies, friends, relatives and age mates at all times and according to the values of society. Female initiates were given thorough information on their sex roles as well as the law, tradition and morality and how this would affect them as future mothers and wives (Chege and Fatuma, 2006).

The above scenario is not peculiar to members of Lugari District who are socialized to partake responsibilities that are commensurate to their sex, hence, girls are taught how to be good wives and house makers and their responsibilities is usually confined to reproduction and performing household chores, while men are taught to be aggressive and hardworking husbands, hence seen as the sole breadwinners of their families and authority wielders. The subordination of women and their inferior position they hold in Lugari District of Kakamega County does impede on their development and wellbeing, hence the need to empower them by according them education in order for them to take their rightful place in the society and ensure their full participation in the societal development (Chege and Fatuma, 2006).

In the same vein, it can be underscored that the 8-4-4 system of education was geared towards imparting appropriate skills to enhance self-employment, this is indeed not the case, due to high cost, poverty and lack of facilities there have been high rate of school dropout, most of the young people dropout of school or graduate without necessary skills for self employment. Furthermore, the Country's training institutions

are also inadequate or lack the essential facilities and technology to prepare students for the challenging market demand. This is made worse with the emergence of substandard tertiary institutions that take advantage and exploit the youth, without the exception of women. In most cases there is no linkage between the training institution and either formal or informal sector. Hence, the young people trained in such institution cannot be absorbed in the labour market. This situation of unemployment among the young people is also prevalent in Lugari District of Kakamega County, where due to lack of employment, many young women are made idle and wander in the street corridors without meaningful agenda, this results to high rates of crime and prostitution, particularly in the various areas, for instance, Mwamba amongst others. Thus there is need to tailor our education system to the job market, this will ensure the young people are equipped with the appropriate skills and technology that would enable young people to be absorbed easily in the labour market or be self-employed (Chege and Fatuma, 2006). The empowerment of this young people, especially women by giving them formal education ensures their full participation in the development process, hence facilitating the growth and development of Lugari District and the entire Nation.

It can further be noted that, women participation in formal education reflects their economic position and related factors in society. Although the enrolment rates of girls and boys in primary schools have improved in Lugari District due to free primary education, the chances of a girl child reaching secondary and college or university education are considerably less than those of the boy child. When money is scarce parents prefer to invest in their son's education to higher levels because of the anticipated economic returns. This implies that decisions made by households and

families on education investment are often gender related. In Lugari District, for instance, some parents oppose investing in girl child education, to them girls are meant to be married hence educating them would not benefit the family. There is further a belief that boys are intelligent, perform better in school and hence are better educational investment than girls. A factor that facilitates the preference of the boy child is the patrilineal inheritance system. As prime beneficiaries of the family assets boys are favored in human capital investment decisions. In addition parents worry about wasting money on the education of girls who are likely to get pregnant or married before completing schooling. There is a belief that once married, girls become part and parcel of another family and parental education is lost (Chege and Fatuma , 2006).

In Lugari District, the enrolment of primary school children aged 6-13 has steadily increased from 39,02 in 1999 to 54,613 in 2008. In 2008 the enrolment of this category by sex was 39,350 males and 39,153 females. With free primary education this situation will improve in the preceding years. Nonetheless; the number of girls enrolling to secondary schools has reduced. This can be attributed to the high cost of education and early marriages (Lugari District Development Plan 2008-2012).

Based on the above scenario, it is indeed important to empower women and girls in Lugari District and the entire nation by providing them with education. This entails offering bursaries to needy and bright girls. The enactment of gender and education policy by the Government is critical. This policy would establish mechanisms to eliminate all gender disparities in education, training and research in relation to access, retention, completion, performance and quality of education. Issues to be

taken into consideration includes; mainstreaming gender at all educational levels, such as schools and higher institutions, increasing participation of women in the governance and management of education, increase participation of disadvantaged girls and women in education, increase the participation of adults and out of school youth in gender equitable basic literacy and continued adult education programmes, empower women, boys and girls on gender issues, and finally, eliminate sexual harassment and gender-based violence, and in particular, teachers found sexual harassing or co-habiting with school girls should be imprisoned or sacked. These measures would ensure and enable women shape their own future and participate effectively in decision making and the development of the society and the Nation.

2.5.2 Ensuring Gender Balance and Power Relations.

It is noteworthy that gender orders social relationship in ways that some individuals have greater power than others. This in turn determines the extent of power and control accorded to women. Usually women are accorded fewer opportunities and privileges in society, this means that women hold fewer positions of authority in society and have limited impact on decision-making and public policy making levels. Furthermore, gender inequality are functionally structured and perpetuated by economic structures, political system and other social institutions, for instance, civil law and religious customs in society may restrict a woman's opportunity to own property, work in certain occupation or serve as religious leaders. As a consequence, women's development and economic growth is hindered thus leading to poverty (Connel, 1987). In the same vein, gender inequality can be attributed to limited access and control over productive resources, access to financial services, insufficient access to education, lack of skills, cultural impediments and other constraints limiting

employment options and participation in decision making, hence, being an obstacle to women's effective participation in development. Faced with such a scenario, empowering the women is indeed imperative in order to uplift her status in society and ensure her participation in the development process. In Lugari District, for instance, the position of women is inferior to that of their men counterparts, such a situation makes women lack opportunities to participate fully in decision making and have their needs articulated and catered for. Hence, empowerment process, in particular, social, political and economic empowerment of the woman is critical to the development of any society, Lugari District not exceptional.

Furthermore, wife inheritance is closely related to property inheritance. In many traditional African societies, in particular, Lugari District in Kakamega County, wives are not allowed to own or inherit property after the death of their husbands, hence the need to get an adult male especially a close relative to inherit the deceased property. In some cases the property in question also includes the widow and her children. Women appear to be strongly disadvantaged against inheriting such valuable property as land, capital, business and building, this as such impedes women's capacity to develop leading to poverty (Judith et al, 1998). In summary therefore patriarchy is a dominant structural feature in Lugari District. As such women are relegated to junior positions in terms of power relations against their male counterparts. The men are indeed breadwinners, major decision makers and household authority wielders. Property inheritance and all other forms of decision making fall within the jurisdiction of male authority. In this context therefore the pursuit of educational opportunities and the choice of marriage partners for girls must await ratification and approval of the representative of the patriarchal authority structure, who is basically the male

parent. This situation calls for the empowerment of the women, both economic, political, socio-cultural and by providing them with educational opportunities, this will enable them assert themselves and involve fully in societal development, give women voice in decision making power in society and afford them greater respect and self-esteem apart from improving their socio-economic status and making their voices heard and their needs articulated.

In addition, policy interventions towards removing barriers to general female wellbeing includes: economic and knowledge empowerment, increasing access to financial services, employment and participation in decision making. Further, there is need to plan, design and implement programmes to transform gender related norms and behaviour in relation to care, work and responsibility apart from involving all stakeholders, be it the religious leaders, mass media, family unit, private sector and civil society in transforming and nurturing positive attitudes and appreciation of the unique roles played by women. It should be underscored that, enabling the population regardless of gender, actively participate in social and economic wellbeing is indeed critical to long-term and sustainable social, political and economic development of any given society and in particular, Lugari District.

2.5.3 Ownership of Property

Generally, in many African traditions, customs and belief systems, women are not supposed to own valuable property, such as land, House or even cows, this is seen as a preserve of men as the authority wielders and breadwinners in the household. Hence, women own less valuable items like chicken, ornaments, utensils, cooking stoves among other items seen to be of less value. The most important and valuable items such as land, livestock and money are owned by men. Since ownership means

control in terms of disposing the items owned, the inability to own property is economically disempowering for women. Even in terms of need women do not have the right to dispose off the valuable household items and this makes them vulnerable to poverty. Paradoxically, even when both men and women own certain household property jointly, men still have the overall authority over such property including children (Judith *et al*, 1998).

In case of divorce or death of the husband, women in patriarchal society do not have much control over family property, this impoverishes them further. It can be noted that women have access to many household items but lack overall control (Judith *et al*, 1998). This scenario is indeed not peculiar to Lugari District where women lack ownership of property and finance that would enable them improve their socio-economic status in society, hence enhancing development. The need to empower women in terms of access to property and financial support in order to improve their wellbeing, especially in Lugari District is indeed of at most importance (Judith *et al*, 1998).

Moreover as regards genders disparities, males and females still have different levels of access to assets and opportunities, in health, education, economic welfare and political participation. Women and girls have commonly been found to have poor access than men to human capital development opportunities, for instance, physical and financial capital and employment and earnings. Distinct disparities also exist in terms of their political voices, access to opportunities to participate in political process and in decision making within and outside the family. These disparities do affect the quality of life, welfare, capability and general wellbeing of women, hence perpetuating poverty and the disadvantaged position of women in society (Gok,

2008). These scenario is not peculiar to women in Lugari District who still hold subordinate positions in society, hence do not participate effectively in National development, hence the need to put measures and policies aimed at empowering them and ensuring the right of women town property.

2.5.4 Ensuring Gender Equality

The concept of Gender is usually defined within certain confines of different disciplines. As such it can be summarized as Gender connotes the process whereby our identities as women or men are constructed and is based on the assumption of it being a social construction and not natural or biological. Secondly, Gender has been defined as socially constructed and culturally variable roles that women and men play in their daily lives. It refers to a structural relationship of inequality between men and women as manifested in labor markets and political structures as well as in the household. Gender discrimination and differentiation are still dominant despite efforts by the Government and some Non-Governmental organizations to eradicate them. The phenomenon is observed in different spheres and levels of life, such as in political participation, decision making, labour market and finance (African Economic Research Consortium, (1994). Hence, the integration of gender equality and women's empowerment into poverty eradication, democratic governance, crisis prevention and sustainable development ensures that women voice in all governance institutions ranging from the parliament, judiciary and public service as well as the private sectors is heard. Thus ensuring that they participate equally with men in public dialogue and decision making and influence the decisions that will determine the future of their families.

Various theories have been used to contextualize the gender inequality aspect. This ranges from socialization theory to hierarchical gender perspective. Risman (1998), identified three distinct theoretical traditions that help understand sex and gender, the first focused on gendered-selves, hence postulates that sex differences are due to biology or socialization. In this regard, men mature to be competitive and work oriented while women mature to become nurturing, person oriented and child centred. In terms of gender, children are taught to behave a certain way according to their sex whereby boys are taught to be masculine and girls to be feminine, for instance, parents will often buy trucks or army toys to boys while they would buy dolls and playhouse type of toys to girls.

The second approach focuses on how social structures create gendered behavior. This theory argues that men and women behave differently because they fill different positions in institutions settings, work organizations and families, hence perform different gendered roles in the society. In this perspective, a women role is seen to be private as opposed to the public roles performed by men. The third approach is the interaction perspective which emphasizes contextual issues such as, cultural expectations taken-for-granted situational meanings. According to Oakley and Marsden (1987), an individual is expected to create differences that are neither inevitable or essential .This gendered difference can therefore be interpreted to mean legitimization of inequality, as what is female in a patriarchal system is devalued (Gok, 2008).Hence, in many communities, Lugari District not an exception, women's work and roles is seen to be insignificant and hence private as opposed to the roles undertaken by men.

As espoused by Kaufman and Alfonso (1997) gender hierarchy is shown in family inheritance laws and customs, valuation of women's work as opposed to men's work and the power to make decisions in society, family, church and social networks and from the opportunities available for development. This hierarchy is accepted by both gender and not questioned, thus perpetuating inequality in society. According to UN (1993), violence against women should be understood within the context of women's and girls subordinate status in society. While both women and men experience violence, evidence suggests that the risk factors, patterns and consequences of violence against women are different from violence against men. Many cultures have beliefs, norms and social institutions that legitimize and therefore perpetuate violence against women. Kariuki, (2012) argues that violence against women cannot be separated from the norms, social structures and gender roles that influence women's vulnerability to violence (Gok,2008).In view of the above, it is important to understand that enabling the population regardless of gender to participate in social and economic wellbeing is indeed critical to sustainable development of any society, thus measures aimed at eliminating all forms of discrimination against women and giving them equal opportunities ,particularly in Lugari District is indeed important and would spur economic and sustainable growth, specifically among women in the study area.

It should be noted that Gender equality is important in societal development because it affects social harmony and societal wellbeing in various dimensions, for instance, policy dimension in all areas including education, poverty, labour, financial market, political and economic empowerment. Furthermore gender equality enhances the prospects of achieving both international and national commitments, such as, the

millennium development goals, Education for all, employment creation, poverty eradication and elimination of all forms of Discrimination against women. Gender inequality on the other hand undermines economic growth and social development. This is particularly true among developing Nations, such as Kenya, Lugari District not an exception, where women are often constrained from having equal access to social and economic capital, for instance, access to employment, political, financial and social services (Gok, 2008). Consequently empowering women and enabling them to participate actively and contribute to social, economic and political activities is important in order to achieve sustainable development.

Ensuring Gender equality is critical for any country's development. Despite the fact that women represent over 51 per cent of Kenya's population, their representation in post-primary education, wage employment, enterprise ownership and decision making process is limited, they are also adversely affected by such factors as traditional and social practices, poverty and domestic violence among other challenges. Thus improving their profile in all sectors and reducing gender disparities will not only benefit women but also men, children and the poor. In addition, it will also enhance women empowerment and contribute to sustainable economic growth, reduce poverty and social injustices.

With this backdrop there is need to enact policy measures that would ensure gender parity in access to education, healthcare, access to social, economic and political opportunities, such policy interventions would include legislation, female specific policies, plans and programmes aimed at addressing specific gender gaps or forms of discrimination such as affirmative action, promotion of girl child education, economic

empowerment through the women development fund amongst others (Chege and Fatuma,2006).

Enterprise ownership and access to financial services particularly by women is critical to economic empowerment. This includes levels of savings, access to credit, and insurance services amongst others. In this regard, various initiatives have been put forward to ensure women participate in entrepreneurial activities, for instance, Equity Bank which loans money to women to start small business, hence improving their socio-economic status and wellbeing. This is indeed commendable in ensuring the empowerment of women (GoK, 2000). Furthermore the introduction of women enterprise and development on December 2006, was indeed a noble initiative towards reducing poverty through economic empowerment of women and ensuring that women participate in entrepreneurial activities, such as running small business, hence improve their welfare (Gok, 2008).However the impact of this noble venture would only be effective with improved innovation and participation of women in entrepreneurial activities and effective management of the fund.

The above measure in terms of empowering women to ensure their effective participation in the development process and improve their social wellbeing is indeed important in ensuring gender equality, particularly among women in Lugari District. Nonetheless more needs to be done in order to capture and integrate the various issues and challenges that women face. Hence the need to relax rules and regulations to make it easier for women to benefit from the women enterprise and development fund.

In conclusion therefore, it should be underscored that when a woman is empowered, the whole nation is empowered. All Kenyan women may not be politically economically or socially empowered at the same time, but the journey of a thousand miles begins with one step.

The most important determinant of country competitiveness is its human talent, the skills education and productivity of its workforce. Women account for one-half of the potential talent base throughout the world. Over time therefore a nation's competitiveness depended significantly on whether and how it educate and utilizes its female talent. To maximize its competitiveness and development each country should strive for gender equality that gives women the same right, responsibilities and opportunities as men. Numerous studies carried out during the last decade have confirmed that reducing gender inequality enhances productivity and economic growth (Connel, 1987). In addition empowering the women through Education, capacity building and employment creation is of utmost importance to ensure Economic, political, social prosperity and development of any given nation, hence if the Kenyan Government places more emphasis on narrowing the gender gap, women would get an opportunity to play an active role in governing and make a difference in the Kenyan society. An empowered citizen facilitates economic development of a Nation.

2.5.5 Ensuring Women Representation in Decision Making

Representation of both men and women in decision making process is critical for effective implementation of policies that affect the general population. This includes participation in Government organs, civil positions and senior Government positions amongst others. Overall negligible proportions of women are represented in senior

and middle level policy formulation and implementation processes despite the substantial number of women in communities. This form of structure contributes to the limited gender sensitivity in the policy process including roles and needs of women (Kariuki,2012). For instance the number of women in senior Government position, such as the County commissioners is indeed negligible, hence the need to increase their number and enable them to be fully represented in decision making and policy implementation by ensuring gender equality in political representation.

A comparison between 2003 and 2006 indicates that the number of female ministers declined from 3 to 2 against a total of 32 men, even if the number of women assistant ministers increased from 4 to 6 it was a mere 13% as compared to male representation. In the public service representation, such as the level of provincial administration women were not represented at all by January 2006, while at the district commissioner administration unit the number of women actually reduced from 3 in 2003 to 2 in 2006 representing a mere 2.8% (Gok,2008). Furthermore in the 2007 general elections, there were 269 female candidates out of the 2,548 total parliamentary candidates, up from 44 females aspirants out of the 1,015 legislative aspirants in 2002. However only 15 women candidates made it to the tenth parliament after going through campaigns that were marred by violence and other challenges (Gok, 2008). Despite this with the emergence of the new constitution more women representation in parliament and public service was seen. For instance, Article 97(1)(b) provides that 47 elective seats in the National Assembly shall be reserved for women; Article 98(1)(b) reserves 16 seats in the Senate for women members who shall be nominated by the political parties. This scenario has led to an increase of women representation in the National assembly with 47 women representatives and

16 nominated senators, hence making a total of 63 (FIDA,2013).It should be underscored that more efforts are still being made by parliamentarians to ensure that women are fully represented, this is evident with recent attempts by the civil society and parliament to draft a formula to ensure that 2/3 of women are represented in the National assembly making a total of 94 legislatures.

This glaring Gender disparities in major decision making institutions can be attributed to various factors such as, negative stereotypes and socio-cultural attitudes reinforced with strong patriarchal family systems that work against women, Lack of societal capacity to accommodate and appreciate women in leadership positions, Limited financial base to sustain competitive campaigns, physical and emotional intimidation threatening personal security of women, low education levels among majority of woman and finally lack of interest in political issues amongst most women amongst others (Kariuki,2012).

To a large extend, there are indeed limited public support systems targeting women political empowerment. Although affirmative action has been entrenched in most Government policies, such as education and public service delivery and the Kenyan constitution, implementation of the same is limited and is indeed a hurdle that requires appropriate measures and methodology that will ensure effective women representation in all spheres of Government, be it political or administrative (Gok,2008).

Despite the progress made in terms of political participation and representation among women in Kenya, in particular with the appointment of six women cabinet secretaries and the forty seven county representatives serious and persistent obstacles still hinder the advancement of women and their participation in decision making process. Some

of the principle obstacles are related to persistent poverty, lack of equal access to health, education, training and employment and cultural barriers. Hence more need to be done in order to ensure that women participate effectively in all spheres of development (Kariuki, 2012).

In Lugari District women still face a lot of challenges in terms of political representation and decision making. In the said area cultural traditions, attitudes and Gender stereotype does impede women's participation in the political process and decision making power. Women still hold subordinate positions and their voices are never heard and their needs catered for effectively. Leadership positions in the District are skewed towards males and therefore women are not involved in decision making on issues affecting the District (Lugari District Development Plan 2008-2012). This situation calls for the sensitization of women to enable them take leadership roles in the District.

There are many gender imbalances in the District namely, distribution of workload, control of family income and resource, access to resources both for women and poor males and level of participation in development activities. The determinants of gender disparities in the district may include culture, environment, economy, and Government policies amongst others. The gender concern includes heavy workload for women and girls, and discrimination on land ownership by women as well as discrimination in access to credit facilities. These disparities if not corrected will continue to affect development in the District .They will determine the way resources and opportunities are targeted and will also influence the ability and incentive to participate in development (Lugari District Development Plan 2008-2012).

To correct the above disparities, a number of measures need to be put in place which includes the empowerment of women, girl child education and creation of awareness on gender equality.

2.5.6 Prevention of Domestic Violence

The Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women (1993) recognizes that, Violence against women is a manifestation of historically unequal power relations between men and women which have led to domination over and discrimination against women by men and to the prevention of their full advancement and growth. This is one of the crucial social mechanisms by which women are forced into a Subordinate position compared with men. Violence against women is defined as “any act of gender based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life.” In every society, violence against women can be identified and is not limited to women of certain economic, social or political background. Indeed it cuts across culture, tribal lines, education, class, income or age. Violence against women has negative impacts on women such as:

First, it results in the violation of rights and fundamental freedoms of women and further prevents them from enjoying these rights, hence an obstacle to the achievement of equality, development and peace.

Second, it results in women being subordinate to men through the continuous practice of harmful cultural practices such as female genital mutilation, wife inheritance, early marriage, widow cleansing and domestic violence which rob a woman of her psychological and physical health and integrity. Causes of domestic violence are:

- a).** Cultural – Traditionally, the family is seen as private, under male domination and beyond the reach of the state. Further, customs of marriage such as payment of bride price and beliefs that only men can inherit property and land contributes to violence. For example, in order to dissolve a customary marriage, a wife is expected to return the bride price that was paid for her hand in marriage. A woman who cannot afford to pay back the bride price will have to remain in the abusive marriage. In addition, cultural norms regarding gender roles can render women in subordinate positions to men which may make violence against women more likely to occur.
- b).** Economic - Factors such as women's economic dependence on men, discriminatory laws and practices regarding inheritance and property

The issues of gender related violence takes the form of domestic violence, rape, defilement and incest. According to Gender monitoring unit, between April 2004 and March 2005, a total of 1,483 women were raped while the defilement index indicated that 717 children were abused over a similar period. These figures do not include the unreported cases that occur every day. Presently the cases of defilement, rape and wife battery have increased to unprecedented levels. According to the Kenya Demographic and Health survey (2003), one out of every four women experienced domestic violence with 40% experiencing physical violence and 16% experience sexual violence. This scenario is basically a result of attitudinal and cultural perceptions than policy. In many communities a husband is justified to beat the wife if she burnt food or argued with him. While it may be argued that the key issues related to persistence of gender violence is the rate of economic dependence of women on men, it is indeed important to note that the need to preserve the family unit

,especially the children, makes women not to divorce or to be separated from their husbands, hence perpetuating this vice (Gok,2008).

Major findings of research particularly by the Institute of Economic affairs in Kenya (2008) indicate that in many parts of the world, Kenya not an exception, it is considered both as a right and even an obligation for men to physically abuse or chastise their wives in the face of perceived transgression. Women are taught to be submissive and obedient to their partners and a mans honour depends on his ability to control his wife's behavior. Most of the cultural norms in the communities where gender based violence is rampant not only encourage male violence against women but also serve to entrap women in violent relationships by teaching them that violence is normal and deserved. Further, another common norm that family affairs should be kept private and that outsiders should not intervene isolate women from potential sources of support (Ibid.).

Domestic violence has locked up potential and opportunities for women who cannot develop themselves because of being afraid of their husband's attitude and reaction. Gender violence also takes the form of emotional abuse and attitude of indifference. Sometimes it threatens the family unit and it is an issue that requires urgent attention and activism if our Nation is to maintain the social fabric upon which the family unit and hence the society and the economy are rooted.

This scenario is not peculiar to women in Lugari District who continue to be battered by their husbands without apparent reasons. This calls for the enactment of policies and measures that will protect women from being battered by their husbands and stiffer penalty should be accorded to those found engaged in rape and child abuse.

Hence, it can be noted that, the above measures would ensure the effective participation of women in the Development process.

Moreover, it can be noted that in the District certain measures have been put in place to ensure that women participate effectively in the societal development, these measures includes:

The provision of preventive and reproductive healthcare services

The health problem of rural women in developing countries, Kenya included, stems from poverty, poor environmental condition and lack of healthcare services. They are often compounded by social attitudes and customs. Some of these health problems are: inadequate access to clean water and sanitation, poor nutritional status, in some societies this condition is aggravated by patterns of food distribution within the family which discriminate against women and girls and by food taboos imposed on pregnant and lactating women, inadequate access to mother and child healthcare services, high rates of death in pregnancy and childbirth, in the sense that frequent pregnancies combined with inadequate nutrition, locally endemic diseases and lowered resistance to infections lead to the maternal depletion syndrome which underlies these high death rates. Finally, early marriage and high rates of childbearing among young women is indeed a problem that needs to be addressed. These problems call for an extension of primary healthcare services, particularly maternal and child health and family planning services. They also require education and action programmes to improve hygiene and nutrition, eradicate disease and provide water and sanitation. Community based approaches offers an effective way of meeting the health needs of rural women (Lugari District Development Plan 2008-2012).

It should be underscored that the health sector prepares human resource for taking part in the labour force thereby contributing to the alleviation of poverty, apart from playing a critical role in preparing individuals to cope with changing circumstances in economic development. Efforts to contain HIV/AIDS pandemic has been promoted through the Kenya National HIV/AIDS strategic plan, in the total war against HIV/AIDS (TOWA) project whose provision of healthcare services laid emphasis on preventive, promotional and rehabilitative services, with provision of adequate staff and drugs. Furthermore, population control through programmes in reproductive health has been pursued to ensure that the Districts meager resources are properly utilized (ibid).

Furthermore, in order to curb, control and prevent HIV/AIDS pandemic, there has been efforts to provide for advocacy, home based care and the provision on of voluntary counseling and testing centres mainly in District Hospitals and Dispensaries to offer counseling services to people infected and affected by HIV/AIDS. In the same vein there has been other initiatives and projects which includes; increase of immunization coverage particularly of children under 1 year and pregnant mothers, which is undertaken by KEPI, Malezi bora weeks which aims at improving health of the child and mother, this initiative focuses on children under 5 years and women of reproductive age. There has been also the provision of infrastructure and equipment which aims at expanding healthcare services, such as provision of X-ray, maternity, Theatre equipment and specialized clinics in Lumakanda district hospital, Likuyani sub-district hospital and Mautuma sub-district hospital (Lugari District Development Plan 2008-2012)

Provision of education

Education is widely recognized as the key to National development. An increase in the access and quality of education, relative to the national population is critical to socio-economic growth and productivity, increased individual earnings and subsequent reduced income inequalities and the reduction of poverty. It contributes significantly to improved health; enhance democracy, good governance and effective leadership (Gender policy in education, 2007). The national education system has been characterized by gender disparities at the national level and between various regions in favour of males. Between 1999 and 2004, North Eastern and East provinces had greater gender disparities of over 10 percent, while central province had a gender disparity of only 2 percent. The widest gaps exist at the higher education levels, despite the enrollment of female students increasing by 48 percent between 1990 and 2000, in comparison to 27 percent for males. In 2004, female students made up only 36 percent of enrolment. This expansion have not been without major challenges, one of which is ensuring equity (Gender policy in education, 2007).

There is adequate evidence that educating women is beneficial at the national, community, family and individual levels. With even a basic education, individual women effectively engage in economic activities and thus contribute to greater national productivity. At the family level, educated women have reduced fertility rates, brought up healthier, better educated children and families and reduced infant and maternal mortality rates. At the society or community, educated women participate more in development activities as well as in political and economic decision-making processes (gender policy in education, 2007). Despite this benefit, rural woman in the developing countries, particularly in Kenya, suffer from the following educational disadvantages:

i) Low levels of literacy and educational attainment, compared with both urban women and rural women, although all Governments claim to promote non-discriminatory education, in practice it is the daughters of rural families who drop-out of school early because of family poverty or need for child labour.

ii) Limited access to training programmes, in particular, agricultural training and extension programmes which is dominated by men.

iii) High school drop-out rates among adolescent girls, which is associated in some cultures with increasing rates of teenage pregnancy. Hence, more emphasis should be given to providing family life and sex education programmes for young people in rural communities. Unequal education opportunities are a big barrier to women's full participation in development process. Additional measures are required to ensure that women and girls have access to the education and training which they need to fulfill their potential as agents of rural development (International planned parenthood federation, 1982).

In view of the above obstacles to women's effective participation in the development process, it should be underscored that the District recognizes the critical role played by education in preparing individuals to cope with changing circumstances in economic development. Hence emphasis on education has been laid on the promotion of girl-child education and establishment of a unified scheme of work. Further, there has been the provision of funds for construction of physical infrastructure, capacity building through funding of seminars and workshops, provision of opportunities for the children to attend schools thus increasing enrolment, transition and completion rate and sensitizing communities on importance of education. All these aims at increasing the transition rate from 50% to 70% in the District (Lugari

District Development plan 2008-2012). In addition, through the constituency Development fund and availing Bursaries to the needy and bright students, priority is always given to the promotion of the girl child education, hence improving the progress and growth of the women in society. Offering education to women plays a greater role in widening their worldview, opportunities and giving them an avenue to prosper and participate effectively in the development process.

In addition, it can be said that the economy of the District is predominantly depended upon Agriculture development and therefore the backbone of the livelihood of people. It's the leading sector in terms of food security, employment, income earning and overall contribution to the socio-economic being of the people. Majority of the people depend on this for survival, with 84% directly or indirectly employed in the sector. With this backdrop, women have not been left behind and some women and self help groups do involve in horticulture, cereals and poultry farming. This project has in turn made them to play an active role in the development process (Lugari District Development Plan 2008-2012).

Finally, another venture that enhances women's participation in development includes Gender and Social services sub-sector which is charged with the responsibility of mobilizing individual groups and communities to attain full participation for sustainable socio-economic development. This sub-sector focuses on activities like: capacity building the women groups and community based organizations on income generating activities. The Department is also responsible for the disbursement of the Women Enterprise Fund, hence enabling women to start small business and venture into specific projects, thus uplifting their livelihood (Ibid.).For instance, in the District, women do receive a grant called "Njaa Marufuku Kenya" from Agriculture

Sub-sector, this grant is geared towards the elimination of poverty and hunger in the District. The grant has enabled women to venture into income generating activities, such as Dairy farming, particularly, rearing of Dairy Goats and cows, Poultry keeping, Horticulture, planting of maize, potatoes and Grain Amaranth.

In addition, the contribution of women groups has been of great importance to uplifting the lives of women in Lugari District. It is from these groups that women get finance either from merry-go-round or from Table Banking a scenario where they acquire small loans from members' contribution which attracts 10% interest. This has enabled them to expand their business, engage in Dairy farming, poultry keeping, Horticulture, among other projects, thus improving their livelihoods.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Overview

The method section of this research study described the procedure followed in conducting the study. In this study, the researcher adopted a case study research that involved collecting data and information from the women in Lugari District in

Kakamega County on the challenges in participation of rural women in local development

3.2 Research Design

Research design employed was descriptive research. The study aimed at collecting information from respondents on the Challenges in participation of rural women in Local development in Lugari Division, Lugari District. The tool employed in the initial identification process was documentary research from the District Social Services offices.

3.3 Area of study

The research was carried out in Lugari District which is located in Kakamega County Western Province. It borders Bungoma North District to the North, Uasin Gishu District to the South, Likuyani District to the East and Matete District to the West. The District has a cool and temperate climate with favorable rainfall and a population size of 106,123 people (2009 population census) covering an estimated area of 265.8 km/sq.

The District lies between Longitude 34° 28' and 35 East and between latitude 0° 25' and 1° North of the equator. There is only one administrative Division, that is, Lugari Division comprising of four locations namely; Mautuma location with a population size of 25082, Lugari location with a population size of 31,281, Chekalini location with a population size of 19,705 and Lumakanda location with a population size of 29,955 people. The major crops grown in the District includes: Grain Amaranth, Maize, Bananas, sunflower and keeping of Dairy animals.

3.4 Target Population and Sampling Technique.

The research was carried out in Lugari district which comprises of one Administrative Division and four Locations with an estimated population size of 106,123 people, constituting of 51,705 males and 54,418 females according to the 2009 population census. The subjects of the study were drawn from women from all the four locations with the sample size of 200 respondents being randomly drawn from 50 registered women groups. The researcher did use cluster and simple random sampling in determining participants to the study. The women groups were divided into a cluster of 4 from which 12 women groups were selected from three locations and 14 from the fourth location having the highest concentration of women groups. Fifty members were randomly selected from each location making a total of 200 respondents.

3.5 Data Collection Procedure

Data was collected by use of open-ended and closed-ended questionnaire, observation and desk reviews of books, journals, grey literature and internet. Some questionnaires were self-administered for respondents who were able to complete the questionnaire themselves. The researcher did administer other questionnaires, this was where the questionnaires were used to interview respondents who did not have the ability to easily interpret the questions because of their level of education and language (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003). The researcher did not employ the services of research assistant.

3.6 Reliability and Validity of Research Instruments

In the study in order to enhance validity and reliability of the research instruments, the researcher did a pilot at Kapsaret Division of Uasin Gishu County. Further, the

researcher framed the questions towards meeting the objectives and the research questions enumerated in the study. Thus questions were geared towards addressing the issue at hand, that is, challenges in participation of rural women in local development, not socio-cultural empowerment. Furthermore in order to enhance validity and reliability of the research instruments the researcher did avoid going for convenient sample and hence, targeted a specific population that was representative, this ensured that the study was able to be replicated and generalized to other population and geographical areas (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003).

3.7 Data Analysis

Data analysis was done by use of descriptive statistics, such as the mean, mode, median and the use of frequency tables and percentages. Results obtained were presented in the form of tables, pie chart and bar graphs. The researcher relied on the statistical package for social scientists in analyzing the results of the findings. The researcher used both primary and secondary data. Primary data was obtained using questionnaire and direct observation, while secondary data was obtained through books, journals, unpublished literature and the internet.

3.8 Limitations of the Study

The researcher did experience certain limitations in the study that to some extent affected the validity of the findings. This included unanswered and incomplete questionnaires. Due to the fact that the researcher used questionnaires it was not effective enough because some questionnaires were returned unanswered, some were incomplete while others not returned. Further more because some questionnaires were sent to respondents, the researcher had no direct contact with them, hence could not

clarify any misunderstanding or probe deeper into answers given by respondents. Moreover, the researcher experienced language barrier, this was in situations where the respondents could not answer the questionnaires due to illiteracy and inability of the respondents to understand English or Swahili language To remedy this, interpreters were used. As concerning the unanswered and incomplete questionnaires, the researcher could only work on the answered questionnaires and discard the incomplete and unanswered so as to preserve the credibility of the study.

3.9 Ethical Issues

The major ethical considerations in this study included: getting a research permit specifically from Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology in order to gain authority to carryout effectively the research. Furthermore, privacy and confidentiality of the respondents was of utmost importance in order to boost efficiency and facilitate collection of data, hence, with due respect the researcher ensured the privacy and confidentiality of the respondents by not disclosing their names , this entailed using codes or numbers. In seeking the permission of the respondents and explaining the intention and aim of the study, the researcher ensured their voluntary participation without harassing or coercing anyone into participating or giving information.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Overview

This chapter focuses on the presentation, interpretation and analysis of the findings of the study using frequency tables, percentages, pie chart and Bar Charts. Out of a sample size of 200, only 140 respondents filled questionnaires with a deficit of 60 questionnaires which were unanswered or incomplete. The discussion of results was based on each objective and revealed the following:

Table 4.2: Respondents Marital Status

	Frequency	Percent
Married	96	68.6
Single	31	22.1
Divorced	4	2.9
Separated	9	6.4
Total	140	100.00

As indicated in Table 4.2, various characteristics emerged concerning people's marital status, as illustrated, the majority of women were married (68.6%) as opposed to those separated (6.4%), Single (22.1%) or divorced(2.9%). It is evident from the study that marital status was not a hindrance to women participation in local development activities in the study area because the main focus was on the gains to be made from the various projects initiated by the women and how their livelihoods would be improved rather than their marital statuses. In addition, Participation in the

development process was all inclusive because women, especially in women groups, shared their experiences and would motivate one another.

Table 4.3: Age of Respondents

Age bracket	Frequency	Percent
20-30	38	27.1
31-40	48	34.3
41-50	23	16.5
51-60	21	15
61 and above	10	7.1
Total	140	100.00

As indicated in Table 4.3, the majority of the respondents (61.4%) were young women aged 20-40 years, 16.5% aged 41-50, 15% aged 51-60 and 10% aged 60 and above, this illustrated that more young women were active participants in local development activities as opposed to older women. The reason for high number of young women participating in development activities is due to the fact that young people constitute the majority of the population, secondly they lack economic resources such as land, that would enable them improve their livelihoods, further their participation is pronounced because of the gains they would achieve, for instance, from the women enterprise fund and the youth enterprise fund that is geared towards empowering the youth, especially women. In addition, the above scenario is brought about by the need for young women to get rid of discriminatory traditional norms that confines them to perform household chores, hence their involvement makes them to be financially and socially empowered.

It is evident that participation in local development activities is of at most importance in improving the status and livelihoods of women. As espoused by Chambers (1993), empowerment entails enabling the poor and powerless to take control of their lives and secure a better livelihood. This is the case as more women strive to participate in development activities in order to improve their socio-economic status

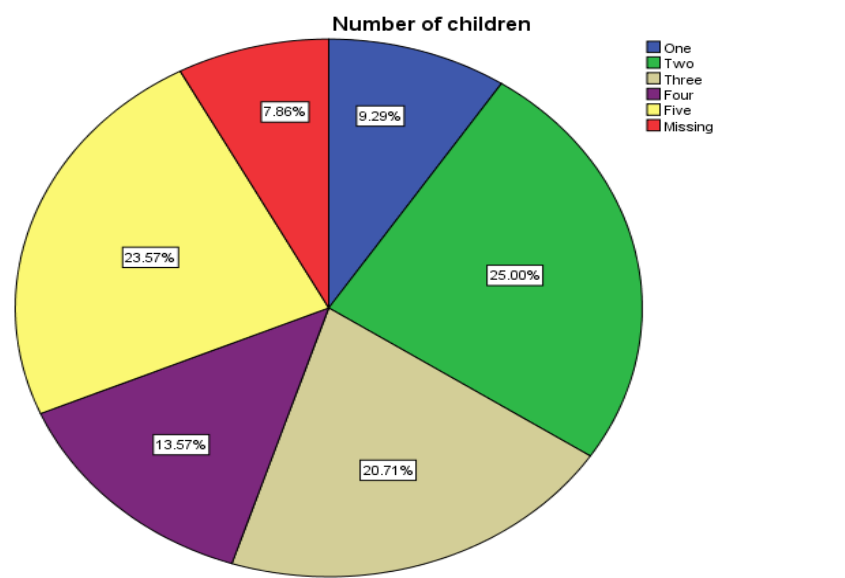


Figure 4.1: Number of children

As indicated in Figure 4.1., majority of the women (25%) had two children, 20.7% had three, 23.57% had five and 13.57% had one child. The preference of having few children in the family was beneficial because all the children would access education, better healthcare amongst other amenities, thus improving their livelihoods. Furthermore; this situation can be attributed to the availability of better reproductive health services and family planning methods, thus allowing women in the study area to plan for their families.

4.2 Challenges in Participation of Rural Women in Local Development in the District.

The main objective of the study was to assess the challenges in participation of rural women in local development activities in the District. The analysis and interpretation of questionnaire responses from women revealed that they still faced a number of challenges which includes, illiteracy, lack of political participation and property ownership, access to employment, control of family income, inaccessibility to finance and lack of decision making power at both family and societal level. This is illustrated by the following tables and figures:

Table 4.3: Do you hold any Leadership Position.

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	6	4.3
No	134	95.7
Total	140	100.00

As indicated in Table 4.3, the majority of women (95.7%) do not hold leadership positions as opposed to 4.3% who do. Lack of political participation by the majority

of women makes them to hold inferior positions in society and lack decision making power on matters affecting them. Further, they are not involved in the formulation, planning and implementation of development projects and programs that would have as its core the needs of women. Hence, due to poor representation, women continue to be discriminated against, thus, impeding on their growth and development. As viewed by Kabeer (1996), the integration of gender, and in particular women empowerment into poverty reduction ensures that women have a voice in all governance institution and participate equally with men in public dialogue and decision making, thus influencing decisions that will determine the future of their families.

Furthermore, representation of both women and men on decision making process is critical for effective implementation of policies that affect the general population. Thus more needs to be done in order to ensure that their participation is effective, inclusive and reaps much benefit. Such measures include training and capacity building, offering civic education to sensitize women on their rights and freedom and affirmative action to ensure that women are represented in all spheres of the Nations development, Thus upholding the two-third majority rule.

In addition, in the study, it was evident that women groups did face a number of challenges, this included, absenteeism (21.43%) and lack of commitment by members (10.7%), illiteracy (42.87%), late repayment of loans (25%) and member's contribution, insufficient funds and lack of Donor support and cooperation among members as shown in Table 4.4. All these factors had an impact on the success of the groups and the sustenance of projects initiated, hence impeding on the effective growth and development of women in the District.

Table 4.4: Challenges Faced by Women Groups

	Frequency	Percent
Absenteeism	30	21.43
Illiteracy	60	42.857
Late loan repayment	35	25
Lack of commitment	15	10.714
Total	140	100

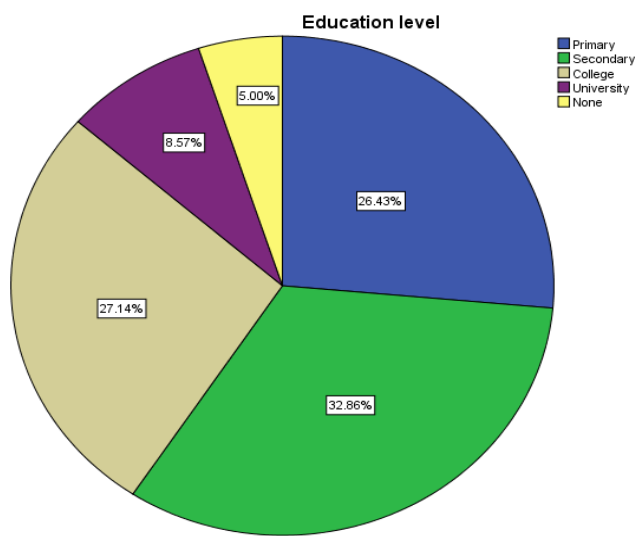


Figure 4.2: Educational Level

Education is a basic requirement for effective participation in the development process in any given society; hence lack of education is an obstacle to individual and societal development. According to Cheston et al, (2000), education is one of the most important means of empowering women with the knowledge, skills and self-confidence necessary to participate effectively in the development process, furthermore, girls who have been educated are likely to marry later, have smaller families, know their rights and gain confidence to claim them and recognize the importance of family and reproductive healthcare. Moreover, it should be underscored that an estimated 13.7million women and youth in Kenya in 2011,7.6 million lived in poverty which triggered early entry to marriage, motherhood and family establishment, denying young girls greater prospects for career development, hence free primary education and subsidized secondary education creates a suitable opportunities for delaying entry into marriage(Gok,2013). This study did focus in examining women's participation in the development process, the inferior position they hold in society and an investigation of the factors which hinder them from participating effectively in National development.

Thus as illustrated in the Figure 4.2, the majority of the respondents (32.86%) had secondary education as opposed to college (27.14%) and university education (8.57%). Education being the yardstick towards effective participation in the labour market and in turn the societal development, lack of quality and inadequate education makes women to be subordinated and discriminated against. This scenario illustrates the inferior position held by women in the study area, which is being confined to performing household and reproductive roles, and their inability to get formal employment, hence being an obstacle to their growth and development.

Table 4.5: Occupation of Respondents

Occupation	Percentage
Farming/Agriculture	51.43
Business	20.06
Professional(Nurse, teacher, Secretary)	28.57
Total	100.0

It is evident from Table above that majority of the women, that is, 51.43 percent practice farming as opposed to having formal employment such as being teachers, nurses, social workers, secretaries among other professions which constitutes 28.57 percent and doing business which makes up 20 percent. This scenario is indeed absurd because lack of formal employment in particular among women leads to them being subordinated, hence holding inferior positions in society which does not promote their growth and development. As such they become dependent on their husbands. According to the institute of economic affairs (2008), employment is a major avenue for increasing incomes and consequently economic wellbeing. It is indeed the primary asset at the disposal of the poor and hence the main transmission mechanism through which they can benefit from growth.

It can be underscored that the participation of women in productive employment activities in major sectors can be attributed to factors that curtail women's mobility in economic domain and conflicting domestic and reproductive responsibilities and constraining nature of occupations where domestic responsibilities cannot be easily combined with economic activities. Another constraining factor is the limited access to required skills and techniques, hence being an obstacle to employment

opportunities. Furthermore, unfounded belief systems about women's aptitude, skills and dispositions and reproductive responsibilities work against their participation in some productive sectors.

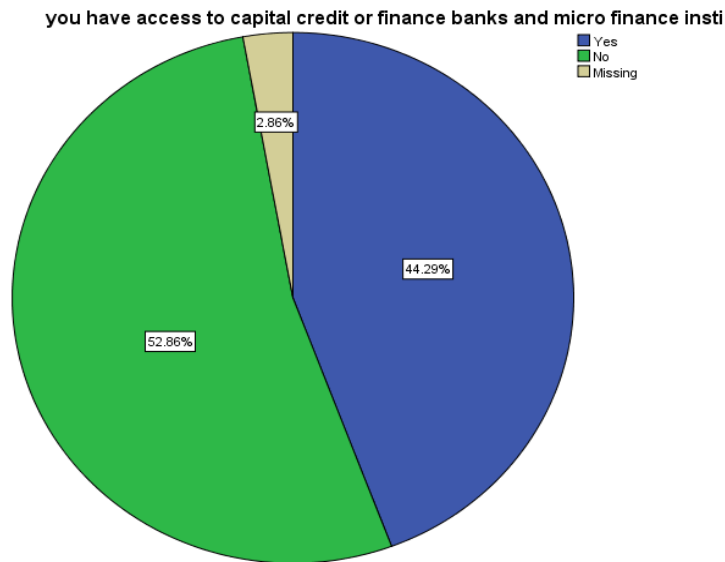


Figure 4.4: Accessibility to Capital and Credit

As indicated in the Figure, minority of women (44.29%) have access to finance and credit from banks and micro-finance institutions as opposed to the majority (52.86%) who lack access to finance and credit. This scenario is exemplified by the fact that the majority of the women would fear acquiring loans and credit services from banks or micro-finance institutions because of the interest rates levied on loans and lack of collateral to act as security while others see no need of getting loans because they have alternative ways of obtaining finance such as the women group or merry-go-round. Lack of access to credit facilities among women impedes on their level of growth and development by limiting their potential and capabilities in doing business and other productive activities.

According to Morduch (1999), access to financial services is critical for economic empowerment of any population, women not an exception. This includes levels of savings, access to credit, insurance services amongst others. Experience and evidence from other countries, for instance, point out that loosening economic constraints on women has an immense consequence on development. This includes the success of microfinance institution such as the Grameen Bank in Bangladesh which provides small loans to women to start business of their own. Furthermore, Pitt and Khandker (1998), indicate that microcredit taken by women rather than men of the household increase women's non-land assets and children's education and doubles women's expenditure than if the credit was given to the husband. Thus it should be noted that access to financial services by women has a great or multiplier effect on the family's wellbeing and the prosperity and growth of the entire Nation.

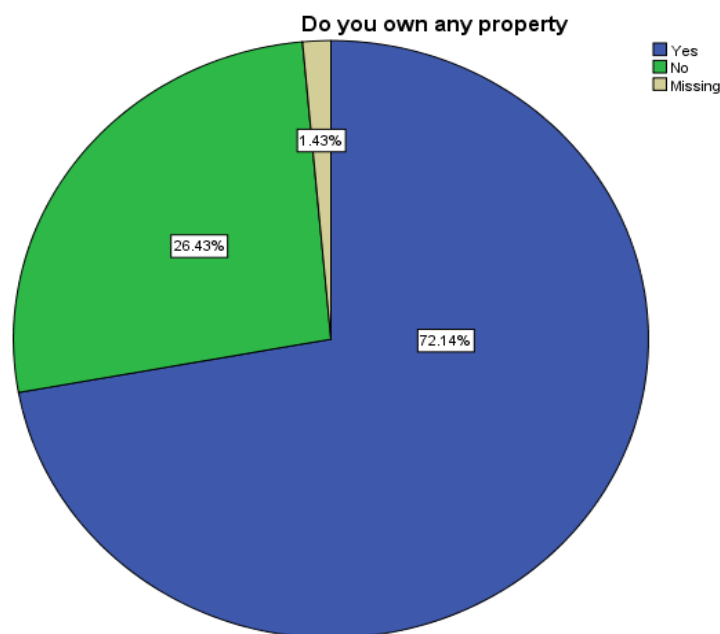


Figure 4.5: Ownership of property

It is evident from Figure above that the majority of women, that is, 72.14% own property as opposed to those who lack (26.4%). This situation is indeed encouraging and fosters their participation in development apart from improving their livelihoods. As such ownership of property ensures that women become independent and do not entirely depend on their husbands. It should be noted that ownership of property by women was limited to dairy cows, goats and poultry. This was possible due to their participation and being members of women groups and merry-go-round which made it possible for them to get finances from the group as soft loans, hence enabling them invest in poultry, dairy cows and goats. Moreover, the projects initiated by women groups ensured that they owned certain property jointly, such as land, dairy cattle, amongst others. It should be underscored that in most cases landownership was a preserve of men in the study area. In addition women did owned property by virtue of being married, thus they owned property such as land, business apartments jointly with their husbands by virtue of being married.

As espoused by Kabeer (1994), empowerment is the ability to make strategic life choices in a context where this ability was previously denied, as such with ownership of property, women are enabled to make independent choices and decisions that would improve their livelihoods and hence make them participate effectively in the development process.

Table 4.6: Support of women ownership of property

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	120	85.7
No	20	14.3
Total	140	100.00

From the above table it can be noted that majority of the respondents (85.7%) do support women's ownership of property as opposed 14.3%. The reason for this is that ownership of property gives security to the property hence it cannot be disposed of by men without their consent, further, in case of divorce or separation the women are not left with nothing, hence the property they own helps them rebuild their lives and cater for their needs. In addition, it gives the woman independence and decision making power in matters affecting her and the family.

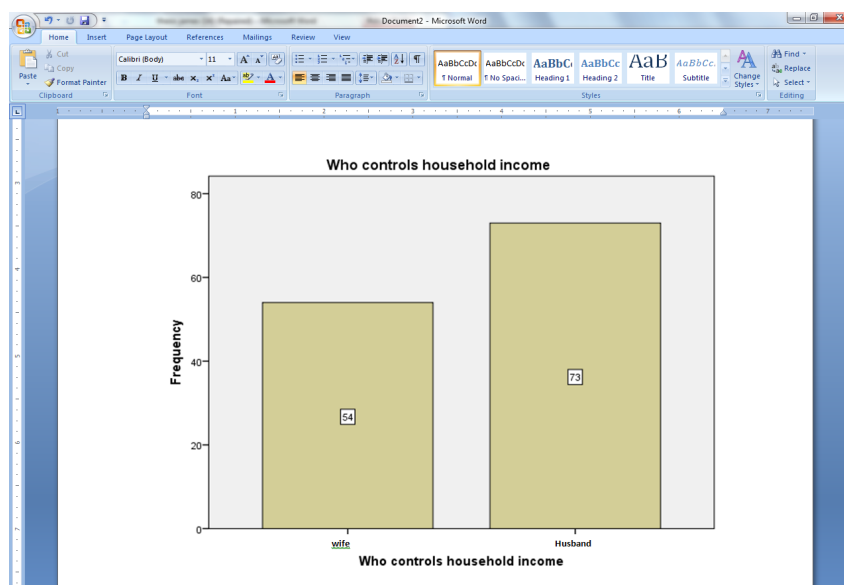


Figure 4.6: Control of Household Income

As indicated in figure 4.6, women lack overall control of family income as opposed to men. This scenario depicts the deplorable condition and the inferior position that is held by women in the District. Further, women lack of control of family income make them not participate effectively in decision making on matters affecting them and their families, as major decisions are undertaken by men who are seen to be the authority wielders and family providers, this impacts negatively on the welfare and wellbeing of women in the family and society. It should be noted that gender issues are everyday societal issues which affect women in their endeavor to realize development. Gender inequalities focuses on social institutions such as the family, education, resource and employment amongst others, lack of productive resources such as, land, credit and income and discriminatory attitudes towards women impoverish them further, hence their inferior position in the family and society.

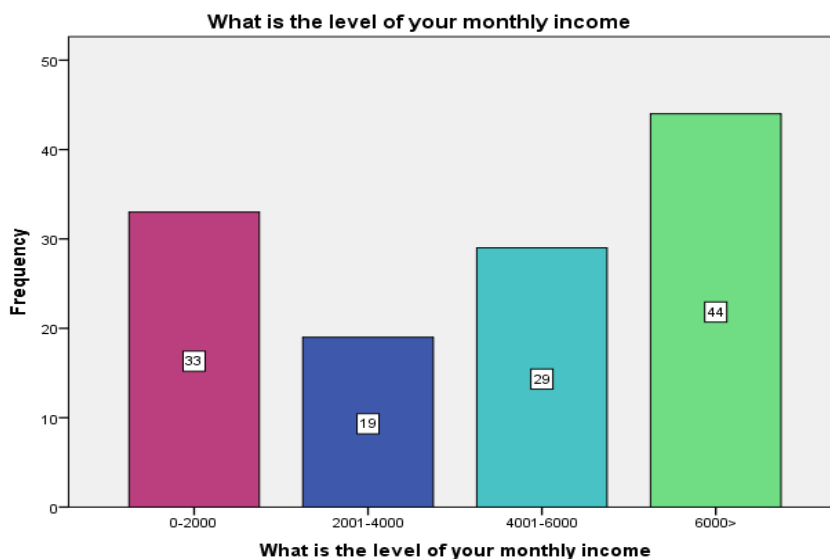


Figure 4.7: Income per Month.

As indicated in figure 4.7, Majority of the women earn incomes ranging from 6000 and above. This scenario illustrates that their participation in local development activities is indeed critical to their roles as, wives, mothers and care givers in the family. As such, incomes of women go a long way in ensuring that family needs are catered for. It should be noted that exploitation and oppression of women is rooted in the structure of patriarchy which believes that sexualism is deeply ingrained in social relationships, hence a fundamental transformation is important in order to bring social change, empowering women is indeed paramount because it leads to improved livelihoods and upholds the dignity of women in the society, hence, they would not depend entirely on their husbands. It is in view of the above therefore that women are empowered and enabled to meet their basic needs, for instance, food, shelter, education and healthcare before transcending to other higher level needs, such as safety, love, self-esteem and self-actualization this is in agreement with Abraham Maslow Hierarchy of Human needs (Mulwa, 2008).

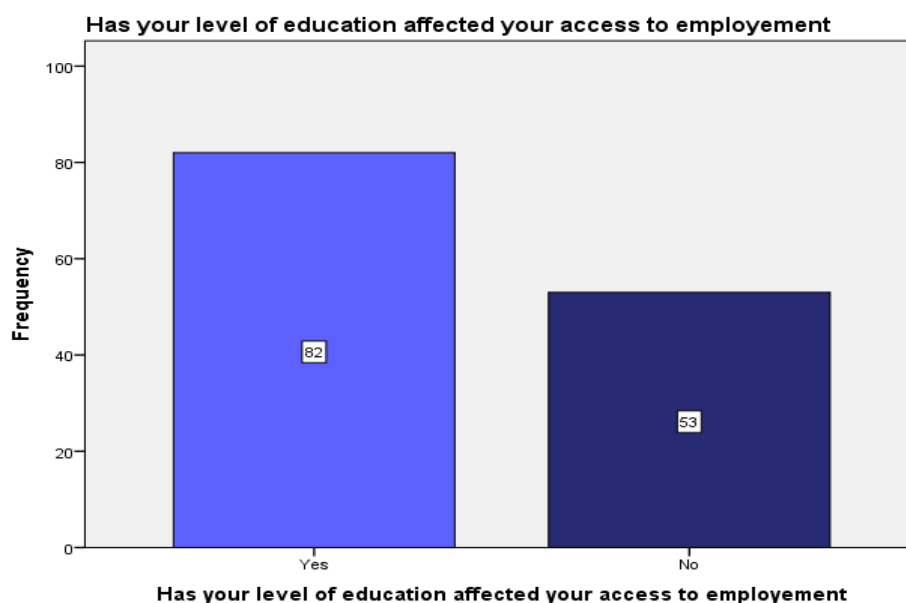


Figure 4.8: Effect of Education on Accessibility to Employment

As indicated in figure 4.8 the answer yes meant those whose academic level affected their access to employment and No those who were not affected. It is evident that majority of women's education level (82 women) had an effect in their access to employment as opposed to 53 women. As such many women could not be employed in fields they would have preferred due to low qualification and lack of required skills and competencies while others lacked employment because they were not educated at all or dropped out of school either in primary or secondary level. This situation was a hindrance to women's effective participation in the labour market, hence being an obstacle to their growth and effective participation in development process.

According to the Institute of Economic Affairs (2008), education has a positive effect on poverty to the extent that the level of education of the household is inversely related with the incidence and depth of poverty. Thus, the more educated members of the household are, the lesser poorer they become. Thus, it should be underscored that education is one of the most important means of empowering women with the knowledge, skills and competencies and self-confidence to enable them participate fully in the labour market and hence, necessitate the development of the society and the entire Nation.

4.3 Activities Involved in by Women in the Study Area.

The second objective was to identify the activities that women were involved in the District. From the findings of the study, it was evident that women did participate in various income generating activities that did serve to improve their livelihoods and economic status. This included poultry and dairy keeping, Horticulture, agriculture, in particular the planting of maize, potatoes and Grain amaranth and running Small business. This income generating activities did ensure that women were not entirely dependent on their husbands. As espoused by the feminist theory women earnings should not be seen as "pin money" but rather as a significant element in the family budget, hence playing a pivotal role in supplementing the family income and would in some extent get families out of poverty when men did lack employment (Mcnay and Pond, 1980).

Table 4.6: Involvement in any Income Generating Activities

As indicated in Table 4.6, majority of women, that is, 85.7% participated in income generating activities as opposed to 14.3%. These activities included farming, horticulture, poultry keeping and the rearing of dairy goats and cows and operating small business. These activities did serve to improve their livelihoods and economic status and ensured that women were not entirely dependent on their husbands.

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money" but rather as a significant element in the family budget, hence playing a pivotal role in supplementing the family income and would in some extent get families out of poverty when men lacked employment (Mcnay and Pond, 1980).

4.4 To Examine the Benefits Accruing from their Participation in Local Development Activities

The third objective was to examine the benefits accruing from women's participation in local development activities in the District. From the findings of the study it was revealed that women did benefit a lot from their participation in local development activities, this ranged from education of children, purchase of property, such as land, poultry, Dairy cows and goats, doing business amongst others as illustrated in the following table below.

Table 4.7: Benefits of being a member of a women group

	Frequency	Percent
Bought Dairy cow and Goat	36	25.7
Poultry	15	10.7
Purchased Land	10	7.1
Started small Business	28	20
Educated children	51	36.43
Total	140	100.00

As indicated from Table 4.7, majority of women have benefited from their membership in a women's group in various ways ranging from purchase of property, education of children to constant market for their produce, training on good animal husbandry and managerial skills and book keeping amongst others. This has enabled them sustain their families, hence improving their livelihoods and economic status. As espoused by Hashemi and Schuler (1993), participation of women in ventures outside the family, such as Non-Governmental Organizations or women groups allows them to reduce their emotional dependence on their families, build alternative support networks thus enabling them to increase their potential and assert themselves within the family as well as the community.

4.5 Strategies in Enhancing Women Participation in Local development Activities.

The fourth objective of the study was to explore appropriate ways of enhancing women's participation in local development activities in the District. Data analysis and interpretation of questionnaires from the respondents reveal that despite women active participation in local development activities, for instance, poultry keeping, Horticulture, Dairy keeping amongst others, still more needs to be done in order to ensure that their participation is effective, inclusive and reaps much benefit. Such measures includes training and capacity building which entails mobilizing, training and empowering women on socio-economic activities, Sensitizing the community on retrogressive cultural practices, such as, early marriage, wife inheritance, female genital mutilation and gender violence, Training community elders on gender Issues

and finally, Enhancing the provision and quality of family planning services and facilities. It should be noted that only a meager 4.3 percent of women in the study area hold leadership positions, this is indeed ineffective in addressing women issues, hence there is need to employ affirmative action in order to ensure that women are represented in all spheres of the Nations development, Thus upholding the two-third majority rule and Education of the girl child and giving women equal opportunity in employment amongst others. The findings of the study revealed that only 6 women out of 140 held leadership positions, representing 4.3 percent, most of the women were affected in accessing employment opportunities due to their education level, majority of them having primary and secondary education, representing 59.2 percent as opposed to having university education, that is, 8.57 percent.

Table 4.9: Situation of women in Lugari District in relation to education, agriculture and leadership

	Percent
Education level: college	27.14
University	8.57
Primary and Secondary	59.2
Leadership position	4.3

Agriculture	45
Accessibility to finance	44.29

Based on the above data it is worth noting that there is need to improve the education of women and in particular the girl child. This is done by offering incentives like bursary to needy and bright girls and providing them with sanitary pads so as to avoid absenteeism among girls. Furthermore, the need to improve agricultural practices and over-reliance on rain fed agriculture and monoculture is critical, hence the need to avail funds to promote awareness of irrigated agriculture and introduce intensive land use methods which can maximize farm yields and lastly the promotion of diversification. In addition there is need to improve infrastructure, especially roads to ease the transportation of farm produce to the market and to offer subsidized fertilizer and seeds.

There is need to employ affirmative action in order to ensure equal representation at all spheres of Government. It should be noted that in the study area leadership is skewed in favour of men. Due to the prevailing cultural practices, women are not allowed to contest for parliamentary positions; if they do they are ridiculed and labeled as social deviants. Lack of representation in policy making process is disastrous to the progress and prosperity of women.

Finally in the study area women lack access to financial services, in particular loans from banks and microfinance institutions because they lack land to act as collateral for such loans. In order to enhance their participation in the development of the District there is need to ease access to finance and offer loans at low interest rates.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter focuses on the summary of the findings, conclusion and finally giving recommendations and suggestions for further research.

5.1 Summary of Findings

The first objective of the study was to investigate the challenges faced by women as they participate in local development activities in the District. The analysis and

interpretation of questionnaire responses from women revealed that they still faced a number of challenges which includes, illiteracy, lack of political participation and property ownership, inaccessibility to finance and lack of decision making power at both family and societal level. This was an obstacle to their effective participation in the development process and hence explains their inferior and subordinate position in the study area. This is in agreement with Kartrin, (2007), who holds the view that women all over the world do not enjoy the same legal and political rights with their male counterparts and that deep-seated cultural beliefs allow women very limited roles which are confined to being mothers, wives and home makers as opposed to being co-workers in National building.

The second objective was to identify the activities that women were involved in the District. From the findings of the study, it was evident that women did participate in various income generating activities that did serve to improve their livelihoods and economic status. This included, poultry and Dairy keeping, Horticulture, Agriculture, in particular the planting of maize, potatoes and Grain amaranth and Running Small business. This income generating activities did ensure that women were not entirely dependent on their husbands. As espoused by the feminist theory women earnings should not be seen as "pin money" but rather as a significant element in the family budget, hence playing a pivotal role in supplementing the family income and would in some extent get families out of poverty when men did lack employment (Mcnay and Pond, 1980).

The third objective was to examine the benefits accruing from women's participation in local development activities in the District. From the findings of the study it was

revealed that women did benefit a lot from their participation in local development activities, this ranged from education of children, purchase of property, such as land, poultry, Dairy cows and goats, doing business amongst others. The participation of women in development activities is indeed critical to their growth and development of the entire Nation. Furthermore, it goes a long way in ensuring that women needs are catered for, their voices are heard and that policies are streamlined towards meeting their felt needs. It is in view of the above therefore that women are empowered and enabled to meet their basic needs, for instance, food, shelter, education and healthcare before transcending to other higher level needs, such as safety, love, self-esteem and self-actualization this is in agreement with Abraham Maslow Hierarchy of Human needs.(Mulwa, 2008).

The fourth objective of the study was to explore appropriate ways of enhancing women's participation in local development activities in the District. Data analysis and interpretation of questionnaires from the respondents reveal that despite women active participation in local development activities, for instance poultry keeping, Horticulture, Dairy keeping amongst others, still more needs to be done in order to ensure that their participation is effective, inclusive and reaps much benefit. Such measures includes training and capacity building, Affirmative action to ensure that women are represented in all spheres of the Nations development, Thus upholding the two-third majority rule in representation in all spheres of government and Education of the girl child and giving women equal opportunity in employment amongst others.

5.2 Conclusion

In conclusion therefore, it suffices to say that women participation in local development activities is of paramount importance in fashioning their destiny, hence the need for the Government to enact effective policies and measures aimed at improving their economic status and ensuring that their needs are integrated in National Development. As stated by Chamala (1995), community participation has indeed become a hallmark of many successful development projects around the world, hence it's imperative to involve the local population, in particular women, in decision making, planning and implementation of projects. This would ensure the success and continuity of various projects and programmes.

Furthermore, it can be noted that 90 percent of the population in the District practice Agriculture, hence making it the main source of livelihood. As indicated in the study, 51 women do rear dairy cows and goats and keep poultry while 21 of them practice farming particularly the production of grain Amaranth and Horticulture.

Inaccessibility to finance is indeed a hindrance to the growth and development of women in the District. As indicated in the study majority of the women, that is 52.8 percent, lack accesses to financial services from banks and Micro-Finance institutions due to lack of collateral to act as security for loans. This lack of property ownership and inaccessibility to finance among women leads to them not participating effectively in development.

Education is indeed critical to the progress and development of any give society; hence lack of it retards growth and success of individuals. As indicated in the study,

women in Lugari District are not much educated with the majority having attained primary and secondary education while a meager 27 percent and 8.5 percent having gone to college and university. As a consequence of this the employment of women in white collar jobs, such as, extension officers, secondary school teachers and medical Doctors is a challenge.

In addition, it can be noted that participation in the development process in the District is skewed in favour of men as opposed to women. This scenario undermines women's effective participation in design, planning and implementation of development projects and programs. A meager 4.3 percent of women hold leadership positions, hence a hindrance to their effective participation in decision-making and policy formulation.

5.3 Recommendations

The study was concerned with the examination of the challenges in participation of rural women in local development. It can be noted that gender inequality and lack of effective participation in the development process has been an obstacle to women growth and development. This is due to cultural, legal and religious bias that continues to hinder and subordinate and make them hold inferior positions in many societies. As part of the recommendations, it's important to empower women economically by providing them with finance to enable them start projects that would have a great impact in transforming their livelihoods. Although there has been an attempt by the Government to mitigate and improve the status of women by introducing a fund, for instance, the Uwezo fund and earlier women development and trust fund, this is not enough, measures needs to be put in place to ensure transparency

and accountability in the distribution and use of this fund. Further, there is need to ensure accessibility to financial services from banks and Micro-finance institutions, such as the guarantying of loans to women at low interest rates, hence making it affordable to them. The findings reveal that in the study area women did benefit from the “Njaa Marufuku initiative”, which a grant was given by the ministry of Agriculture to women to enable them practice farming hence reducing hunger and starvation.

Furthermore, it is important to note that, the roles played by men and women in a society, the rights of women to make decisions and act independently, and their treatment by the males around them all have an immediate influence on the quality of reproductive health care available to them. Demand for quality care must and will come from women, but resources are only as good as women’s rights to use them. Gender responsive programs should recognize that practices such as Female Genital Mutilation, early marriage, abduction, rape, lack of access to and control over resources, and the absence of decision-making and negotiation power all negatively affect women’s reproductive health and rights. Because many women have limited control over their sexual lives and contraceptive use, integrating gender issues into reproductive health and HIV/AIDS program interventions becomes critical.

Active male involvement in reproductive and family care-giving enhances responsible parenthood and reduces gender based violence that affects women’s reproductive health and rights. To accelerate the process and realize gender equality, more work has to be done to provide women and girls with access to education and information. Women and girls continue to need economic support, as poverty

facilitates their isolation, and earning power enhances their community and family status. Progress also demands that entire communities take individual and collective measures against gender-based violence and harmful traditional practices.

In addition, land is indeed an emotive issue in the study area and the entire country, hence the need to enact policies and measures that would ensure equal access to land among men and women. This is made possible by ensuring that land is jointly owned by husband and wife, thus avoiding conflicts in families and the scenario where men would sell land without their wives consent. In order to strength and ensure land security, there is need to increase the number of women in land control boards and land committees, this would go a long way in ensuring that families and women, in particular, are not made squatters and that family land is respected and secured.

Education is a pillar to the growth and development of the society and Nation as a whole, thus the need to educate women and in particular, the girl child. This scenario is achieved by giving of bursary fund and grants to needy and intelligent girls to enable them pursue further education. In addition, there is also need to train and educate women on life skills, such as training them on good animal husbandry, record keeping and management of finance and project. This will ensure proper use of funds and finances that women groups get either from the government or Non-Governmental organization and community based organizations. This will further ensure that proper and effective projects and programmes are implemented, hence eliminating duplication and misuse of funds. Moreover, policies should be formulated which addresses gender gaps in education and clearly defined strategic plans that address specific issues of access, quality, retention and performance of the girl child.

Agriculture is the backbone and indeed a pillar of development in Lugari district, hence the need to ensure that women are given incentives to enable them participate effectively in this domain. For instance, by offering subsidies to farm inputs, such as fertilizer and seeds. Further, the development of infrastructure is of at most importance in order to ensure that farm produce reach to the designated markets on time. This would be necessitated by improving the road network and ensuring that women get ready market for their produce, such as, milk, eggs, vegetables, maize amongst others, hence improving their livelihoods. The need to train women on vegetable and horticulture production, animal husbandry and marketing is of critical importance in ensuring that their wellbeing is improved. Although certain initiatives have been started, especially the training of women on how to rear hybrid chicken and dairy goats by community based organizations, such as Technoserve, still more needs to be done in order to ensure that more women can access such training

Furthermore, learning institutions and youth programmes play a critical role in sensitizing youth on gender issues. Education also plays a role in addressing gender disparities through its capability towards enhanced access to education opportunities, and empowerment of women to be able to participate in major economic activities. Parental guidance which is a form of informal education is also critical especially among communities with retrogressive social and cultural effects. Emphasis should be laid on methods of allocation of duties to male and female children such that from the early ages, the children are taught not to discriminate based on sex. Consistent attention has to be paid to violence against women and girls. Such changes may require transformation of mindsets within Government, decision makers, youth, men and even women themselves on greater awareness of the gendered consequences of

policies and programmes in the country. One very effective way of transforming attitudes and beliefs apart from legislation is through wholesome and action oriented political willingness to promote changed attitudes through allocation of resources to public sensitization Programme geared towards this goal.

Another initiative would include legislation that ensures political parties attain representation 50-50 affirmative target. The country should embrace the notion that qualification, character Profile of Women's Social-Economic Status in Kenya

Institute of Economic Affairs content, relevant training and experience, and not gender are the main criteria for effective leadership. Some of the steps in this direction also include campaigns to engage men in gender based issues and informed women empowering fellow women and girls.

In addition, Female population should be encouraged to participate in various economic activities in order to improve their livelihoods. These include enrolment in post-primary education, observing individual health needs and accessing productive income generating activities and/or well paying employment. Introduction of Women's Development Fund is a positive initiative towards economic empowerment of female population, but its implementation needs strong identification and monitoring systems in order for the poor women to equally benefit.

Moreover, the Government, the civil society, human rights bodies and all stakeholders who are pro-affirmative action should embrace a law with arrangements of co-ownership of all the properties acquired by a married couple including the land, during their marriage. Co ownership arrangements will not only enhance the family unit ensuring stability and productivity but it will also economically and socially

empower women and earn them some sense of respect and confidence required for any human being to normally progress and contribute to productivity. This will also ensure women have access to some form of security in the event of accessing financial services such as loans.

Community Policing on Gender Based Violence. The issue of Gender Based Violence is still a major challenge in spite of the Domestic Violence Bill. One way of solving this problem is through community intervention. Through community interventions, it should be within the provisions of the law that any form of gender-based domestic violence is reported by the nearest witness to the nearest authority. In addition, the community should be allowed to directly intervene in an event where such violence is witnessed. Behavioral change communication can play an important role in challenging prevailing beliefs and norms that contribute to the perpetuation of GBV.

There should be a shift from perceiving Gender based violence as a private matter to one that merits public attention and interventions. These include community based education activities that target the entire community. This will facilitate in the creation of mechanisms that create a deterrent to aggressors by reducing the community's tolerance to violence and creating an environment where the perpetrators fear being publicly shamed for their actions.

At individual level, changing men's attitudes and behaviours towards Gender Based Violence is an essential strategy. While it is acknowledged that it is a gradual process and a long term goal, it is an essential process without which affirmative action cannot be obtained. Such community initiatives could be to involve men advocating for gender equalities as role models to younger men. According to Guedes, (2004)

similar initiatives have been carried out in other countries such as Uganda where the Center for Domestic Violence Prevention project embarked on an objective of working closely with a cross-section of community members and leaders in Uganda to change attitudes and behaviours that perpetuate violence against women. In this case, a variety of activities and strategies were used to influence change such as local activism through community theatre and door to door visits; local level advocacy with key stakeholders to promote understanding; using media and public events to bring these issues to the foreground; building capacity of key groups such as police officers and health care workers; developing learning materials with rights-affirming messages and implementing seminars on communication skills with local council leaders who are predominantly men and who receive domestic violence cases.

It should be underscored that in Kenya efforts to address the increasing cases of gender-based violence have largely been uncoordinated. In addition many cases have gone unreported due to cultural inhibitions and women's acceptance of GBV as part of their lives. To eliminate sexual harassment and gender-based violence there is need to mainstream policies that address GBV at all educational levels and establish modalities for dealing with sexual and gender-based violence by involving all stakeholders and community elders in eradicating it. For instance, stiffer penalties should be handed to those involved in sexual and gender-based violence; this would include excommunication from communities, heavy fines and life prison sentence. These measures would act as a deterrent mechanism to other members of the society, hence reducing such incidences.

Other initiatives include working with the youth to have a particular role in changing norms and behaviours before they become deeply ingrained. It may be more feasible

to effect changes at a time when norms and behaviours are not as deeply rooted. Adult men have an important role by serving as positive examples to younger men, helping them distinguish GBV as unhealthy behaviour, and publicly challenging norms that deem GBV acceptable.

Similar programmes in India have shown that men's fear of being publicly shamed for the violence they commit serves as an important deterrent. While research and experience of the USA indicate that policies and laws that make violent behaviour more costly to abusers decrease the rates of interpersonal violence. According to Guedes (2004), many developing countries have gender-based violence legislation in place, but male judges and law enforcement agents who are sympathetic to perpetrators often implement them inappropriately. Thus ensuring that adequate laws and policies exist and that they are properly implemented is as important as modeling gender equitable behaviours. Changing community norms so that Peers, community leaders, and extended family provide negative sanctions against violence is also very critical. The Government, private sector and other relevant organs should step up awareness campaigns on rights for women and enact appropriate policy interventions to target women. This would enhance their effective participation in the social, economic and political systems. Pro-poor policies and interventions should also target women especially in rural and marginalized areas as appropriate.

In addition, gender empowerment is crucial to the welfare of women in Kenya and in particular Lugari District, it should be noted that through socialization girls learn and internalize subservient beliefs, values and attitudes against themselves and therefore lack empowerment. Lack of empowerment for girls is a serious barrier to equitable gender relations. In order to overcome gender misconceptions that translate into

inequities and inequalities, there is need to develop and implement policy guidelines for mainstreaming gender and development, life skills and human rights, with special focus on women rights for all types and levels of education, second, there is need to create structures and forums for women empowerment, including support groups, clubs, experience sharing and exchange programmes within and outside the country and finally, develop modalities for regular provision of adequate, relevant and up-to-date information and education on women and girls (Gok,2007).

Finally, there is need to enhance Female Representation in Leadership Positions, this includes: a) Implement the affirmative action in all political parties' structures to ensure women Progress in campaign processes right from grassroots level to national level. This entails providing women candidates with finance and other resources and giving them equal opportunities in their campaigns, (b) Enforcing affirmative action on women representation in leadership at a ratio of 50:50 at all levels of leadership, be it in the public service, parliament or judiciary, (c) implement strategies and policies aimed at mainstreaming gender and addressing gender issues in both political, economics, and management level as well as in all political parties' manifestos which would ensure that women are nominated to fill certain party positions, hence ensuring gender equality.

In conclusion, in the study area, women do face obstacles in political participation; this range from lack of finance, cultural bias and discrimination. In addition, they are subjugated to performing household chores and reproductive roles which impedes on their development, hence perpetuating poverty. This situation could be eliminated if women are given equal chance of being elected in political offices and participate effectively in the planning, design and implementation of policies and programs

aimed at improving their livelihoods, thus the need for affirmative action to ensure that the two-third rule in terms of political and appointment to public office is adhered to.

5.4 Recommendations for further Research

The study recommended further research to be undertaken on:

- a) The increase of female-Headed Households and its impact on the development of the District
- b) The effects of HIV and AIDS and its impact on the health and livelihood of women in the District.
- c) Domestic violence and its effects on the wellbeing of families, in particular, women in the study area.

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QUESTIONNAIRE

Challenges in participation of rural women in Local Development in Kenya: A case study of Lugari District, Kakamega County

I am Oduma James a Masters student at Moi University, School of Human Resource Development and I'm carrying out a research study on the above topic in partial fulfillment of the Requirements for the award of the Degree of Masters of Science in

Development Studies. Your contribution in answering these questions will be highly appreciated.

Yours faithfully,

Oduma James.

1) Socio-economic data

i) Name

ii) Age

iii) Marital status (a) married

b)Single

a) primary

c) Divorced

d) Separated

iv) Educational level

b)Secondary

c) College

d) University

e) None

v) Number of children

One two three four five

vi) Number of educated children?

a)Boys

b)Girls

vii) Number of uneducated children?

a) Boys.....

b) Girls.....

viii) Occupation (a) Farming/agriculture

b) Business

c) Other Professional (specify).....

.....

2) Who controls household income?

a) Husband

b) Wife

3) Do you participate in any political activity or are you in any political organization?

a) Yes b) no

If yes, how independent?

.....

.....

.....

.....

4) Do you hold any leadership position in the political organization?

a) Yes b) No

If yes, which

position?.....

.....

5) Do you have access to capital, credit or finance from banks and micro-finance institutions to enable you start a business?

a) Yes b) No

If no, why?.....

.....
6) Do you own any property?

a) Yes b) No

If yes, what is the state of tenure?

a) Purchased

b) Inherited

c) Rented

Other forms of
tenure.....

.....
7) Do you have any legal papers (e.g. title deed) to support your property ownership?

a) Yes b) No

If yes, whose name appears on the title deed?

a) Husband b) wife

8) Do you think that both names of husband and wife should appear on the title deed?

a) Yes b) No

Explain your answer above

.....
.....
.....

9) Do you support women ownership of property?

a) Yes b) No

Explain your answer

above.....
.....

.....
.....

10) What is the level of your monthly income?

a) KSHS 0-2000 (b) KSHS 2000-4000 (c). KSH 4000-6000 (d) KSH 6000 and above

11) Have you encountered any barriers in accessing further education?

a) Yes b) No

If yes, state the barrier.....

.....
.....

12) Has your level of education affected your access to employment?

a) Yes b) No

If yes, to what extend?

.....
.....

13) How have you benefitted from the women trust fund?

14) Are you involved in any income generating activity?

a)Yes b) No

If yes, which are these activities?.....

.....
.....

15) What are the challenges that the group faces?.....

.....
.....

16) What are other sources of income for the group apart from the women trust Fund?

.....
.....
.....

17) How do you ensure transparency in the utilization of the finances the group gets from financial institutions or from the Government?.....

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