

**COMMUNICATION DYNAMICS FOR WOMEN PARTICIPATING IN
COMPETITIVE POLITICS IN KENYA: A STUDY OF WAJIR COUNTY**

BY

FATUMA HIRSI MOHAMED

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DECLARATION

Declaration by the Candidate:

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.....
FATUMA HIRSI MOHAMED

.....
 Date

SHRD/DPHIL/07/12

Declaration by Supervisors:

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

.....
DR. MASIBO LUMALA

.....
 Date

Department of Publishing, Journalism and
 Communication Studies
 Moi University

.....
DR. ABRAHAM MULWO

.....
 Date

Department of Publishing, Journalism and
 Communication Studies
 Moi University

DEDICATION

To Allah, the Almighty who makes all things possible!

Dedicated to my late father, Hon. Abdi Ali Hirsi, and my mother Halima Farah Osman,
both of whom gave me the wings to fly.

ABSTRACT

Although the Kenyan Constitution 2010 created opportunities for more women to participate in competitive politics, such participation in Wajir County continues to be low and confined to the Women Representative seat. Generally, women's participation in politics remains a challenge in Kenya, as in many other parts of the world. This is despite many strategies formulated, time and gain, in country, and abroad, to increase the numbers of women in political leadership. This study investigates the factors that contribute to these remarkably low levels of women leadership in politics in areas such as Wajir by specifically focusing on communication. It seeks to understand this through interrogation of interpersonal communication and, intra-cultural communication dynamics in order to unearth communication-based factors affecting women in the political arena. I further address how these factors influence the shaping of gendered spaces for women in terms of political engagement and leadership. This qualitative study adopts an interpretivist-constructivist paradigm and analyses data of interviews from a sample size of 27 participants, composed of politicians, campaign members, religious leaders and the councils of elders. Interview recordings were transcribed, and data analysed thematically. Study findings suggest that cultural and religious beliefs influence the way communications is carried out and the places in which it can take place. Public forums were often restricted for women making it difficult for them to express their political agenda. The non-viability of female leadership was propagated through religious discourse that presented teachings and practices that discourage free association of women with men and participation on public issues. In addition, results show that the use of folklore, proverbs, parables, and poems stereotype women negatively thus undermining their leadership in the political space. More importantly, the study highlights women politician's unfamiliarity with the culturally known and acceptable political language used by men. Nevertheless, the study found that women politicians tried to mitigate the situation by adopting a culturally appropriate, four-step communication strategy to overcome the challenges they faced. Based on these findings, it can be argued that although the Constitution of Kenya 2010 entitles women to compete on a level playing field for elective positions, these legal liberties are not sufficient to overcome the discriminative, rigid and gender-biased community governance structure, the cultural norms, and religious restrictions that run counter to these provisions. This is manifested through various communication barriers and restrictions that women political candidates face, as seen in this study's findings. I therefore recommend that affirmative action initiatives in rural communities, such as in Wajir county, should focus on mitigating the cultural and religious norms, beliefs and practices that are a hurdle to women's leadership, and, which mute the voices of women in politics. Further, opinion leaders such as community and religious heads should be sensitised on the need to support women political candidates vying for various seats and be involved in spearheading civic education aimed at empowering women to effectively participate in competitive politics. There is also need for capacity building for women political aspirants especially on the use of culturally acceptable political language.

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“Every country deserves to have the best possible leader and that means that women have to be given a chance to compete. If they’re never allowed to compete in the electoral process, then the countries are really robbing themselves of a great deal of talent.”

Madeleine K. Albright, NDI Chairman (former US Secretary of State)

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AfDB	African Development Bank
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
EU	European Union
EUEOMK	European Union Election Observer Mission to Kenya
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FIDA	Federation of Women Lawyers
IPU	Inter-Parliamentary Union
KANU	Kenya African National Union
KEWOPA	Kenya Women Parliamentary Association
KNBS	Kenya National Bureau of Statistics
LWVK	League of Kenya Women Voters
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MGT	Muted Group Theory
MYWO	Maendeleo Ya Wanawake Organization
NCIC	National Cohesion and Integration Commission
NCSW	National Commission on the Status of Women
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund

UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
UNRISD	United Nations Research Institute for Social Development
WB	World Bank
WISP	World Initiative for Sustainable Pastoralism

CHAPTER ONE - INTRODUCTION

1.0 Overview

In this study, I look at the communication challenges faced by women participating in competitive politics in Wajir County, Kenya. Specifically, it investigates the interpersonal and intercultural communication dynamics faced by women politicians in their quest for political leadership. The quotation “One is not born, but rather becomes, a woman” (Simone de Beauvoir, 1949, p. 281) highlights how women’s role in politics is restricted not by their biological sex but by their gender, constructed through the representation of women in the public discourse. Markstedt (2007) also notes that if the aim is equal representation, it is of vital importance to analyse and understand how gender is represented in political communication.

This first chapter commences with a brief background to the study. I start by looking at women in politics from a broad perspective in terms of empowerment by focusing on the key areas that affect women’s leadership and their participation in politics. This is especially in regard to communication within a particular cultural setting. I then give a synopsis of women in politics—globally, regionally, and locally—and discuss the use of communication and its significance in politics.

This is followed by the aim of the study and the research questions that guided this inquiry. In addition, the chapter highlights the study’s geographical, content and methodological scope and sets out the framework for the main research problem addressed in this study. The introductory chapter also highlights the rationale and

significance of this study, as well as the key theories that have informed it, and concludes with a summary of the major issues discussed.

1.1 Background to the Study

Kamau (2010) points out that women have both a right and an obligation to active participation in political leadership. In addition to this, political analysts and researchers from different regions of the world, have observed that when women get into leadership and management, they bring a different perspective of political leadership (Kamau 2010, citing Clinton-Rodham, 2003; Neuman, 1998; Maathai, 2006; Thomas and Wilcox, 2005; Wanjohi, 2003). These analysts and researchers have argued that having more women in politics would help solve problems associated with perpetual poverty, especially as it affects women. Women's leadership not only aids in building nations but also helps to balance up decision making processes (Epstein *et al.*, 2005).

Before the 20th century, few or no measures had been taken to ensure gender equality in the world. However, the formation of the United Nations (UN) and its focus on human rights led to the development of channels through which women can seek redress for their equality-related grievances. Since then, international organizations, the UN Development Programme (UNDP) and UNIFEM (now UN Women) have been prominent champions of women empowerment. The support for women empowerment is embodied in several treaties and frameworks that include: the consensus of the Beijing Platform for Action in 1995; Goal 3 of the Millennium Development Goals in 2001; and the adoption and widespread ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of

Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) by the United Nations General Assembly in 1979.

The Fourth World Conference on Women, held in Beijing in 1995, highlighted the persisting inequality between men and women in decision-making. The Beijing Platform for Action, in regard to the achievement of effective democratic transformations, in practice, reaffirmed that women's persistent exclusion from formal politics, raises a number of questions and it undermines the concept of democracy, which, assumes that the right to vote and to be elected should be equally applied to both women and men.

Therefore, the absence of women from political decision-making has a negative impact on the entire process of democratization. Democratic institutions such as parliament, do not automatically achieve gender equality in terms of representation. The Beijing Platform for Action therefore emphasized that women's equal participation in decision-making is not only a demand for justice or democracy but can also be seen as a necessary condition for women's interests to be considered. Without the perspective of women at all levels of decision-making, the goals of equality, development and peace cannot be achieved (UN, 1995). At this conference, the First Lady of the U.S.A., Hillary Rodham Clinton, made this pertinent statement:

“If there is one message that echoes forth from this conference, it is that human rights are women's rights.... And women's rights are human rights. Let us not forget that among those rights are the right to speak freely. And the right to be heard. Women must enjoy the right to participate fully in the social and political lives of their countries if we want freedom and democracy to thrive and endure.”

In January 2015, the UN adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development with 17 SDGs and the fifth Sustainable Development Goal (SDG)—‘achieve gender equality and

empower all women and girls’—reflects the global attention to the issue of gender inequality. This goal has been providing the impetus for governments to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls by 2030 (UNDP, 2015a). However, scant empirical studies exist to show women’s worldwide engagement in elective politics, particularly in regions with patriarchal systems. The UNDP (2015b) noted that global female representation among legislators, senior officials, and managers between 1999 and 2007 was greater than the female share of parliamentary seats in 2011 (28.3 per cent, compared to 19.3 per cent for parliamentary seats). This indicates that women’s participation in competitive politics is possibly limited by factors such as community, culture, and religion. In this study, I aim to find out if other factors, such as communication, especially in a cultural context, may also contribute to gender inequality in politics.

Globally, in the political arena, women do not have what could be called a niche of delight in world politics considering that, since 1950, very few women have served as heads of state. Up to the end of 2012, only 20 of the 193 countries in the world had women heads of state (Markham 2013, citing Oyster & Stange, 2011). More recently, according to UN Women, as of 2020, women in executive government positions serving as Heads of State or Government were only in 22 countries globally. In fact, 119 countries have never had a woman leader. 10 countries have a woman Head of State and 13 countries have a woman Head of Government. In national parliaments globally, only 25 per cent of all national parliamentarians are women, up from 11 per cent in 1995 and only four countries have 50 per cent or more women in parliament in single or lower houses - Rwanda with 61 per cent, Cuba with 53 per cent, Bolivia with 53 per cent, and

the United Arab Emirates with 50 per cent (IPU, 2020). A further 19 countries have reached or surpassed 40 per cent, including nine countries in Europe, five in Latin America and the Caribbean, four in Africa, and one in the Pacific (Ibid, UN Women analysis).

To achieve this, more than two-thirds of these countries have applied gender quotas, either legislated candidate quotas or reserved seats, thus enabling space for women's political participation in national parliaments. Noting that the internationally agreed target set in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action was a balanced political participation and power-sharing between women and men in decision-making, most countries in the world have not achieved gender balance, and few have set or met ambitious targets for gender parity (50–50). Infact, the participation of women in political leadership globally is low. According to IPU, despite increases in the number of women at the highest levels of political power, widespread gender inequalities persist. The global share of women in national parliaments, as of 1 January 2021, is 25.5 per cent, a slight increase from 24.9 per cent the year before and is still below the 30 per cent targeted by the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action that was to be achieved by 2005.

This shows that the dearth of women in political leadership is global, yet there is established and growing evidence that women's leadership in political decision-making processes improves them. Research on the *pancha at s* (local councils) in India, shows that the number of drinking water projects in areas with women-led councils was 62 per cent higher than in those with men-led councils. Similarly, in Norway, a direct causal relationship between the presence of women in municipal councils and childcare coverage was found.

To build on these documented gains, when talking about women in leadership, we then must consider empowerment which is defined as a person's capacity to make effective choices; that is, the capacity to transform choices into desired actions and outcomes. The extent or degree to which a person is empowered is influenced by personal agency—the capacity to make a purposive choice—and opportunity structure—the institutional context in which choice is made (World Bank, 2005). Empowerment is relevant at both the individual and collective level and can be economic, social, or political (World Bank, 2005). The conceptualization of empowerment varies widely and Mehra (1997) cautions that effort must be made to ensure the definition of empowerment is quantified according to specific contexts. Literature shows that many scholars accentuate 'agency' as an essential element of empowerment, although they use different terms (Kabeer, 2001; Abu-Lughod, 2009; Schuler & Rottach, 2010; Njoh & Akiwumi, 2012).

Kabeer (2001) argues that, to be considered 'empowered', women themselves must be significant actors in the process of change. That is, women must engage in agency. For example, health and development strategies may support or enable women's empowerment but cannot, of themselves, provide empowerment. Likewise, Santillan *et al.* (2004) noted that women's agency is often expressed in terms of an ability to make decisions and affect outcomes of importance to themselves and their families or seen as women's ability to exert control over their own lives and available resources. Process or the progression to a state of greater equity, is another element of empowerment emphasized by many writers on the subject.

The focus on women's empowerment has given rise to a growing body of literature tracing the history of empowerment and the reasons why women fall into the category of

a marginalized group whose voices need to be heard, particularly in policy making and decision-making contexts, such as in politics. According to Monteiro and Ferreira (2016), Europe is the bedrock upon which feminist movements in many societies today are built. The emergence of women empowerment is traceable to the feminist movements of 18th century Europe, epitomized by the publication of *A Vindication of the Rights of Women: With Structures on Political and Moral Subjects* (1792) by Mary Wollstonecraft. This was followed by *The Enfranchisement of Women* (1851) by Harriet Taylor Mill and *The Subjection of Women* by John Stuart Mill (1869). The struggle was replicated in America with the publication of *The Woman's Bible* (1895) by Elizabeth Cady Stanton alongside 26 other feminists (McMillen, 2008). Their agitations were geared towards directing attention to the fact that women were being discriminated against and having their rights breached in many ways (Hassin *et al.*, 2018). The overthrow of patriarchy or patriarchal equilibrium was a major driving force (Bennett, 2006). Consequently, feminist activism has targeted the poverty, inequality, exclusion, alienation and violence women face in society (Motta, Fominaya, & Eschle, 2011).

When considering the whole essence of gender empowerment, there are important gender differences to consider (World Bank, 2005). Put simply, the extent to which a person is empowered is influenced by gender. It therefore follows that a perceived channel for countering gender inequality is the empowerment of women. After all, literally 50 per cent of the global population consists of women (Hassin, Hasan, & Musa, 2018). However, it is important to emphasize the fact that women cannot be empowered if they are not in positions of power themselves and, more importantly, if they are not able to articulate their issues through communication.

In Africa, women's political activism began to surface in the middle of the 20th century, facilitated by the increasing independence of many African nations (Berger, 2008). However, most of the agitations did not utilize the power of the media through publications (Kolawole, 2002). Events showed that African women did not let up in their struggles for emancipation despite this limitation (Kolawole, 2002). It follows then that the history of the women's movement in Africa has been mainly action-based. Women in most African countries resorted to using non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and state feminism to advocate for leadership space. However, NGOs have often distanced themselves from active politics, choosing to focus on issues such as promoting girls' education and protecting women's rights. So African women's activism has been communicated through music, fashion, charisma, political influence, and riot (Salami, 2010). In Nigeria, Funmilayo Ransome-Kuti (1900-1978) and Margaret Ekpo (1914 – 2006) are notable figures in the feminist struggle.

Mrs. Ransome-Kuti's activism led to the establishment of the Abeokuta Women's Union (AWU) and the Women's International Democratic Federation (WIDF) in the late 1940s. These were organizations and movements that aided Kuti to promote women's rights in terms of education, political participation, and employment. One of Ransome-Kuti's notable protests with her AWU members was that which was against the Alake of Egbaland, King Ladipo Samuel Ademola, when he wanted to impose taxes on women. The AWU protested with the slogan 'no taxation without representation'. The women contended that since they were not regarded as equal members of society, they should not be asked to pay taxes (Adebisi, 2008). Markham (2013), citing the UN report (2006) on Women leadership, contends that "women tend to be highly active in civil society

organizations, yet remain to be underrepresented in leadership, except in organizations explicitly working on issues of women and gender” (p. 5). The preferred mode of communication in these instances was action rather than words.

In Morocco, for instance, it has been a long struggle for women who have resorted to women’s NGOs and state feminism dating as far back as 1956. To get closer to politics and to foster democratization, women in Morocco are compelled to join hands with political parties to represent their interests in parliament and government. Civil society activists come in as intermediaries plying for a healthy relationship between NGOs and political parties, though at a distance. Although the current regime promised equality of men and women and a better quality of life, the beneficiaries have mainly been people from the aristocracy and the upper class (Ennaji, 2016, citing Ennaji, 2008).

Six African countries: Burundi, Mozambique, Rwanda, South Africa, Tanzania and Uganda have achieved the critical mass of 30 percent or higher women representation in their national parliaments. These countries have achieved this milestone because they recognized the importance of equity between women and men in decision making and they instituted changes in their electoral and parliamentary processes (Otieno, 2012, citing Sirleaf, 2010). Otieno (2012, citing Mutamba, 2005) adds that “Rwanda succeeded by implementing a gender quota system. With a population of 70 percent female following the 1994 genocide, women had to assume traditional male roles. Able finally to participate in the drafting of a new constitution and new legislative structures, they pushed for greater equality in politics through such initiatives as a constitutional quota and election quotas to ensure women’s place at the political table. This achievement could not have been possible without the support and demonstrated political commitment

of the Government of Rwanda at the highest level of leadership. Kenya, on its part, has also implemented the same measures in its Constitution 2010.”In addition, KEWOPA (2018) notes that Kenya remains behind in terms of women representation in the East Africa region. Rwanda still leads the pack with 61 per cent followed by Tanzania (36), Burundi (36), Uganda (34) and South Sudan at 28.5 per cent. In Kenya, there is 22 per cent and 31 per cent women representatives in the National assembly and Senate respectively. The number of women in Parliament was gradually rising in both Houses, standing at 23.6 per cent currently up from 20.6 per cent. This implies that Kenya has the least woman representatives despite the two third rule enacted by the constitution of Kenya 2010.

While these countries have indeed made strides in empowering women and increasing their participation in leadership, with Rwanda having over 50 per cent women parliamentary representation after their elections in 2013, the situation in Africa generally is that there is still widespread underrepresentation of women at all levels of decision-making.

Since Kenyan independence in 1963, women have strived to be active in politics but despite elections for political leaders being held every 5 years, they have remained underrepresented. There was not a single female MP in the first legislature in 1963. Since then, there has been a rise in women’s representation in parliament, especially after Kenya abolished the single-party system and adopted a multi-party system of government in 1992. In 1997, 4.1 per cent of the members of parliament were female; in 2002, women formed 8.1 per cent of the parliament and 9.8 per cent in 2007. The statistic from

2007, at under 10 per cent, represented Kenya's best level for the representation of women in parliament since independence.

The revised Kenyan Constitution passed in 2010 was considered a milestone in women's empowerment in political leadership as it provided legislation to ensure that, at a minimum, a third of the elected leaders are women. However, even with legislation, the 2013 general elections saw only 16 of the 290 women aspirants elected as members of parliament (Kaimenyi, Kinya and Samwel, 2013). In addition, women's participation in the 2013 general elections remained very low—for senator positions, out of 244 candidates, 19 were women and for governor positions, out of 237 candidates, only 7 were women. Unfortunately, no women were elected as either a senator or a governor. For the 1,450 ward representative positions, only 88 (6 per cent) of the elected candidates were women (EUEOMK, 2013). In total, the political representation of women in 2013 consisted of 86 women elected to the National Assembly and the Senate, 16 elected from single-member constituencies, 47 to parliament, five nominated members from political parties to the National Assembly and there were 18 nominated senators including 2 representatives of the youth and persons with disability (KEWOPA, 2014).

This persistent exclusion curtails entrenchment of principles of democracy and gender equity. In essence, without the active participation of women and the incorporation of women's perspective at all levels of decision making, development and peace cannot be achieved (Kassa, 2015, citing Seyedah *et al.*, 2010).

Kamau (2010) summarizes the status of women in leadership by noting that despite the progress made in some countries, serious and persistent obstacles still hinder the

advancement of women and their participation in political decision-making processes. Some of the main obstacles are related to persistent poverty; lack of equal access to health, education, training and employment; cultural barriers; political structures and institutions that discriminate on women; and in some cases, the impact of armed conflict and natural disasters, which has also contributed to women's lower participation due to other challenges that accompany conflict. I support Kassa (2015). View that without greater representation of women in parliamentary, executive and judiciary positions, it is difficult to achieve participatory, accountable, and transparent governance which can ensure the political, cultural, social, and economic priority goals of the wider society.

1.1.1 Communication, Culture and Religion

Having given some background into the political dynamics affecting women globally, regionally, and locally, I now present my study's focus which is on the communication dynamics for women participating in competitive politics. The study is situated in Wajir county in Kenya and looks at the factors affecting communication in the political arena, specifically for women politicians, and tries to ascertain whether interpersonal, and intra-cultural communication dynamics, and gendered spaces affect women's political engagement and leadership. It seeks to find out the impediments in regard to communication that have hindered women politicians in sharing their ideas, promises and campaigns with the electorate. This could be in the form of actions or verbal communication that is influenced by culture and religion.

In Kenya, much research focus on factors that hinder the participation of women in political processes has found that one area is a lack of political goodwill on the part of

their male counterparts to include them in structures of political governance (Ponge, 2013, as cited in Mitullah & Owiti, 2007). Others note that the patriarchal nature of politics, the lack of resources and lack of support for women seeking leadership roles, societal expectations and stereotypes, insecurity, gender-based humiliation and violence all further undermine women's political ambitions in Kenya (Mwatha, Mbugua & Murunga, 2013).

Other research into the representation of gender in media coverage has found that men get much more coverage than women. Macharia (2016) notes that access to communication channels is important as the media sets the agenda and guides everyday discourse and interaction. Her further analysis of the African media landscape, Kenya included, shows that it is also highly gendered. This could be attributed to the probability that because most media owners and practitioners are predominantly male, the message design and communication may favour male over female political candidates. Propaganda and persuasion are often used to entice the electorate, and in my study, I look into some dominant male-positive verbal discourses and stereotyped messages from the communication perspective.

While exploring the aspect of communication in politics, Aalberg and Jenssen (2007) stressed the importance of vitality in a politician to be able to communicate since so much of politics nowadays takes place in the media. However, they were reading communication only from the mass media standpoint, hence ignoring other models of communication. The media are deeply implicated in the process of defining and framing gender (Aalberg & Jenssen, 2007). They represent and reconstruct the contrast between femininity and politics, both in popular culture and in serious political reporting.

Although women are underrepresented in politics, they are even more poorly represented in media coverage. Women have a harder time gaining access and being portrayed in the media and when they do receive coverage, reporters often ask more personal and apolitical questions than they would do for male politicians (Aalberg & Jenssen, 2007 citing Eide 2000; Gronn & Vaagland, 2000; Zoonen, 2000).

My study, therefore, within the scope of interpersonal communication and, more specifically, intra-cultural communication, aims to find out if political discourses that involve cultural and religious perceptions, language use, including proverbs, parables, and poems, and general political communication in public, and in the media, affect the way the community in Wajir county, including the voters, consider women's leadership in politics. The study also addresses itself to discovering how this affects women in their quest for political leadership.

In Kenya, as in most parts of the democratic world, political leadership involves a rigorous process that starts with campaigning. These leadership campaign platforms are largely shaped by existing cultural attitudes. The patriarchal culture in Kenya tends to discourage women from speaking their mind freely and this makes their participation in politics difficult as it is harder for them to communicate freely and sell their policies during campaigns.

Religious and cultural impediments have been heavily involved in restricting women's involvement in politics, as reported by the Heinrich Boll Foundation and the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (2011) in their publication on "Religion, Politics and Gender Equality". This report indicates that religion, to a large

extent, bolsters marginalization of women in society. This is because religion contains myths augmenting the marginalization of women. For example, mainstream religions link the female to the origin of evil. Such religious myths have rationalized and legitimized the subordination of women under colonial and missionary policies, reinforcing gender biases. Therefore, the report by the Heinrich Boll Foundation and UNRISD (2011) concluded that religion provides a strong sense of identity and promotes cohesion by reinforcing ethnic nationalism and bolstering authoritarianism. This creates a sense of community which has immense exclusionary effects and leads to the marginalization of religious minorities such as women, further preventing women from getting involved in politics (Heinrich Boll Foundation & UNRISD, 2011).

Most elements of Christian and Muslim leadership do not provide support to women's political causes and impose an oppressive and paternalistic order through platitudes such as "respect for tradition" and "morality in danger". For instance, Durham (2017) citing Lehman (1980) noted that despite social movements and legislation, a pattern of gender segregation persists as women seek to enter male-dominated professions, with the Church one of the most resistant bodies to accepting women in roles of leadership. Dutch theologian Riet Bons-Storm succinctly articulated the (mis)perception of women seeking or serving in ministry as disorderly and unreasonable feminists or rebels (Hammon, 2010). These perceptions are not limited to just one faith. Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, and Muslim women alike who demand the authority to serve as religious leaders are confronted with scorn and condemnation (Hamman, 2010). This hard stance seems to have softened in recent years, and over time there are more women Church leaders, especially in the evangelical movement. The same cannot be said of Islam as there is a

strict code where women cannot lead men in prayer in any form, in the mosque, or elsewhere.

However, the religion of Islam, according to its main sources of legislation, the *Qur'an* (the central religious text of Islam believed to be revelation from God) and the *Sunnah* (the body of traditional social and legal custom and practice of the Islamic community based on the way of the Prophet Muhammad - made up of his words and actions) should not be held accountable for the plight of Muslim women in many spheres of life—including education, economy, and politics—because this is due to people's unjust traditions, not the revelation itself. About 1400 years after Christ, Islamic Law was in fact the first to equate men and women. Islam announced women's freedom and independence at the time when women on earth were in their worst shape. Islam gave all women human rights and equated them to men in all civil rights. Islam never put women under the control of their fathers or husbands. Some western women did not have these advantages until the beginning of the twentieth century (Qassim Amin, 1899).

When dealing with the Islamic perspective of any topic, there should be a clear distinction between the normative teachings of Islam and the diverse cultural practices among Muslims, which may or may not be consistent with them. The focus of this thesis is on the normative teachings of Islam as the criteria to judge Muslim practices and evaluate their compliance with Islam. In identifying what is "Islamic", it is necessary to make a distinction between the primary sources of Islam - the *Qur'an* (Islam's holy book) and the *Hadith* (recorded learnings and examples from Prophet Muhammad's life), and legal opinions of scholars on specific issues, which may vary and be influenced by their

times, circumstances, and cultures. Such opinions and verdicts do not enjoy the infallibility accorded to the primary and revelatory sources.

Although Islam, as a religion, has been perceived as an impediment for women's engagement in political leadership (Rahman & Memon, 2015), this goes against the fundamental and general rule in Islam that equates men and women in terms of rights and duties. The few differences between men and women in some Islamic rulings are only in terms of physical appearances and, accordingly, the different role that each gender is most capable of playing. However, the fundamental rule of equality is obvious in the verse, 'So their Lord accepted their prayer: That I will not waste the work of a worker among you, whether male or female, the one of you being from the other' (Qur'an, 3:195). This is also seen in the verse, 'Whoever does good whether male or female and he is a believer, We will most certainly make him live a happy life, and We will most certainly give them their reward for the best of what they did' (Qur'an, 16:97). Despite these verses implying general gender equality, there are traditions that some people invented, which God did not send authority for, which degraded the intellectual and social status of Muslim women (Rohman, 2013). These people still insist on the traditions that were common in the dark ages before Islam and refuse to apply what Islam introduced. As noted by Rahman & Memon (2015), the oppression of Muslim women in some cultures is due to traditions and mores and not necessarily a result of religious edict.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

For my study, I looked at the problem from three dimensions – social, academic and context. Socially was to understand why there was low participation of women in politics

and to interrogate intra-cultural communication dynamics with a view of understanding their influence in shaping gendered spaces; negative or stereotyped cultural norms and communication, reinforced by religious beliefs. Academically, I wished to bridge the knowledge gap as studies that amplify the voices of women in political communications are few.

Lastly and contextually, although the Kenya Constitution put in gender affirmative policies with the one third gender rule, it remains a challenging environment for women whose voices may be muted thereby hindering their capacity to participate effectively in political competition. My study therefore aimed to investigate ways in which intra-cultural communication dynamics support or hinder the participation of women in political leadership

The first general elections held after the promulgation of the 2010 Kenya Constitution, saw a notable increase in the number of women taking part in competitive politics in 2013. This was because the new Constitution created the Women Representative position, and introduced the one-third gender rule, whereby each county assembly had to achieve at least one-third of the opposite gender in their assemblies. However, in 2013, Wajir County, with a population of over 700,000 people, elected just the one Women Representative legislator to the national assembly and none to the county assembly and this was replicated across much of the other counties.

To give perspective to the possibility of having women representation at county and national level, the actual positions that women can contest in Wajir County include the position of governor or deputy governor (two positions), senator (one position) and

Women Representative (one position - open only to women). In addition, at the County level, there are 30 wards at the County Assembly which either gender can contest, as well as the position of Member of Parliament for the 6 constituencies in the County (6 positions open to both genders). However, as of 2013, there had been only one elected woman legislator in Wajir County, since independence in 1963, and this was only as a result of the implementation of the provisions of the new Kenyan Constitution 2010.

To understand the remarkably low levels of participation by women in politics in areas such as Wajir, I felt there is a need to interrogate interpersonal communication and intra-cultural communication dynamics to understand the factors affecting communication for women in the political arena and if it contributes to their non-participation. This also means studying how these factors influence the shaping of gendered spaces for women in terms of political engagement and leadership in such localities as Wajir. The study also seeks to find out if women politicians have found ways to counter these communication dynamics to overcome any challenges faced.

1.3 Aim of the Study

My study aimed to investigate the communication dynamics that affect women seeking political leadership in competitive politics, especially in regard to communication within the geographical and cultural area of Wajir County and is informed by the context and background of political leadership there. This study interrogates whether there is any effect, based on culture and religion, on the communication of and by women seeking political leadership in Wajir County. In addition, I also sought to establish if there are ways to overcome the communication challenges to women's participation in politics so

as to ensure women's full involvement in politics. Focus is on the political discourse, and examines the perceptions and implications of communication forms, and practices used by politicians to sell their candidature through others (campaign team), in election campaigns (town-hall meetings, community gatherings) and in the media (mainstream and social media).

1.4 Research Questions

The study aims to answer the following questions:

1. What intra-cultural communication dynamics affect the performance of women politicians in Wajir County?
2. Why do women in Wajir County experience communication challenges while campaigning for elective positions?
3. What strategies, if any, do women in Wajir County employ to overcome intra-cultural communication challenges while campaigning for elective positions?

1.5 Scope of the Study

In this section, I present the geographical, content, and methodological scope of my study.

1.5.1 Geographical Scope

This study was conducted in Wajir county which is one of the 47 counties in the Republic of Kenya created under the Kenya Constitution 2010 and located in the north-eastern region of Kenya. Wajir county borders Somalia to the east, Ethiopia to the north,

Mandera County to the north-east, Isiolo County to the south-west, Marsabit County to the west and Garissa County to the south. The county has six constituencies, namely Wajir East, Tarbaj, Wajir West, Eldas, Wajir South and Wajir North and has thirty electoral wards (see Appendix VI and VII). From the verified 2019 report on the Kenya National Population and Housing Census, Wajir County has a total population of 781,283 people.

1.5.2 Content Scope

This study focuses on communication discourse as depicted in cultural practices and beliefs in the political leadership of women. It looks at political empowerment as the struggle for power, between those who seek to assert and maintain their power (men) and those who seek to overcome it (women). It looks at politics as co-operation and the practices and institutions the local society has for resolving clashes of interest over money, power and liberty while focusing on communication challenges the women in Wajir County experience while campaigning for elective positions.

The study reviews the effect of language and communication as rooted in the cultural and religious practices of the residents of Wajir County in the political leadership of women asking the question how, and if, intra-cultural communication dynamics support or undermine the performance of women politicians. The study also focuses on communication and language used in written or spoken word to assign meaning to groups and their social practices, to events, and to social and ecological conditions and objects and tries to find what strategies women in Wajir County employ to overcome intra-cultural communication challenges while campaigning for elective positions.

1.5.3 Methodological Scope

The study is based on the interpretivist-constructivist paradigm and employs a qualitative approach. Using the qualitative method allows me to formulate questions that are exploratory and based on the purpose of the study. Data gathering was done through interviews, observation, and analysis of documents, and electronic/broadcast material.

My use of a case study design helped in explaining the phenomenon in a real-life context, as the focus was only on communication of women in politics in one focal county. The qualitative case study approach also allowed the obtaining of a rich description of the participants' experiences regarding the participation of women in Wajir politics. Twenty-seven participants were selected to participate in the study using a purposive sampling technique. Interviews were conducted with women who participated in the political campaigns during the 2013 general elections, including political candidates and those who assisted in political campaigns, advisers, and supporters in the area. In addition, interviews were conducted with religious leaders such as imams and the Council of Elders (CoE) from Wajir County. The primary data generated from these interviews allowed the exploration of the meaning participants attached to their experiences regarding women's participation in competitive politics.

Prior to data analysis, the data gathered from the in-depth interviews was processed through editing and transcription to transform it into a textual format. Recorded data from each interview was transcribed, making it possible to reflect on the information given and make contextual notes in the transcription. The notes taken allowed the placement of text emphasis on the experiences of the respondents as was necessary (Fontana & Frey, 2005). All the data was collected, cleaned, coded, and analysed thematically after

checking for any emerging themes in relation to the research objectives. I present the findings in narrative format, quoting my respondents and sometimes paraphrasing their responses. The methodology for this study is discussed in further detail in chapter three.

1.6 Justification for the Study

According to Dale (2007), while the motivations for political discrimination of women are unclear, the phenomenon's existence in the political arena shows that, in general, the perceived social value of women is less than that of men. An elevation of the status of women in society, which would increase female bargaining power and raise female worth, could therefore be a lynchpin for solving this problem, especially since tackling the problem by limiting the means of selection and propaganda campaigns have had limited success.

One of the most comprehensive and enforced policies to this end was the Kenya Constitution of 2010, which mandates that one-third of all elective positions should be reserved for either gender. It is through this provision in the Constitution that the position of a woman representative was created in every county. This ensured that, automatically, 47 women are elected to the country's national assembly. However, this has not ensured representation of women in politics as seen in the other political positions during the 2013 Kenyan general elections. In essence, this has not changed the perception that women should not be involved in roles outside the home as politics is considered 'men's roles'. It is therefore important to determine the cause of such a perception and to propose an effective strategy to address women empowerment.

The trend in Kenyan political discourse has, over the last two decades, been characterized by efforts towards gender equality and working towards fairness for both genders, especially in making opportunities available for leadership roles. Despite this desire, women continue to be excluded in the political process. Women's participation in political decision-making is therefore mostly peripheral.

To emphasise the slow rise in numbers, I repeat that the percentage of women parliamentarians in Kenya remained less than 6 per cent from 1963 to 2007. In the 2008 general elections, the numbers rose slightly to 9.8 per cent, with 22 women parliamentarians. Things looked up when the 11th parliament, which came into place in March 2013, saw a lot of improvement as far as women representation is concerned, with women making over 19 per cent representation in parliament. This was made possible by the creation of 47 seats for women as well as policies requiring parties to nominate women into parliament. In the subsequent elections, IPU (2017) reports that women improved to 21.6 per cent in the current 12th parliament. Even though the number of women members of parliament has increased, if the one-third gender rule is to be observed, it still lies way below the expected 33 per cent. Following the 2017 elections, the combined number for both Senate and National Assembly are 26.7 percent.

Attempts to explain this trend in Kenya have focused mainly on socio-economic and political factors that contribute to the marginalization of women. Many empirical studies have neglected the context of gendered communication and have often analysed gender by merely looking at the speaker's biological sex, including how they are represented in the media and how much coverage women get in comparison to their male counterparts. To look at women in politics in a slightly different manner, this study seeks to establish

the effect of interpersonal communication and, more specifically, intra-cultural and gendered communication dynamics on women's leadership with a view to filling the gap in knowledge and help identify effective measures for encouraging greater involvement of women in politics.

1.7 Significance of the Study

In addressing the issue of 'why' or 'what' significance the study has, my rationale for conducting this study aimed to answer my research questions and explain why I thought it was important to study communication in relation to women in the political realm. It explains why I sought answers to the research questions and what value I would add to knowledge about interpersonal communication.

The new Kenyan Constitution, promulgated in 2010, was meant to offer a new form of governance and renewed the much-needed hope for women by making it a mandatory condition to have 33 per cent or one-third representation of either gender in national and local legislative bodies. Despite this, few studies have been done in Kenya looking at the challenges facing women in getting involved in political leadership in relation to interpersonal communication and, more specifically, intra-cultural communication.

I carried out this study because I believe the issue of low representation by women in politics needs focus. My assertion is that the government is not able to ensure the full implementation of the provisions for women representation, such as the one-third gender rule in the Kenyan Constitution, due to major challenges arising from communication dynamics based on cultural and religious practices, especially in the marginalised,

culturally gender-biased pastoralist communities in Kenya. Very little attention has been devoted to these concerns by scholars, particularly in Kenya, as the majority of the studies have focused on other factors that affect women's participation in politics such as lack of resources, cultural biases, and lack of support from political parties. Research has also been in areas of media and how it portrays women politicians.

This study aims at identifying and providing information on such communication challenges so that this information can assist policy makers, political leaders, scholars and the general public, not only in Kenya but all over the world, in their bid to ensure the implementation of the constitutional provisions on the involvement of women in political leadership.

This study, on the effect of communication and language on the political leadership of women, should attract more research and, through this, provide solutions to women's political leadership in Kenya. The information from the study will also provide literature background for other researchers and academicians who are willing to carry out studies in the same field in Sub-Saharan Africa.

I am convinced that this study contributes to the body of research on interpersonal communication and, more specifically, intra-cultural communication because it shows the challenges facing women politicians when they seek political office due to this factor. In addition, it adds to scholarly literature on communication and qualitative research methodology that should add value to knowledge on the subject of interpersonal communication, in particular, and, more generally, to the discipline of communication.

1.8 Summary

In this chapter, I have presented the key background issues on the subject that motivated this study. The chapter highlights the aims of the study, the statement of the problem which the study seeks to address, the purpose of the study, and the main research questions that the study aims to answer. The geographical, content, and methodological scope of the study is also presented, followed by the justification and significance of the study.

In Chapter Two, I position my study in the field of communication and further discuss the concept of culture and religion in interpersonal communication in the realm of politics. I also discuss the theories that I used to explain my research on the subject matter.

CHAPTER TWO- LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Overview

In Chapter One, I presented the social and academic problems that encouraged me to undertake this study. In Chapter Two, I review the literature for my study paying particular regard to communication challenges women face when they seek political leadership. I look at the challenges caused by cultural and religious beliefs and practices that affect women in terms of forms, modes, and spaces of free communication for women in politics. The study explores the communication channels used by women and the influence these have on their participation. These are in line with the main focus of the first two of my research questions – the ‘what’ and ‘why’ or communication challenges faced by women. It surveys a selection of research studies conducted in different parts of the world focusing on women’s political leadership and the challenges faced, including in terms of communication. Also discussed are the Egalitarianism and Muted Group theories that are relevant to my study as they provide the basic criteria against which communication is viewed and discussed in this study. More importantly, I review and discuss the concept of political discourse by situating it in the field of communication studies. I also explain the rationale for this study.

2.1 Situating the Study in the field of Communication

At the outset of my study, I sought relevant literature on communication, especially in the political field. I found that research about African communication and studies by African-affiliated authors remains scarce. This is corroborated by a study carried out by a team of researchers who set out to establish a comprehensive picture of the state of scholarship in

the communication field. They found 5,228 articles published in 18 top communication journals between 2004 and 2010. After review, articles were coded for topic nation, author affiliation, article type, category of communication studied, and research method. Thirty-nine Africa-focused articles including 25 authored by researchers from African institutions were found. Over half addressed health communication; most focused on Kenya and South Africa (Journal of International and Intercultural Communication, 6:4, p 317-333). This is why I embarked on this research journey; to add to the communication field by finding out what, how and where women were able to communicate with the voters in the community in Wajir county.

I now seek to define communication so that there is clear understanding in line with my study. Figueroa *et al.* (2002) argue that the role of communication is to facilitate dialogue between individuals with divergent views, with a view of reducing diversity. When dialogue is implemented effectively, it ensures convergence of diverse positions which leads to mutual understanding and agreement. Ultimately, it enables individuals to engage in collective action through which they address mutual problems. The result of reaching mutual understanding is that individuals are willing to collectively act to solve a problem. As such, through a process of dialogue, participants emerge with social outcomes (mutual understanding, agreement, and collective action) and individual outcomes (perceiving, interpreting, understanding, and believing).

Communication is also defined as the process of giving, receiving, or exchanging ideas, information, or messages through appropriate media, enabling individuals or groups to persuade, to seek information, to give information or to express emotions. Communication is a very diverse field that can be interpreted and contextualised in many

ways. The seven most common contexts are: intrapersonal, interpersonal, intergroup, intercultural, public, mass, and organizational. My study is situated in the context of interpersonal communication—face-to-face communication between people. This is the most expansive of all the contexts and rich with research and theory. Interpersonal communication may also be defined as a continuous occurrence for the mutual transfer of information resulting from happenings in the past and the past actions of the concerned parties. To further refine this, the study looks specifically at intra-cultural communication which is the meaningful exchange between members of the same social group or of groups with similar cultural properties. In the context of place, the people in Wajir county are a homogeneous grouping from the same tribe with a common culture and language.

The study can also be seen within the context known as public communication, or the dissemination of information from one person to a large group. This is not a new context—speech presentations have existed since the beginning of time and continue today. In public speaking, speakers usually have three primary goals in mind: to inform, to entertain, or to persuade. This last goal – persuasion – is at the core of rhetorical communication (McCroskey, 1997). Many of the principles of persuasion – including audience analysis, speaker credibility and delivery of message – are necessarily part of the persuasive process. This is the area that my study has interest in as it seeks to establish how women politicians communicate with the electorate in order to persuade them to vote for them.

Political communication at the interpersonal level can therefore be said to acknowledge that individuals exist within a social network. The people's attitudes and opinions are often strongly influenced by the people that interact with them. Theories that operate at

this level recognize the reciprocal relationships between an individual and the people within that individual's immediate surrounding environment: family members, friends, and other people that one interacts with within the social environment of influence and can impact on the individual's political choices. Theories in this category seek to define not only the individual but also their social networks. While several theories are applicable at the interpersonal level, my study is pegged to the Egalitarianism Theory (ET) and Muted Group Theory (MGT).

2.2 Previous Research on Communication, Women and Politics

Much of the literature about women in politics focuses on other challenges facing women such as their biological status as women, their lack of finances, lack of political party support, insecurity during campaigns and their negative or biased portrayal in mainstream media. Not much research has focused on communication about women, or from them. This study seeks to find out what interpersonal communication issues and challenges women politicians face while seeking political office.

Politics, by its very nature, communicates its ideas via talk and self-expression. Effective self-expression requires a friendly environment and freedom of expression. Moreover, political leadership implies followership. If most communication with political followers is anchored in patriarchal culture and religion, this will affect the followers' attitudes, beliefs, demands and needs, and vice versa.

Globally, it has been found that marginalized communities find themselves isolated and excluded from many of the national activities taking place and this isolation and exclusion leads to political marginalization including exclusion from the political

decision-making processes (Maathai, 2006). Political marginalization has particularly been the focus for the well-developed and functioning democracies in a bid to ensure equal opportunities in the participation of the political decision-making process (Maathai, 2006). History shows that women in Kenya have not fully exercised their freedom of expression in seeking political leadership due to the hindrances of religion and patriarchal culture. Nevertheless, human rights organizations such as FIDA Kenya have begun working hard to shape gendered spaces for women's political engagement and leadership. This is because gender equality is a basic human right and closing the gender gap is key to achieving the sustainable development goals (SDGs). In fact, gender equality is the 5th sustainable development goal (SDG). In addition, Naomi and Andrew (2008) found a common view that empowering women is key to economic, political and social development.

The Kenyan Constitution recognizes that the lack of women's voices in political leadership reflects discrimination against women which can affect the country's socio-economic development. This is the reason why the legislative system in Kenya is encouraging political empowerment of women by providing space for women in the government through the one-third gender rule enshrined in the Kenya Constitution of 2010 (EUEOMK, 2013). This ascertains the need for a more competitive political space for women regardless of culture, religion, and social status.

To put my study into perspective, I start by looking at research on pastoralism. This is because the case study that I embarked on is situated in a community that has a pastoralist and nomadic lifestyle which impacts their culture and traditions, including the communication of the people. According to recent statistics from the World Initiative for

Sustainable Pastoralism (WISP), a total of over 200 million nomadic and transhumant pastoralists throughout the world generate income and create livelihoods in remote and harsh environments. The areas where pastoralists live tend to be areas of hardship where conventional farming is limited or not possible. However, pastoralists in these areas still manage to generate income (MARAG, 2011).

According to Rota and Sperandini (2010), despite the growing recognition of pastoralism as a valuable and sustainable natural resource management system, pastoralist communities remain socially and politically marginalized. Markakis (2004), in his study on pastoralism, argued that the desperation commonly experienced by pastoralists is believed to be largely an effect from colonisation and commercialisation, which have had an irreversible impact on pastoralist societies. The results of colonisation and commercialisation which include agricultural expansion, environmental conservation, biofuel production, population pressure, climate change and conflict have all contributed to the increasing exclusion and vulnerability of pastoralists in eastern Africa and the Horn of Africa.

However, according to Hodgson (2000), the process of marginalization of pastoralists has not been experienced evenly throughout pastoralist societies. Often, it is the women who suffer the greatest losses. Naomi and Andrew (2008) expound on the level of marginalization of women by stating that women's marginalization is two-fold. They are 'doubly marginalized' because women pastoralists experience discrimination and marginalization from the government and communities with more economic power as

well as living in remote, under-serviced areas, leading a lifestyle that is misunderstood by many decision-makers, let alone the discrimination from their male counterparts. Compared with male pastoralists, women are less able to participate in decisions that affect their lives and livelihoods.

Pastoralist communities in Kenya discriminate against women in the sharing or utilization of natural resources (Pingua, 2014). In these pastoralist communities, men and women utilize resources for different purposes and in different ways, influenced heavily by culturally accepted gender norms. For instance, women in pastoralist communities have very low social status, very low literacy levels, very restricted roles in public life and restricted ownership of livestock (cattle and camels) which is the main source of wealth in pastoral economies (Pingua, 2014). Aspects of women's subordination in pastoralist communities include very limited access to education for girls, very limited access to training for women, and very limited access to information especially on access to wider discussions of new ideas and prospective political opportunities (Pingua, 2014). Additionally, most pastoralist women are married at a young age, in their early teens.

Harmful cultural traditional practices such as polygamy, wife sharing, female genital mutilation (FGM) and the payment of a 'bride price' encourage people in pastoralist communities to view women as property (Pingua, 2014). The cultural practices in the pastoralist communities help in enforcing these rules and taboos. So, there are many negative stereotypes that women confront in everyday life that must be considered before we look at leadership roles that women may aspire to, such as political office.

Fortunately, women's literacy rates have significantly increased as a result of positive government policies and strategies (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organizations (UNESCO, 2012). However, despite progress in education as a whole, gender disparity remains a challenge as 16 per cent of women in Kenya still lack basic literacy skills, compared with 9 per cent of men (UNESCO, 2012). The failure to promote and retain girls in primary and secondary education is probably one factor negatively affecting the slow progress in women's literacy (UNESCO, 2012). In Wajir County, the literacy level is 23.6 per cent for adults. There are 203 primary schools with a total enrolment of 59,065 pupils of which 35,928 are boys and 23,137 are girls (Wajir County, 2018). The primary school retention and transition rates are about a half. There are 34 secondary schools with 5,122 boys against 2,073 girls (Wajir County, 2018).

Socio-economic and cultural factors such as early marriage and polygamy affect education, especially for girls. Early marriage and polygamy among pastoralist communities lead to high illiteracy levels among women because many girls are forced out of school to get married. This is one of the causes of the low enrolment of girls in Wajir county, 39 per cent at primary level with 50 per cent transition to higher levels (Wajir County, 2018). As noted by Sahu and Yadav (2018), education is a predictor of political participation. Therefore, pastoralist women's engagement in politics is negatively affected by their high levels of illiteracy. The direct effects of lack of education among women in political engagement include poor acquisition of the knowledge and communication skills useful for public debate and a lack of direct training in political analysis through courses with current political events content (Sahu & Yadav 2018). With limited access to education, most women in pastoralist communities, such as

Wajir County, have little knowledge and insufficient communication skills for effective participation in competitive politics. This explains the low number of women seeking political leadership in Wajir County and other pastoralist regions in Kenya. This study seeks to establish the communication dynamics, as affected by culture and religion, which may affect women's leadership in politics.

2.2.1 Communication and Politics

For a politician to convince people to vote for them, they have to be persuasive because success in politics demands that politicians lobby people through persuasive communication. Theoharis (2008) argued that the concept of persuasive communication has been an active area of research, mainly for businesspeople, with a focus on better customer relations and persuasion. However, the study of persuasion is also of extreme importance when studying political communication (Theoharis, 2008).

Politicians need to master the art of getting their points across and defining and framing their messages. It is also important in making the messages relevant to policy makers and the electorate, in pursuing the transformation of their ideas into legislation and overseeing their implementation. Some describe this process as persuasion, others prefer to call it 'lobbying'.

Within the European Union (EU), lobbying is defined as "activities carried out with the objective of influencing the policy formulation and decision-making processes of the European institutions" (European Parliament, 2008). It can therefore be said that political proponents who try to communicate effectively to voters are essentially engaging in lobbying. Whether it is persuasion or lobbying, the essence remains the same. In politics,

it is always important that politicians lobby their fellow politicians and voters to support them. Without effective persuasion and lobbying, a politician is deemed a failure (McGrath, 2007). This is a general understanding of many people, including myself.

Politics is essentially concerned with power and authority; that is, how to obtain and appropriate power, how to make decisions and control resources within a jurisdiction, and how to control and manipulate the perceptions, behaviour and values of those who are governed, among other things. In order to do all these, politicians rely on one key resource—communication—using specific language, texts, or signs. This means that politics is inherently dependent on communication, hence the notion that “language is an instrument of power” (Hay, 2002). We can therefore conclude that complex relationships between the governed and those who govern them are enacted and mediated through language and through communication.

Although persuasion has been defined variously, according to communication scholars it is defined as a communication process in which the communicator seeks to elicit a desired response from the receiver. Perloff (2002) has several definitions which include i) a conscious attempt by one individual to change the attitudes, beliefs, or behaviour of another individual or group of individuals through the transmission of some message, and ii) a successful intentional effort at influencing another’s mental state through communication in a circumstance in which the persuadee has some measure of freedom. He also says that persuasion is a symbolic process in which communicators try to convince other people to change their attitudes or behaviour regarding an issue through the transmission of a message, in an atmosphere of free choice.

Looking more closely at persuasion, the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) developed by Petty and Cacioppo and quoted in Petty (1986), is the main theoretical framework discussed in the persuasion literature. It is a dual process theory that describes the change of attitudes. The basic premise of the model is that there are two persuasion routes—the central and the peripheral one—and it aims to explain the different ways of processing stimuli and their use as well as outcomes on attitude change. In the central route of persuasion, the recipient is perceived as being able and motivated to listen closely and elaborate on the arguments of the message. If the arguments used have merit and make sense, they will persuade, otherwise they will not (Crano & Prislin, 2006).

In the peripheral route of persuasion, the recipient does not elaborate much on the content of the message. The recipient is rather influenced by superficial cues or heuristics—e.g. the number of sources cited, the appearance of the source, the length of the message and the number of arguments etc. (Brehm *et al.*, 2009). These two routes focus essentially on the cognitive and affective processes within the recipient of the message, and both are important aspects of effective communication. The communicator's 'choice' of the route to use depends on the recipient's abilities and motivation to receive the message, the characteristics of the source and the message itself (in terms of both content and style). For instance, if a communicator is eloquent and speaks clearly or if the message is of importance to the recipient, the 'strenuous' (in cognitive terms) central route of persuasion is chosen (Brehm *et al.*, 2009). If the source of the message speaks too fast, if the message is unimportant or unrelated to the recipient, then the less 'strenuous' peripheral route is the one dictating whether the message becomes persuasive (Brehm *et al.*, 2009).

For my study, we have to take into consideration that the electorate in Wajir county, not used to women politicians, suddenly had to deal with them in the 2013 elections. The women politicians themselves had to persuade the voters of their suitability for leadership. This study therefore captures the issues that arose for the women politicians and whether there was a difference in the way the ordinary voter evaluated male and female politicians. This is also important to take into consideration because the community is used to the culturally well-known language used by men in their campaigns. I therefore found that it would be interesting to find out to what extent they listen to women's persuasive arguments vis-à-vis their heuristic value.

In clarifying the characteristics of a persuasive politician, perhaps the two most important attributes determining whether a communicator is persuasive or not are credibility and likeability. A communicator is viewed as being credible when they are considered to be competent to deliver valid information on a topic and when they are trustworthy, honest and presenting a balanced argument (Brehm *et al.*, 2009). The Wajir community, in which this study is situated, were not familiar with women politicians as not many women had vied for political office until the 2013 elections. This was due to the introduction of the position of Women Representative and the one-third minimum quota in the county assembly, in accordance with the new Kenya Constitution 2010 under which the elections were being held. The community, having previously been used only to male politicians, would be obliged to judge on the two above-mentioned criteria of credibility and likeability in regard to the women also. This presented a greater challenge for the women candidates, as they did not have such easy access to public forums as their male counterparts and were often portrayed as inferior to men in the public debates.

Likeability is influenced by a source's similarity to the recipient in beliefs and values and by physical attractiveness, including vocal pleasantness and facial expressiveness (Olson & Zanna, 2003). A communicator who appears to be compliant and yields some points to a discussion is more persuasive than one who acts dogmatically (Cialdini *et al.*, 2002). Communicators are usually particularly persuasive when they appear to argue against their own interests and when they act as if they are not actually trying to change the recipient's opinion (Brehm *et al.*, 2009). This aspect would be measured against the women politicians as they were really trying to change the voter's opinion of women's leadership. The culture and religion of the Wajir community emphasise that women should not be leaders and therefore their credibility and likeability would be in question. These challenges are elaborated further in the findings of this study in later chapters.

Research has also indicated that there are very few noticeable differences between a message's substance and style (Sparks & Areni, 2008), but this applies only in relation to the recipient's perception. Arguments that are well-structured, coherent and make sense are more persuasive than messages which are irrational and unfounded (Crano & Prislin, 2006). A well-established feature of message content that affects its validity and hence its persuasion is the originality and novelty of the presented information. According to the informativeness principle, recipients expect the source to have something new to say when it wants to communicate with them (Olson & Zanna, 2003). The importance of an argument's timing depends on the expectations that recipients have about where important information should be placed in the communication (Igou & Bless, 2007). In this study, I look at the above statements to assess how communication from women

politicians is perceived, whether it is found to be coherent and persuasive or acceptable to the community at large.

More relevant than the persuasion that women leaders had to deploy in their campaigns was the lobbying aspect for the campaign managers, especially for the men who were supporting the women leaders in their quest for political leadership. Most proponents of lobbying agree that it is a long-term process that must be characterized by tactical and strategic goals.

To elaborate further, Mack (2005) adds that the three “core elements” of effective lobbying campaigns are intelligence, strategy and implementation. Gormley (2007) further identified the role of sound organization, adequate financial resources and persistence. But perhaps the most important aspect of lobbying is a thorough knowledge and understanding of the prevailing political culture and dynamics of decision-making (Harris & McGrath, 2012). The current political culture differs drastically from that of just two decades ago, with the advent of globalization and the emergence of sustainable development as a viable concept in the political agenda. According to Harris & McGrath (2012), one of the most important changes that characterize today’s political reality is that politicians are more susceptible to public opinion and do not so much shape it, as follow it. Therefore, effective communication by politicians must be supplemented with corresponding action to make public opinion favourable towards one’s cause.

The literature on lobbying specifies certain characteristics that lobbyists should possess if they are to build a good reputation and eventually be persuasive. Two of the most important attributes of lobbyists must be honesty and credibility (Harris & McGrath,

2012). Women lawmakers are often perceived as more honest, credible and more responsive than their male counterparts, qualities that encourage confidence in democratic and representative institutions (Schwindt-Bayer & Mishler, 2005). Further, lobbyists should present both sides of the argument, not merely their own side, but appear to be as objective as possible (Harris & McGrath, 2012). This study looks at women and how they communicate in relation to these lobbying characteristics. Seeking public office requires lots of convincing of ambivalent voters and lobbying therefore plays an important role in on-boarding such wavering voters.

Hay (2002) noted that followers affect the leader's style, qualities, beliefs and motivations through effective communication. This implies that there is no followership without communication, and without followership, there is no political leadership. Moreover, political activities involve communicative events and encounters where the politicians use languages or texts contextualized in such communicative events such as cabinet meetings, parliamentary sessions, election campaigns, rallies, interviews with the media, bureaucratic practices, protest demonstrations, and so on.

Historically, women in Kenya have been marginalized in terms of political representation due to factors such as patriarchal culture and religion, which favours men more than women. This has gone hand in hand with political language discourses and representations that have led to the political discrimination of women in arid and semi-arid regions like Wajir County. The daily life of women has been made much harder by the existing hostile cultural, religious, and geographical environment. In this context, the place of women aspiring to become politicians becomes complex and is heavily dictated by highly gendered values and norms in action, as well as communication.

In addition, Islam, considered patriarchal and practised by most people in the county, has also been hijacked to support men. Among Muslims, it is considered undesirable for women to speak in public. Regulations surrounding mosque attendance also exacerbate discrimination against women since women do not usually perform their prayers in the mosque but are expected to pray at home. Such religious practices deny women the public spaces to meet so as to communicate freely and advocate for political positions. Consequently, the involvement of women in politics is limited as they cannot freely mingle in public meetings. As a result, they have limited right to voice their concern or express their views, opinions, wishes and desires to the general populace who attend such forums.

Cultural practices also portray women as lesser beings whose place is in bearing children and taking care of the man and the elderly. This is normally communicated by the use of

utterances aimed at diminishing the value of women in society as political leaders. Pavlenko and Blackledge (2003) argued that utterances and culture are so intertwined that the utterances can be conceptualized as ‘culture soaked’, incorporating different concepts and usage, even though culture and language are not reducible to each other.

Moreover, cultural practices confine women to household duties and do not allow them to join or contribute to decision making (Bayeh, 2016). As is reiterated by a woman aspirant in Wajir County during the 2013 general election, cited in the FIDA Kenya (2013) gender audit, people in Wajir County kept on questioning the woman’s political aspirations to explain her objective in the political race. People told the female political aspirant to stop campaigning and focus on staying with her family, implying the woman’s place was in the house. They further told the aspirant that, as a Muslim, she was showing disrespect to men by participating in politics (FIDA Kenya, 2013), thereby making it seem the wrong thing to do for a woman.

Another context is that of mass communication, which targets large audiences. Mass media refers to the channels, or delivery modes, for mass messages. Mass media include newspapers, television, radios, and so forth. Mass communication refers to communication to a large audience via these channels of communication. The mass communication context, therefore, encompasses the channel and the audience. The disciplines of advertising, media studies and journalism, among others, fall under mass communication. The women politicians would also use these media to disseminate their campaign pledges to persuade the electorate to vote for them.

2.2.2 Communication and Religion

Religion is a major influence on the lives of Somalis and impacts their culture and public and private life and it is evident that there is no separation between religion and cultural issues. Wajir County, with a predominantly Somali population, is very influenced by Islam and the Somali culture is deeply intertwined with religion. People’s belief in religion is extremely important; — religious belief manifests itself externally and is able to affect an individual’s communication (Buddenbaum, 2008). A study by Schultze

(2005), *The God Problem*, argues that a Supreme Being communicates with and affects the actions of human beings. This makes establishing a set of communication laws increasingly difficult because it is nearly impossible to measure the will of God. Schultze (2005) admitted communication scientists often ignore this problem by pigeon-holing religious people as “pre-modern, irrational, artefacts to study rather than legitimate sites of human-God communication.” Schultze continued to consider the challenges of interpreting communication from a divine being within current communication models. This study indicated that there is an important relationship between religion and communication.

Religiosity is usually tied to doctrinal or dogmatic beliefs. Those with high religiosity attend regular services at an organized religious institution and participate in ritualized ceremonies associated with their particular religious community. Hill *et al.* (2000) defined spirituality as a search for an *Ultimate Truth* or an *Ultimate Reality*. Religion, as Hill describes it, is the same search for truth but with an added dimension of rituals or beliefs that are used as means and categorized by specific religious groups. The study also ponders the idea that religion could also have non-spiritual dimensions such as ethnic identity or belongingness. For instance, Muslims pray five times a day, and the men do so in congregation at the mosques. This daily interaction allows communication flow and discussion but only for the men, as women do not attend the mosques for daily prayers. They mainly pray at home. For the women leaders in Wajir county, this religious, yet potentially political, ‘space’ was therefore unavailable to them to interact with potential voters.

Religion affects communication. To express the effect of religion on communication, the Social Cognitive Theory of mass communication explains how symbols are perceived in the media. In the Social Cognitive Theory of Mass Communication, Bandura (2001) asserts that people often use symbols to process and understand experiences that require judgment and action. These symbols often come in the form of media messages from a variety of sources. Media then has the ability to stand in for traditional communication messages normally reserved for social actors such as family, friends, and other human beings. This idea serves as a very preliminary entrance for religion into communication. Religion is a symbol that people use to understand the world around them (Bellah, 2000). Therefore, a religious symbol can be a powerful force in communication. Religious symbols can manifest in many forms. Sometimes a sacred text or story is used as a guiding symbol for understanding difficult concepts. At other times, the religious belief system as a whole is a symbolic model through which people lead their lives.

Religious belief can also serve as a social group similar to race, ethnicity, or gender. The favourable response of peripherally processed messages is enhanced if the message is congruent with the receiver's personal beliefs (Chang, 2002). Here the perceptions of the message receiver colour how he or she views the message. A number of studies have shown that membership in a particular ethnic, racial, age, gender and class group can determine perceptions of credibility of news about a specific group (Beaudoin & Thorson, 2005). Religious belief or religious group affiliation can also then serve as a powerful collective from which people draw cultural judgments. Beaudoin and Thorson (2005), for example, demonstrated that African Americans viewed news about other

African Americans as less credible than did people from other racial groups. In turn, whites perceived a significantly different credibility level of news about other whites than did non-whites who viewed the same messages. In this study, race was determined to be a better indicator of news credibility than message content. This is important to note in the context of this research because it shows how group differences can impact and change perceptions. While Beaudoin and Thorson's research focuses on race as a defining group, this research proposed using gender as the determining characteristic for supporting political ideas or ambitions.

Islam, which a large percentage of the population in Wajir county subscribe to, tends to marginalise women as are not given the religious leeway to address public gatherings, especially where men are in attendance. Religious beliefs discourage women leadership, and the culture uses language that portrays women as weak and not worthy of leading. Consequently, very few women in Wajir county are involved in political leadership. Their male counterparts take almost all the political positions, yet gender equality is a basic human right in the Constitution and closing the gender gap is key to achieving many development goals.

The Somali community in Wajir, whose culture is tied very closely to the Islamic faith, emphasise that Somali women should submit to men and fulfil their duties as daughters, wives, and mothers. Women generally do not socialize with men in public places. Women in these pastoralist clans are responsible for caring for children, cooking, and moving the family home, as many practise a pastoralist lifestyle, moving from place to place, seeking pasture for their livestock.

Based on religious beliefs, women cannot freely communicate their political agenda with others in the community. Information from women is not given any priority by men. Women are not expected to have any representative opinion and hence cannot communicate in politics and receive an audience. Due to this, political leadership is difficult for the women to achieve. Women are also often denied the same education in learning and the teaching of religious knowledge that is available to men. In Islam, women cannot lead in prayers or speak at the pulpits of mosques.

2.2.3 Communication and Gender

Communication is considered as a major factor in politics. As rightly opined by Yang and Stone (2003), communication is vital in conveying political messages and luring the masses into voting for a particular selected candidate. According to the participants of the study, involvement in politics is largely a component of communication: how well you convince the electorate, the modes of communication you use, the language you use, the contexts of your communication, both physically and socially, and finally communication relative to other competitors or other leaders in the society. However, it also matters what words and phrases are used to communicate messages.

Looking at words and phrases, Smith (1985), in a study of 517 words revealed: “masculine words outnumbered feminine words by a ratio of 3:1”. Words that were both masculine and prestigious were six times more common than those that denoted feminine prestige. “Feminine words with negative connotations outnumbered negative masculine words by about 20 per cent in spite of the predominance of masculine words overall” (Smith, 1985, pp. 37-38). There are also substantially more words in the English

language that describe the sexual promiscuity of a female compared with a male (Kramarae, 1981, p.43) and Spender (1980) points out that there are no male equivalents to “chatter, natter, prattle, nag, bitch, whine, and, of course, gossip” (p.107). These words are reserved for women only

Therefore, phrases used have largely been created by men within the confines of a patriarchal society. On the surface, this may not seem like much of a problem. Society has moved forward just fine with the words we do have. But, as Kramarae (1981) explained, when the women’s movement began there was not even a word to explain what they were rallying against; “The word ‘sexism’ didn’t even exist. They were trying to solve a problem with no name,” (p.1)

It can be challenging to see how vocabulary is lacking. It is not easy to recognize instances where we may need the addition of new words. A good example of this, however, is the idea of “motherhood”. Spender (1980) stated that this word is an excellent example of how the vocabulary in our language does not always capture the whole female experience. “Motherhood”, as far as language goes, “represents something beautiful that leaves women consumed and replete with joy.” (Spender, 1980, p.54)

For those women for whom motherhood may have represented neither joy nor beauty, a substantial problem arises. There is no reference point for their experience, no way of making it seem real, with the result that they can be left feeling extremely inadequate, convinced that there is something wrong with themselves, because their meanings do not mesh with the accepted ones. This in itself can place even more pressure on them to be

silent. They are not willing to advertise their own ‘neurosis’, and risk being labelled ‘unnatural’. (Spender, 1980).

Masculine bias in the English language is not confined to word meanings alone. It is built into the very structure of the language and supports the “male-as-norm” paradigm. There are a number of overtly masculine words that are sometimes used in a generic sense, including “bachelor’s degree, brotherhood, fellow man, mankind, master, spokesman, and workmanlike. Feminine generics do not occur” (Smith, 1985 p.47). Smith explains:

If a woman is swept off of a ship into the water, the cry is ‘Man overboard!’ If she is killed by a hit-and-run driver, the charge is ‘manslaughter’! If she is injured on the job, the coverage is ‘workman’s compensation’! But if she arrives at a threshold marked ‘Men Only’, she knows the admonition is not intended to bar animals or plants or inanimate objects. It is meant for her. (Smith, 1985, p.49)

Spender (1980) asserted that gendered language is one of the ways that men “intimidate and belittle” women into silence, and this assertion can all too easily be supported. Textbooks given to school children have historically told the stories of males and they present a world in which everything important that has ever happened has been primarily because men have done it. “Women have ‘made’ just as much ‘history’ as men but it has not been codified and transmitted.”

Word order and word pairings are another common way in which the female experience is excluded from language. Commonly, when men and women are referred to together, the male is referred to first. Examples of this include: “male and female, husband and wife, son and daughter, brother and sister, host and hostess, king and queen, Adam and

Eve” (Smith, 1985, p.47). Politics is essentially concerned with power and authority; how to obtain and appropriate it; how to make decisions and control resources within a jurisdiction; how to control and manipulate the perceptions, behaviour and values of those who are governed. In order to do all these, politicians rely on one key resource—communication—using specific language, texts or signs. This means that politics is inherently dependent on language, hence the notion that “language is (an instrument of) power” (Hay 2002). Complex relationships between the governed and those who govern them are enacted and mediated through language.

Moreover, political activities involve communicative events and encounters where the politicians use language or texts contextualized in such communicative events such as cabinet meetings, parliamentary sessions, election campaigns, rallies, interviews with the media, bureaucratic practices, and protest demonstrations. This study focuses on the communication of politicians with the electorate as they contest for positions of leadership. It examines the implications and perceptions developed from the communication used by politicians in rallies, election campaigns and interviews in the media.

2.3 Review of Relevant Theories

In this section, I review Egalitarianism and Muted Group Theory. I concluded that these two theories were most relevant to this study because they provide the basic criteria against which women politician’s performance in elective politics can be judged. In the following subsections, I discuss these two theories in detail and provide a justification for their inclusion in this study

2.3.1 Egalitarianism

This egalitarian concept was developed in the 1970s by a movement considering themselves “biblical feminism”. It was later described as “egalitarianism” owing to its emphasis on the full equality of men and women, while maintaining a professed commitment to scriptural inspiration and authority.

Egalitarianism is also described as a trend of thought in political philosophy. It favours treating people as equals, relating as equals, or enjoying an equality of social status of some sort. Egalitarian doctrines rest on the premise that all humans are equal in fundamental worth or moral status. In so far as the Western European and Anglo-American philosophical tradition is concerned, one significant source of this thought is the Christian notion that God loves all human souls equally. Democratic equality embraces the norm that lawmakers and top public officials should be selected in democratic elections. All mentally competent adult citizens should be eligible to vote and run for office in free elections that operate against a backdrop of freedom of speech and association and in which all votes count equally, and majority rule prevails. All citizens should have the same wide rights to freedom of speech, assembly, association, and religious practice. Criminal justice rules should be applied even-handedly and should embody the procedural values of the rule of law (Cohen, 1989a; Walzer, 1983; Christiano, 1996 & 2008; Estlund, 1999; Rawls, 2005).

Another viewpoint is that of relational equality. Relational equality ideals are often coupled with the ideal of equal democratic citizenship. According to this view, in an egalitarian society, all permanent adult members of society are equal citizens, equal in

political rights and duties, including the right to an equal vote in democratic elections that determine who shall be top public officials and lawmakers responsible for enacting laws and public policies enforced on all. An ideal of social equality complements political equality norms. The idea is that citizens might be unequal in wealth, resources, welfare, and other dimensions of their condition, yet be equal in status in a way that enables all to relate as equals. In this approach, an egalitarian society contrasts sharply with a society of caste or class hierarchy, in which the public culture singles out some as inferior and some as superior, and contrasts also with a society with a dictatorial or authoritarian political system, accompanied by socially required kowtowing of ordinary members of society toward political elites (Walzer, 1983; Rawls 2005).

Another proponent of this philosophy, Gordon (2008), postulated that egalitarianism takes the position that equality is central to justice. Individuals should be equal to achieve justice. However, the standpoint for feminists is that society should be moving toward the goal of “a structure of social relations in which the division of labor... is unaffected by gender” (Brighouse, 2008, p. 360). According to him, “unaffected by gender” is defined as a situation in which no specific activities are thought of as men’s work or women’s work, nor are any activities seen as more appropriate for men or for women. Brighouse (2008) also proposes that egalitarianism promotes a strong view of gender equality that not only advocates for a world in which men and women should have equal rights or even equal opportunities for jobs and power but a world without a socially constructed gendered division of labour. It is this view of egalitarianism that forms the basis for this research and supports the underlying assumption that strong gender egalitarianism should

result in all people, male and female, flourishing in politics or positions of leadership, even if there is no support for that status in currently existing conditions.

The main religion of the community being studied for this research is Islam. Islamic teaching, in relation to the gender issue, sees the position of women as equal to men in the aspects which are not related to their nature (God's will) because the best humans in the sight of Allah are those who best devote, whether men or women. The original Islamic message on egalitarianism, as proclaimed by the Qur'an asserts the equality of all by stating: "O Mankind! We have created you male and female and have made you nations and tribes that ye may know one another. Lo! The noblest of you, in the sight of Allah, is the best in conduct," (Quran, 49:13). Distinction and privileges based on social, economic, or tribal rank or race are thus repudiated, not only by the Quran but also by the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), in his celebrated sermon of the 'Farewell Pilgrimage'. All men are therein declared to be equal children of Adam, and the only distinction recognized in the sight of God is to be based on piety and good acts. Kia (2019) reiterates that "men and women are completely equal in Islam. In some cases, men have more ability, but greater responsibilities. If we adjust for these responsibilities, we can see both have the same qualities and superiority in Islam. Men are physically stronger than women but must also protect women in affairs where strength is important. Women have greater endurance, sensitivity and patience than men, but also higher responsibilities when these characteristics are required."

With the establishment of the Arab-Muslim Empire, however, this egalitarian notion, as well as other ideals, such as social justice and social service (the alleviation of suffering and helping the needy), which constituted an integral part of Islamic teaching slowly

receded into the background. The explanation given for this change generally centres on the fact that the main concern of the ruling authorities became the consolidation of their own power and the administration of the state rather than upholding and implementing those Islamic ideals nurtured by the Qur'an and the Prophet. The original egalitarianism of early Islam was not only diluted but also tamed to conform to the prevailing hierarchical social ideas of older cultures in the conquered territories (Marlow, 1997).

This study therefore assumes that women are equal and that the goal is equality between the sexes. As such, the guiding philosophy for the study is egalitarianism which will be looked at from various perspectives, including religion and culture. However, in promoting gender equality, one aspect that Muslim feminists focus on is the inequality that exists between men and women in the social structure—an inequality not rooted in original religious teachings but in a masculine-biased viewpoint which has, over time, become incorporated into the standard teachings of Islam.

Additionally, like similar feminist rhetorical research, this study will assume that the rhetorical obstacles to getting involved in politics are gender-linked, arising from a woman's disempowered position in society and that a central element in the oppression of women is the denial of their right to speak (Dow, 1995) and the erection of communication barriers. In the next section, I look at the silencing of women through the Muted Group Theory.

2.3.2 Muted Group Theory

Muted Group Theory (MGT) is a critical theory concerning certain groups of people who remain powerless compared to others. Edwin and Shirley Ardener, who were

anthropologists, first invented Muted Group Theory (MGT) in 1975. In his short essay outlining the theory titled “Belief and the Problem of Women”, Edwin Ardener outlines what he sees as the ‘problem’; the voices of women, and other unheard groups, have been ignored and muted. The Ardeners, being cultural anthropologists (people who study societies and cultures), argued that anthropologists and sociologists have under-examined women’s experiences when studying societies and cultures. They also suggested that ethnographers have historically privileged men’s views which has led to a silencing of women’s histories and viewpoints. The reason behind this silencing of women’s views is explained as follows: the male point of view has consistently been seen as the ‘norm’ and consistently used as the authoritative account of history. MGT explains the cause of muteness by a certain group of population; mostly that of women in the society. It highlights the gender perspective where the male is the dominant class and the woman has to live with the consequence of her opinions remaining muted when spoken and, so she mostly chooses to adapt to the situation.

Cheris Kramarae, a professor in women studies, brought MGT to feminist communication studies in the 1980s, arguing that language is ‘culture bound’. She upheld the idea that communication was started by men and, due to this, they take advantage of women because the “words and norms for their use have been formulated by the dominant group, men”. Therefore, women “cannot as easily or as directly articulate their experiences” due to the fact that the words have been created by a population who has never actually been female (p. 1). While speaking, women are considered less powerful than men and the reason behind this is simple psychology—women’s needs are emotionally driven, unlike men, and therefore the perspective of women differs from men

in all aspects. In other words, language isn't neutral, it has been made by a culture that has been historically masculine and favoured masculine views. Because language has been mainly used by privileged groups, its structure tends to best suit their needs and they find it easier to use the language.

The language of a particular culture does not serve all its speakers equally, for not all speakers contribute in an equal fashion to its formulation. Women (and members of other subordinate groups) are not as free or as able as men are to say what they wish, when and where they wish, because the words and the norms for their use have been formulated by the dominant group, men. (Kramarae, 1981, p.1)

Muted Group Theory specifically examines western culture and the English language as it is used in England and the United States. Historically, Kramarae (1981) argued, men have been the "dominant group" in western civilization and, therefore, are responsible for the creation of the English language. Kramarae (1981) stated that this has had a "muting" effect on women.

Muted Group Theory deals primarily with "language." Language entails the words, their pronunciation, and the methods of combining them, as used and understood by a community (Merriam-Webster dictionary, 2012). Spender (1980) on the other hand defined language as our means of classifying and ordering our world: our means of manipulating reality. In its structure and in its use, we bring our world into realization.

Spender (1980) argued that if the language structure of a community "is inherently inaccurate, then we are misled. If the rules which underlie our language system, our symbolic order, are invalid, then we are daily deceived" (p. 3). "Deceit" is a strong term,

but it underscores the importance of language and the fact that its use has real-world consequences. When we speak or write, we are not using “just words”, but powerful symbols that shape and define the very world in which we live.

Kramarae (1981) states that Muted Group Theory proponents support the concept that a language reflects a world view and that, over time, “a dominant group may generate a communication system that supports its conception of the world and then call it the language of the society, while at the same time subjugating others to experiences that are not reflected in that language” p.3. Scientific research has revealed that women have been largely excluded from creating language. In fact, for more than one hundred years etiquette books have explicitly told women to avoid creating new words because “slang is unladylike” p.33.

Muted Group Theory has been used as a framework for examining language and communication for more than 30 years. There are three basic assumptions that are the foundation for the theory: a) women and men perceive the world differently; b) men are politically dominant and their ideas are considered “normal”; and c) women need to conform to the male “norm” if they are to be heard (Foss *et al*, 2004, p.21). MGT has also been found useful for understanding communication dynamics between men and women. Although Kramarae focuses on women's muted voices, she also opens the door to the application of Muted Group Theory to issues beyond gender differences.

In Muted Group Theory, the term “muted” does not always mean “silent”: it might result in silence but, in the larger sense, it simply refers to whether women are able to say all they would wish to say, where and when they wish to say it (Wall & Gannon-Leary,

1999). Research has been carried out by several scholars on how the "muting" process occurs. West and Turner (2010) found four methods that can cause the muting (ridicule, ritual, control and harassment) and central to these silencing methods is how female activities are trivialized through language and speech. Kramarae says that women are silenced by ridiculing women's related lexicon, trivializing their opinions, ideas, and concerns, and censoring women's voices.

Griffin (2011) points out that the discrepancies in power result in the "oppressor" and "the oppressed". According to Kramarae, the muted group as "the oppressed" are people who don't have a "public recognized vocabulary" to express their experience and the failure to articulate their ideas leads them to doubt "the validity of their experience" and "the legitimacy of their feelings". Kramarae also addresses gender, race, and class hierarchies, where muted groups, are supported by our "political, educational, religious, legal, and media systems" and due to the lack of power, muted groups are usually at the margin of the society.

My study's focus is on how the mode of communication and language used in Wajir County, which is male dominated, affects women's free communication in politics. The populace in Wajir county is mostly Muslim, which discriminates against women by propagating practices and teachings that encourage women not to speak where men are present. They are not expected to articulate anything to the general public. This in turn has the direct effect of creating a population of women who are muted, according to Kramarae's (1981) definition. She argues that since women are unable to express their structurally generated views in the dominant masculine discourse, they are neither

understood nor heeded, becoming inarticulate, 'muted', or silent. Even if they talk a lot, they may not express their own different social reality (Wall & Gannon-Leary, 1999).

Of an opposing view, Tannen (2005), a theorist who is critical of feminist scholars like Kramarae, points out that there is an assumption that men are trying to control women. Acknowledging that differences in male and female communication styles sometimes lead to imbalances of power, Tannen is willing to assume that the problems are caused primarily by men and women's different styles. Tannen (2005) also warns readers that "bad feelings and imputation of bad motives or bad character can come about when there was no intention to dominate, to wield power." Kramarae disagrees with Tannen's opinion and believes "men belittle and ignore women whenever they speak out against being muted." She also pointed out that "our political, educational, religious, legal, and media systems support gender, race, and class hierarchies". Both theorists believe muting is involved, but they see it from different standpoints.

In this study, therefore, I aim to establish if these muting methods are present in Wajir county in regard to women seeking political leadership. When referring to ritual, researchers found that women's voices can also be censored by social rituals which advocate for the subordination of women. From the literature reviewed, I note that MGT is not only about gender but also about power dynamics, relationships, and situations that are responsible for muting voices. Fully understanding the processes of dominance and muting requires a wider analysis of the context, including the political, which is the case in my study.

2.4 Political Leadership of Women

The complexity of the position of women in the African political structure and the struggle for representation and improving the current position of women in the world remains high on the political and development agenda (Enaifoghe, 2019). Gender equality features prominently in the new global goals (Africa Studies Center, 2016). During the fourth World Conference on Women (held in Beijing, China), delegates called for an international effort for countries to have at least 30 per cent female representation in national governments (Enaifoghe, 2018). Since then, many countries have indeed increased the presence of women in governments, and the largest increases have been seen in sub-Saharan African countries (Enaifoghe, 2018).

In recent years, women's participation in politics and decision-making in Africa has received significant attention (Ndlovu & Mutale, 2013). Confirmatory developments in African governance, which have been eased by the ever-increasing consolidation of democracy in the continent, have led to an increase in women's participation in politics. These changes have improved the potential for increasing women's entrance to political power (Ndlovu & Mutale, 2013). Changes taking place in the African region have provided an opportunity for more women to assume positions of leadership.

Women's participation in politics is important for improved governance in Africa. Ballington (2008) notes that:

The attainment of gender equality and the full participation of women in decision making are key indicators of democracy. The involvement of women in all aspects of political

life produces more equitable societies and delivers a stronger and more representative democracy (p. 5).

Rwanda has been ranked first globally as it has more than fifty per cent of women in its elected public offices (Ndlovu & Mutale, 2013; Enaifoghe, 2018). This is after Rwanda's ratification of a new Constitution that women occupy at least 30 per cent of parliamentary seats, which resulted in a lower house of parliament that had 48.8 per cent female representation in the 2003 parliamentary election. In 2014, Rwanda's female representation in parliament reached 63.8 per cent, more than double the 30 per cent recommended in the constitution (Enaifoghe, 2018). No one could have foreseen that Rwanda's female representation would exceed the 30 per cent as provided in the constitution (Inter-parliamentary Union, 2014). The Rwandan experience has proven to be a landmark for all democracy, not just in Africa (Enaifoghe, 2019).

Other African countries such as Senegal, South Africa, Mozambique, Uganda and Angola have also been highly ranked for their level of women's representation in parliament. Notable improvements have also been celebrated in some Arab countries that have been traditionally associated with low rates of women's participation in politics (Enaifoghe, 2019). The Inter-Parliamentary Union (2013) revealed that "with 31.6 per cent women MPs, Algeria is now the first and only Arab country to have more than 30 per cent women holding parliamentary seats." The Algerian case is a good example of showing the emerging trends in women's political participation. Another major milestone in women representation in the political leadership in Africa was the 2005 election of Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf as President of Liberia (Enaifoghe, 2018).

In Kenya, although the population of women and men is almost equally matched at all levels, political representation is heavily skewed in favour of men (Mwatha, Mbugua & Murunga, 2013). The most recent Kenyan census in 2019, which is the same as it was in 2013, indicate that women comprise over 50 percent of the Kenyan population although this demographic reality is not reflected in the participation of women in the electoral process. Mohamud (2018) avers that “the reasons behind this disparity have complex historical and cultural elements, which were never given due focus in building the nation.”She adds that:

Kenya is a largely patriarchal society, which has contributed to women’s subjugation in both the private and public spheres. Women have historically taken a secondary position to men, and this tradition is manifested in the practices, policies, and laws of the country. In the past, women have faced several challenges, and the exclusion of women from electoral and political processes is no exception. Despite the constitutional provisions outlawing discrimination on the basis of gender, women continue to suffer setbacks whenever they seek not only elective, but also appointive, positions in Kenya. It is evident that, if we are to achieve equality and equity between men and women and enable women to realize their full potential, women must be fully involved in political life...women make up 52 percent of the population, but women’s representation in political life has yet to reach any meaningful ratio vis-a-vis their proportion of the nation.

While some countries in Africa have met the ideal 33percent mass threshold of women’s representation in decision making, with a country like Rwanda going further and currently, at 64 percent, being the country with the highest female representation of any nation on earth. Kenya still lags behind at less than 25 per cent and, in fact, has been

overtaken by all countries in the East African region on all measures of gender equality indices. Lack of an affirmative action law and a gender insensitive male political culture are two of the factors that have kept the number of women in politics low (Kamau, 2010). Ironically, Kenyan women have actively championed discourse and strategies supporting women's rights and gender equality by, for instance, by hosting the 3rd World Conference of Women in Nairobi in 1985, but sadly, this pioneer spirit has failed in achieving effective political participation or the taking up of leadership positions in Kenya (Kamau, 2010).

Kivoi (2014) traces the advent of exemption of women in active politics in Kenya to 1952 when the Maendeleo Ya Wanawake Organization (MYWO) was formed by white women settlers. The organization promoted capacity building programs designed to empower women economically but never ventured into empowering women to actively engage in politics. As a result, women held politics at arm's length "partly because MYWO did not play its role well and partly because of the oppressive culture which made them believe that politics and leadership is for men only. In the 1990s, the Kenya National Union (KANU) recognized the power of the MYWO, only for it to take advantage and use it to mobilize women to vote for KANU's candidates.

In March 2013, only 16 out of 290 constituencies and only 88 out 1450 wards in the 47 counties were represented by women, and no woman was elected senator or governor in any of the 47 County governments in Kenya. Without the active participation of women and the incorporation of women's perspective at all levels of decision making, development and peace cannot be achieved (Kassa, 2015, citing Seyedah *et al*, 2010). In fact, without greater representation of women in parliamentary and executive positions as

well as in the judiciary, it is difficult to achieve participatory, accountable and transparent governance which can ensure political, cultural, social and economic priority goals of the wider society.

Women's activism in Kenya heightened in the 1990s with the formation of women's movements such as the Muslim Consultative Council Sisters Network and the Widows and Orphans Welfare Society of Kenya. Until then, women had focused on social development issues, which were mostly pursued in politically neutral language (Domingo *et al.*, 2016). Further, Domingo *et al.* (2016), citing Kabira and Kimani (2012), observed that women's political voices were amplified following the National Women's Convention held in February 1992, which inaugurated the agenda to push for women's access to elected positions and political/public decision-making and leadership roles.

Among the factors that hinder the participation of Kenyan women in political processes is the lack of political goodwill by their male counterparts to include them in structures of political governance (Ponge, 2013, citing Mitullah & Owiti, 2007, p. 64). The patriarchal nature of politics, the lack of resources and lack of support for women seeking leadership roles, societal expectations and stereotypes, insecurity, gender-based humiliation and violence all further undermine women's political ambitions in Kenya (Mwatha, Mbugua & Murunga, 2013). Political discourses that involve cultural and religious perceptions, language use, including proverbs, parables, and poems, and general political communication have created negative perceptions among voters in general, and even among women themselves, promoting discrimination of women in politics.

Although some African countries have made great progress in women's representation, others are still lagging far behind the world average (UN Women, 2017). Similarly, at local to global levels, women's leadership and political participation are restricted (Enaifoghe, 2019). There are cases where women are underrepresented as voters, as well as in leading positions, whether in elected office, the civil service, the private sector or academia. This occurs despite their proven abilities as leaders and agents of change, and their right to participate equally in democratic governance (Enaifoghe, 2019). African women face numerous hindrances in participating in political life. Structural barriers through discriminatory cultural beliefs, laws and institutions still limit women's options to run for political office. Women are also less likely than men to have the education, contacts and resources needed to become effective leaders and so women remain seriously underrepresented in decision-making positions across the continent regardless of the high-profile achievements in women representation in political leadership (Ndlovu & Mutale, 2013).

Women have a gargantuan task before they can be acknowledged as full equals and partners to their male counterparts ((Ndlovu & Mutale, 2013). Closing the gender gap and changing or improving the current position of African women in the political structures in the continent is not going to be easy, as it requires political will and implementation (Enaifoghe, 2019). Therefore, to facilitate changes, it is extremely important to understand the scope of the gender gap, for example by using the Gender Equality Index developed by the African Development Bank (AfDB) as noted by the African Studies Center (2017). Eliane Hervo-Akendengué, Public Information Officer of the United Nations Operations in Côte d'Ivoire (ONUCI) cautioned that:

The election of Madame Ellen Johnson Sirleaf to the Presidency of Liberia, and dedication of President Kagame [of Rwanda] to women's decision-making can give the impression that mentalities have changed on the continent. In fact, a lot remains to be done (Larserud, & Taphorn, 2008, p.23).

At the time of this study, the continent of Africa had one female head of state, in Liberia. At ministerial level, South Africa, Guinea-Bissau, and Rwanda lead the continent. In those countries, women comprise more than 35 per cent of ministerial posts. In the majority of African countries, however, women hold less than 20 per cent of ministerial positions. Among women ministers, the most common portfolios are family, children, youth, elderly, handicapped, social affairs, women's affairs, gender equality, and education (United Nations, 2006).

The involvement of women in politics however has been identified to be of importance in campaigning for women rights. For example, in Kenya, women legislators act on behalf of other women. It was not until a woman (nominated member Hon. Njoki Ndungu) moved to the House that a Sexual Offences Law was finally enacted in 2006. Rwanda provides another example of where a gender-based violence bill was introduced into the parliament in August 2006 only after women were elected to nearly 50 per cent of seats in the lower house (United Nations, 2006).

According to the World Bank (2017), the education of girls contributes to a decline in both mortality and fertility rates and improves the health and education prospects of the next generation. The UN Millennium Development Goals include commitments to universal primary education and to gender equality. Africa has made some progress toward achieving this goal. Enrolment figures are improving, and the gap/ratio between girls' and boys' enrolment is narrowing. In sub-Saharan Africa, in 2005, the World Bank

found that 83.6 girls for every 100 boys were enrolled in primary school. However, primary school enrolment figures do not tell the whole story. The gap in higher levels of education is more dramatic. For many women, the lack of leadership capacity is due to discrimination in access to education and training (King & Mason, 2001).

To successfully get involved in politics, women normally go through civil societies. This is especially evident in African states where there is a lot of discrimination of women in participating in politics. According to Anderlini and El-Bushra (2004), in some instances, women turn to civil society and non-governmental organizations, because they face such constraints when entering formal politics. In other cases, women choose to enter civil society because they feel they can have a bigger impact, or they feel that the sector is less corrupt. Involvement in politics largely depends on the exposure given by the media.

Women depend on the media to expose them politically. However, this cannot be achieved easily since most media companies throughout the world are owned and managed by men. Men control access to information, editorial boards, decisions about what “makes” news, and journalism assignments, including decisions about how resources will be spent and what stories will be investigated. According to Oyaro (2007), the images of women in the media - even women leaders - are often stereotypical and undermine their job performance. At a conference in South Africa in November 2007, for instance, African women politicians encouraged journalists not to portray women as “predominantly mothers, grandmothers, and wives”, ignoring their professional lives.

Given the above contextual background underpinning women’s position in political leadership and governance, improving the current position will ultimately require a

decisive intervention mechanism based on the root cause and effect (Enaifoghe, 2019). The approach to improve women's political position will require communication development programmes that will help in uplift their political position in the society with their immediate electorates as well. A communication development approach needs to advocate for the multiplicity of African women in the political structure as agents in the development process, which means that women need to be allowed into the political space in order to participate without any form of discrimination based on factors such as patriarchal cultural beliefs and religion. In fact, the General Assembly of the 2011 UN resolution on women's political participation notes that women in every part of the world continue to be largely marginalized from the political sphere, often as a result of discriminatory cultural and religious beliefs, attitudes and gender stereotypes. Therefore, the communication development approach should provide women with an equal playing field and open up political opportunities for all. This study looks at the communication dynamics for women participating in competitive politics in Kenya using Wajir County as the case study.

2.5 Rationale for the Study based on Literature Review

The purpose of this study is to investigate the political communication dynamics that support or undermine participation of women in leadership in Kenya, particularly in elective positions. The major focus is on how the political communication dynamics, grounded on intra-cultural and religious beliefs, influence women's participation and performance in political leadership. Some of the factors looked at included the use of face-to-face communication including public forums; use of folklore and poems to gain political advantage and demean competitors; use of media platforms (radio, television,

magazines, and newspapers); going house-to-house to talk to people at individual level; use of political male campaign managers to speak to other men on behalf of the women aspirants and use of coded political language. Positive or negative use of these communication dynamics influences women's political success or failure respectively, and is highly influenced by factors such as culture, religion, perceptions on female political leadership, political and party policies, laws and regulations. Adoption and proper application of these factors can lead to higher numbers of elected women in political leadership.

The literature review was not only instrumental in providing more information regarding my topic of study but also necessary in order to give the study its focus and context. Furthermore, as demonstrated in Chapter Six, I refer to the literature during the analysis and discussion of my findings and to support my conclusion.

2.6 Literature Gaps

In pursuit of finding suitable studies on communication, I found scarce literature focusing on communication as a determining factor for women politicians. Much of the literature was on challenges women faced by having little media coverage of their candidacies. Markstedt (2007) had a case study of websites and newspaper covered the women candidates in the Labour Party Deputy Leadership election in the United Kingdom.

Kamau(2010) compiled ten case studies of women and political leadership in Kenya and acknowledges the challenges Kenya women face as they attempt to engage in political leadership. This research focuses less on challenges and more on the perceptions,

experiences, visions, achievements, and their lived experiences that have shaped their leadership perspectives and approaches – A woman's perspective on political leadership.

Another study by Otieno (2012) looks at factors influencing women's participation in political leadership, by assessing the influence of demographic factors, economic factors, cultural factors and gender based electoral violence.

Ndlovu& Mutale (2013) looks at increase in women's movements, quota systems, multi-party systems, increase in educational opportunities, funding from international institutions, global and national agreements, conventions, and commitments amongst others.

Kivoi(2014) tackled factors impeding political participation and representation of women in Kenya by looking at traditional beliefs, perceptions and stereotypes which depict women as being inferior and has tended to militate towards their marginalization.

Ennaji(2016) studied women politics in Morocco and looked at the struggle against gender inequalities and efforts to consolidate democracy and social justice and to challenge traditional thinking and inequitable, oppressive, undemocratic, sexist practices of governance.

In presenting women's struggles for representation in African political structure, Enaifoghe (2018) studied the constitutional quota, electoral law, and political assembly standards.

All the above sample studies looked at other factors and challenges women face as they seek political leadership. My study looks specifically at communication which I found not to have a lot of previous literature.

2.7 Summary

This chapter provided a review of relevant literature concerning women's political leadership. The chapter focused on the communication dynamics in the political field. It also looked at the cultural beliefs and practices influencing women's participation in politics. It also touched on religion, especially Islam, and its role in women's participation in politics. The study also delved into communication channels in politics and their influence in women's participation in politics and positions of political leadership held by women. Specific issues reviewed, which influence women's participation in active politics, including communication in politics such as an ability to persuade, were discussed in light of the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) of persuasion and lobbying. The chapter also discussed the theories that this study was grounded upon which were Egalitarianism and Muted Group Theories. In the next chapter, I discuss the methodological issues guiding this study.

CHAPTER THREE– METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

In this chapter, I present the philosophical paradigm that guided my study and link it to the qualitative approach that I used. I also describe the case study design which was my chosen method. Following this, I explain the sampling procedure and the data generation techniques that I employed which included interviews and document analysis. The chapter concludes with a discussion on the trustworthiness and dependability of the study and the main ethical considerations I made regarding this research.

3.1 Philosophical Paradigm of the Study

In this study, I adopted the interpretivist-constructivist philosophical paradigm. Philosophical paradigm constitutes the way the researcher looks at the world and interprets what was studied (Rubi and Rubin, 2005 as cited in Jwan and Ong'ondo, 2011). Denzin & Lincoln (2005) define a paradigm as a human construction that deals with first principles and indicates where the researcher is coming from as they construct meaning embedded in data. They also define it as a basic set of beliefs that guide action. A paradigm, put simply, is a broad view or perspective of something (Taylor, Kermode, & Roberts, 2007).

Any research needs to be grounded in a philosophical paradigm because it shapes how researchers study and make interpretations about the world. Creswell and Plano-Clark (2007) note that, “research needs a foundation for its inquiry, and inquirers need to be aware of the implicit worldviews they bring to their studies....” (p.21). Researchers must

therefore be explicit about their philosophical assumptions so that readers of their study are able to clearly see the paradigms within which the research is anchored. The philosophical paradigm guides how the research is carried out, who conducts the research, and the degree of involvement or detachment with the research that the researcher ought to demonstrate (Rubin & Rubin, 2005).

Researchers have different beliefs and ways of viewing and interacting with their surroundings. Jwan and Ongo'ndo (2011) postulated that all researchers operate within particular paradigms to the extent that they have a philosophical leaning or a particular way of interpreting the world. However, though researchers have different beliefs and conform to different ways of conducting research, there are certain standards and rules that guide a researcher's actions and beliefs (Jwan & Ongo'ndo, 2011). I took the view that, in order to conduct a clear and concise research, in line with the thinking of many scholars, including Mason (2002), Stake (2014) and Yin (2014), it was imperative for me to clarify the structure of inquiry, including the research questions, the specific methodological choices in my study, and an exploration of the paradigm that was adopted for this study.

I elaborate on my philosophical paradigm by looking at it from the two main philosophical perspectives of ontology and epistemology. Slevitch (2011) states that ontology (onto in Greek 'being' and, logia 'science, study, theory') can be defined as the study of reality or things that comprise reality. On their part, Guba and Lincoln (1994) say that the ontological consideration is what is the form and nature of reality and, therefore, what can be known about it is "how things really are" and "how things really work". My ontological position will therefore be made clear to readers so that the

methodologies used may be interpreted against my stated stance (Crotty 1998; Jwan and Ong'ondo, 2011). Potter (2006) also insists that a researcher's commitment to these paradigms is key to the entire research process.

Epistemology on the other hand is concerned with the way knowledge is studied, explored or demonstrated (Cohen *et al.*, 2007; Given, 2015). It is about "how we know what we know" (Grotty, 1998:8). Guba and Lincoln (1998) describe it as the "nature of the relationship between the knower or would-be knower and what can be known" (p.201). Maynard (1994) says epistemology is concerned with providing a philosophical grounding for deciding what kinds of knowledge are possible and how we decide it is adequate and legitimate. In specific reference to research, epistemology indicates a researcher's stance on how knowledge is created, acquired, and communicated and how the truth of such knowledge may be confirmed (Scotland, 2012). On their part, Jwan and Ong'ondo (2011) point out that the ontological and epistemological positions used by a researcher presents different research approaches towards the same phenomenon. For this reason, I note that as a researcher, I should commit to ontological and epistemological positions in order to engage in any form of research.

My purpose for this study was to explore the communication dynamics that support or undermine the participation of women in political leadership in Kenya, particularly in Wajir County. A major focus was on how communication dynamics, grounded on intra-cultural and religious beliefs, influence women's participation and performance in political leadership. This study was based on the interpretivist-constructivist paradigm, and this guided choices regarding methodology, methods, literature or research design (McKenzie & Knipe, 2006). Atieno (2009) used the word paradigm interchangeably with

approach and design and pointed out that it is interpretive and ethnographic in nature. It is also defined as a “loose collection of logically related assumptions, concepts or positions that orient thinking and research” (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006, citing Bogdan & Biklen, 1998). Further, McKenzie and Knipe (2006) cited Naughton, *et al.* (2001) who defined paradigm in terms of three elements, namely a belief about the nature of knowledge, a methodology, and criteria for validity.

Further, it is important to note that as interpretivism refers to how we gain knowledge of the world, it therefore relies on interpreting the meanings that humans attach to their actions and is concerned with understanding the world as it is from the subjective experiences of individuals. Burrell and Morgan (1989) indicate that phenomenological constructivism embraces a wide range of philosophical and sociological stances, which share the common characteristics of attempting to understand and explain the social world from the perspective of the actors directly involved in the social process. The interpretivist-constructivist approach to research aims at understanding “the world of human experience” (Cohen & Manion, 1994, p.36) implying that “reality is socially constructed” (Martens, 2005, p.12). The interpretative-constructivist paradigm can also be said to state that reality is constructed through interactions between a researcher and the research subject. Creswell (2003) notes that the researcher tends to rely upon the “participants’ views of the situation being studied”. Methods used in such research include interviewing or participant observation, relying on the subjective relationship between the researcher and his/her subjects. The constructivist researcher is said to be most likely to rely on qualitative data collection methods and analysis, as I did in this study.

This study was also guided by the stipulation of constructivism that truth and meaning do not exist in the external world as the positivists suggest but are created by the subject's interaction with the world (Gray, 2014). In addition, truth and meaning are created by interpretivism, which targets understanding a particular context and stresses that reality is socially constructed with the influence of culture and context (Willis, 2007). Consequently, Gray (2014) brought out three tenets of interpretivism through the approach of symbolic interactionism, namely that i) people interpret the meaning of objects and actions in the world and then ii) act upon those interactions and iii) meanings are handled in, and are modified by, an interactive process used by people in dealing with the phenomena encountered.

The use of interpretivist-constructivism sought to generate data from people themselves, aiming to get knowledge about how people perceive, interpret and understand issues that affect them in their contexts (Jwan & Ong'ondo, 2011, citing Mason, 2002). The interpretivist-constructivist paradigm was of significance to my study since it acknowledges that I, the researcher, and the participants of the study do not only co-construct the reality but also interpret and/or construct the reality in specific ways. In addition, the paradigm offered me different ways of studying the subject of this study, multiple ways of arriving at interpretations of the findings and constructing knowledge depending on contexts, options available, and the multiple forces surrounding the participants and the researcher (Jwan & Ong'ondo, 2011).

The interpretivist-constructivist paradigm was also chosen for two other significant reasons. First, women's political empowerment is a social phenomenon that is controlled by social actors and their perceptions of it. My study, therefore, recognized that each of my respondents—whether woman politician, supporter/campaigner, elder, or religious leader—had their own varied background, assumptions and experiences concerning the contribution of cultural discourses in the political leadership of women. There existed, therefore, multiple perspectives and not a single reality, since the perceptions and experiences of the effect of cultural discourses on women's political empowerment was subjective to each individual (Hennink, Hutter & Bailey, 2011). Secondly, the interpretivist-constructivist paradigm guided my study as it aimed to uncover inside perspectives or real meanings of cultural discourses and their effect on women's leadership from the perspectives of the study participants themselves. Their experiences substantially influenced the collection of data and its analysis. In accordance with the interpretivist-constructivist paradigm, given that the study sought to collect data from the chosen respondents on how they perceived, interpreted, and understood issues that affect them in their contexts, interviews were the main technique of data generation (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005). In addition, content analysis, mainly from broadcast media, was carried out. The triangulation of the views of the different respondents helped the interpretation. In this way, I can say that my study conforms to the constructivist view of there not being an absolute reality but, rather, that knowledge is relative because people understand phenomena in many different ways. I next present the qualitative study approach.

3.2 Research Approach

For this study, I employed a qualitative research approach. The choice of the qualitative research approach was informed by Silverman's (2013) argument that qualitative research operates within the interpretive-constructivist paradigm, upon which my study is grounded, and that there exist multiple viewpoints on any subject under inquiry. Jwan and Ong'ondo (2011) defined qualitative research as an "approach to inquiry that emphasizes a naturalistic search for relativity in meaning, multiplicity of interpretations, particularity, detail and flexibility in studying a phenomenon or the aspect(s) of it that a researcher chooses to focus on at a given time" (p.3). The choice of a qualitative approach conformed to the guidelines and features for similar approaches as defined by Creswell (2013), there being two common characteristics of qualitative research: i) data is collected in the field at the natural setting and ii) that the researcher is a key instrument and uses multiple forms of data collection such as interviews, observations, and documents rather than relying on a single data source (Creswell, 2013). I used all the afore-mentioned data sources in this study.

In addition, this study used an inductive-deductive logic process whereby there was use of complex reasoning skills throughout the research process. First, the participant's meaning was critical, which suggested multiple perspectives or diverse views on the topic. Secondly, there was an emergent change of design whereby all phases of the research plan changed or shifted immediately I was in the field. Thirdly, reflexivity was also important—I conveyed how the participants' experiences or history informed the interpretation of the data collected in the study and their gains from the study. This is in line with Denzin and Lincoln (2005) who postulated that a qualitative approach

emphasizes the qualities of entities, processes, and meanings that are not experimentally examined or measured in terms of quantity, amount, intensity, or frequency.

I also opted to employ a qualitative approach for this study due to its significant advantages. First, the perceptions of the women politicians on the effects of different aspects (religion, language and culture) on communication during their political quests could not be measured in terms of quantity, amount or frequency. The use of a qualitative approach therefore was more appropriate for this study. Secondly, the use of the qualitative data gathering method was advantageous as it was more open to changes and the refinement of research ideas as the study progressed, thus making it highly flexible (Saunders & Thornhill, 2007). Thirdly, no manipulation of the research setting was necessary with this approach. Rather than employing various research controls such as experimental approaches, the qualitative data gathering methods were only centred on understanding the occurring phenomena in their natural state as it exists, since qualitative researchers interpret what they see, hear and understand (Creswell, 2009) and methods mainly focus on the kind of evidence that will enable one to understand the meaning of what's going on (Gillham 2000). My emphasis was in examining communication in depth and detail through direct quotation of respondents and capturing their stories through clear descriptions of people, interactions and observed behaviours. Next, I explain my use of case study method.

3.3 Case Study Method

Research design depicts the skills, assumptions and material practices that researchers, as methodological developers, use when they move on from a paradigm to the gathering of

empirical materials (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Jwan and Ong'ondo (2011) defined research design as the conceptualization of the principles and procedures of the different elements of the research design. Research design in qualitative research mainly uses case study, ethnography, narrative research and grounded theory. A case study typically involves an in-depth observation of an individual unit such as a student, a family, a school or an entire culture and is used to gain in-depth understanding of the participants focusing on process rather than outcome (Creswell, 2009; Jwan and Ong'ondo, 2011). Case study research method, according to Yin (2009), entails the study of a case within a real-life context or setting. I used the case study design, as my study focuses on participants from Wajir County only, and communication within and amongst the people living there in relation to politics. My focus was on communication in the political empowerment of women in Wajir County, thereby seeking an in-depth understanding of the women politicians as individual units within a family (family of Kenyan politicians).

My study did not focus on the women's political leadership as a process but rather as an outcome of communication aspects. As argued by Stake (1995), "We do not study a case primarily to understand other cases but our primary obligation is to understand this one case" (p 4). In support of this assertion, Jwan and Ong'ondo (2011) postulate that "the real business of case study is particularization and not statistical generalization. We take a particular case study and come to know it well, not primarily as to how it is different from others but what it does" (p. 40). Creswell (2013) also points out that the qualitative researcher hardly generalizes from one case to another since the context of cases differs and that is what I aimed for in this study.

Other studies indicate that a case study is preferable for research that aims at generating an in-depth understanding of the case (Creswell, 2013, Jwan & Ong'ondo, 2011; Yin, 2009; Berg, 2001). To achieve that end, multiple sources of data are used that may range from interviews, observations and documents to audio-visual materials. That is in line with what Creswell (2013) mentions about relying on one source of data not being enough to develop in-depth understanding of the study. In this study, I employed interviews, observations, and document and electronic data analysis to get in-depth information on communication as used by women politicians in Wajir County. Furthermore, the case study method enabled me to gain multiple perspectives from various sources, while focusing on the units of study as postulated by Yin (2009) as this study employed interviews, observations, document and electronic data analysis to get in-depth information on communication in the political leadership of women in Wajir County. In this study, the main method of data generation was interviews. However, during interviews I observed the non-verbal communications of my respondents and this contributed in interpreting the data generated from them. In addition, I also analysed some of the media materials such as newspapers, social media spaces, and broadcast media to understand language used and communication approaches used by women.

Alternatively, Yin (2003) postulates that case studies arise out of the desire to understand complex social phenomena and allow investigators to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events. I believe that the political leadership of women has been a contentious issue as women fight for gender equality in leadership. It is made more complex due to the different views of the proponents, who are considered feminists, and those who want to maintain the status quo: male dominance in leadership. My study

focused on just one aspect that could have been impacting this leadership and this was communication *for* women, *to* women and *about* women in Wajir county.

Another descriptor is that case study research is an in-depth investigation in one or more real-life settings over an extended period of time (Bhattacharjee, 2012). It is an empirical enquiry that investigates an empirical phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between the phenomenon and the context are not clearly evident (Jwan and Ong'ondo, 2011). In my study, the aim was to seek clarity, understanding and to make meaning out of the data collected.

Although Yin (2003) pointed out the use of case studies as one of the most challenging in all social science endeavours, its importance cannot be underplayed, especially the fact that its strength lies in its ability to discover a wide range of social, cultural and political factors potentially related to the phenomenon of interest unbeknownst in advance (Bhattacharjee, 2012). Jwan and Ong'ondo (2011) also agree with Bhattacharjee by emphasizing that case study concentrates on experiential knowledge of the case while paying close attention to the influence of the social, political and other contexts. According to Jwan and Ong'ondo (2011), the intent of the case is to probe deeply and to analyse intensively the situation under study.

Yin (2009) was of the view that case study is of preference when 'how' or 'why' questions are being posed, when the investigator has little control over events, and when the focus is on a contemporary phenomenon within some real-life context. In addition, it is inclusive rather than exclusive and can afford to look at a large number of details in consideration of their relation to a pattern of events or a decision. This made it

appropriate for my study as its essence lies in that it is both time and description centric, trying to illuminate why a particular decision was taken, how it was rolled out and what resulted. Moreover, it is particularly important for its focus on avoiding omission of details that might prove significant in explaining what happened in the situation being studied (Yin, 2009). Specifically, in this study, I seek to determine how communication affects women in politics and why such effects are evident in the political environment in Wajir County and especially during the 2013 general election.

Further, Yin (2003) postulated that case studies arise out of the desire to understand complex social phenomena and allow investigators to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events. This case study is complex due to the differing views of the proponents who are considered the feminists and those who want to maintain the status quo: male dominance in leadership. To reiterate the use of case study as elaborated earlier: in this study, I understood that political empowerment of women has been a contentious and complex issue, as women fight for gender equality in leadership.

In concluding I point out the three characteristics of the case study method which I found particularly appropriate. Gay, Mills and Airasian (2009) indicate that case studies are particularistic, descriptive and heuristic. My study focused on a particular phenomenon and can therefore be said to be particularistic. This study explored the communication dynamics that support or undermine participation of women in political leadership in Kenya, particularly in Wajir County. In presenting my research findings, I used thick description of the research process as well as in reporting the findings and so my study is also descriptive. In line with the heuristic description of case study, my study generates

new knowledge on the communication dynamics that affect women politicians in Wajir county.

A case study was most appropriate for this research because it allowed me to give a broad description of the participants and the challenges they faced. The case study helped give me a fuller understanding of the subjective experiences of the women in the county with regard to their ability to communicate effectively with all community members. The location of my study gave me a view of issues in that particular county and may not necessarily equate to experience in other counties so it cannot be generalized per se. In the next section, I present my criteria for sample selection.

3.4 Sampling

For my study, I decided to use purposive sampling from a wider population in the county. This was because I believed I would get the most pertinent answers from the people who participated in the 2013 elections in various roles – as aspirants, as supporters and campaigners, as community elders and leaders who guided the community and religious leaders who preached to the people about elections. The wider population comprised many more people but I targeted specific people for my sample size.

Kombo and Tromp (2006) defined sampling as the procedure used in research to gather people, places or things to study. A sample is a finite part of a population whose properties are studied to gain information about the whole population. Typically, qualitative investigations involve the use of small samples. In general, sample sizes in qualitative research should not be so large that it is difficult to extract thick, rich data but

at the same time not be so small as to make it difficult to achieve data saturation (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2007).

The most common sampling methods in qualitative research include purposive sampling, quota sampling, and snowball sampling. In purposive sampling, groups participate according to pre-selected criteria relevant to a particular research question. In quota sampling, when designing the study, the characteristics of the people to be studied is clarified. Snowball sampling, on the other hand, is a type of purposive sampling, using social networks of the selected participants (Burns & Grove, 2007).

For this study, I used purposive sampling in selecting the participants of the study. This sampling technique was appropriate and advantageous for this study for various reasons. Firstly, the study targeted specific women politicians who participated in the 2013 general elections and who had knowledge of the effects of cultural communication dynamics on the participation of women from Wajir County in those elections. Secondly, there was a limited number of women politicians, religious leaders (imams) and members of the council of elders, so there was a need to purposively select them. Thirdly, it would not be practicable or economical to include political populations in Wajir County as noted by Burns and Grove (2007). Purposive sampling was therefore used as it involved making a conscious decision about which individuals would best provide the desired information (Burns & Grove, 2007). This type of non-probability sampling was chosen in order to provide the most useful data upon which to evaluate the effects of cultural discourses on communication in the political empowerment of women.

Using purposive sampling, I identified and selected women politicians and political aspirants from Wajir County who participated in the 2013 general elections. The information on the political aspirants and women elected to political positions during the 2013 general elections was provided by the relevant political parties and the Wajir County Assembly Clerk. It was from this information that I purposively selected information-rich participants for this study.

The sample population included a total of 7 women aspirants, who ran for political office in 2013. My sample size was 3 of them purposively selected to participate in the study. Another group consisted of women who were nominated to the Wajir County Assembly because the gender balance was not achieved when no woman was elected for the post of Member of County Assembly (MCA). The sample population was 15 and I interviewed 2 for my study. There was also a bigger population of community leaders running into hundreds who actively participated and campaigned for political aspirants from Wajir County in the 2013 general election. I selected 15 of them from the different political camps for my study and these comprised male politicians (aspirants included 27 members of parliament, 4 governors and 6 senators), political campaigners, advisors, and activists from Wajir County. There were 8 women and 7 men in this selection totalling 15.

The last group of respondents were well-known religious and community leaders from the county, and I focused on selecting from the three main clans residing in the county which are the Ogaden, Ajuran and Degodia. I visited the relevant offices, which included the main mosques and the Council of Elders offices in Wajir to identify these participants. The officials in the visited offices helped to identify their members to participate in the study, thus providing in-depth information in the subject area. I chose my sample in this

group from the lists provided and included 3 representatives from the imams and religious leaders and 3 from the Council of Elders in Wajir County. In the next section, I look at data generation for this study.

3.5 Data Generation

Data generation refers to the theory and methods used by a researcher to create data from a sampled data source in a qualitative study (Creswell, 2014). I employed interviews with the sample individuals I had identified for the study. In addition, I carried out document and electronic media analysis to gather data from the sources for my study. I did this because Yin (2009) observes that a major strength of data generation in case studies is the opportunity to use varied sources of evidence and reiterates that case studies using multiple sources of evidence were rated higher in terms of quality than those that relied on single sources of information. I took his advice and employed several sources of data generation and these techniques are presented in the next sections.

3.5.1 Interviews

For this study, structured interviews were my primary source of data. They were used to probe, through individual interviews, the 27 respondents that were selected through purposive sampling in order get a deeper understanding of the study focus. The main purpose of the interviews was to have the participants reconstruct their experiences and put them in context in line with communication and women's participation in competitive politics. Interviews allowed the participants to express their thoughts and feelings freely without being limited to specific choices of expected responses. They also encouraged capturing of respondents' perceptions in their own words, a very desirable strategy in

qualitative data collection (Kumar, 2005). This helped me to better understand the finer details of people's experiences, views and opinions from their own perspectives concerning women's communication in competitive politics in Wajir County. The interviews, therefore, not only produced non-standardized information that allowed me to make maximum use of different perspectives among the respondents but also allowed for the modifying of questions from one respondent to another. This also helped to have a deeper understanding of political communication issues among women through the stories they narrated. Two types of interviews were conducted to generate primary data from the study participants: face-to-face and electronic (mainly via email). Sample questions and answers can be found in Appendix II and III.

Face-to-face interviews were recorded using my mobile phone and I later transcribed them before data analysis was undertaken. Apart from recording, I also wrote down the respondents' responses and kept them as field notes. The respondents' feelings, appearance and description of the subject were also noted.

Through the face-to-face interviews, I also got the opportunity to explore the reasons why respondents were attached to their experiences in political communication (Richards, 2003). The interviews further allowed me to observe non-verbal cues of the respondents and appropriately react or modify inquiry in response to these non-verbal cues, particularly when they elicited confusion, uncertainty, or waning motivation (Yin, 2003). In this regard, I was able to react to the respondents' cues by reducing task difficulty and reinforcing interest by skipping selected questions, which had been adequately answered earlier. The process of conducting the face-to-face interviews was crucial since it enabled

modification of the line of inquiry by probing into unanticipated, interesting or unique participants' responsiveness.

Although the interview guides that were used in face-to-face interviews comprised open-ended questions, I modified and changed the sequence of the questions according to the manner, appropriateness and context in which the conversation flowed (Fontana & Frey, 2005). The design of the interview protocol ensured effective and focused use of the limited interview time and allowed interviews of multiple participants in the same systematic and comprehensive manner (Cohen *et al.*, 2007).

My study involved administering in-depth interviews to the sample respondents which included women politicians, women leaders, imams or religious leaders, council of elders and supporters of the political leaders. As explained earlier, purposive sampling was used to select the study respondents. I booked appointments with the respective participants during my annual holidays for ease of availability and for purposes of face-to-face interviews. The interviews were conducted during the December holidays of 2014 and 2015. In-depth interviews were scheduled and agreed with the respondents and conducted at their homes or in restaurants during their free time. Some interviews were carried out in Nairobi while others took place in Wajir County, depending on their areas of residence and availability, as agreed during interview booking.

In order to ensure the confidentiality and privacy of respondents, I accorded the respondents codes in form of initials to describe the three categories for the study. Women politicians/aspirants were given WP as their initials, the religious leaders and male council of elders were given MCL (Male Community Leader), while other women

supporters, campaigners and leaders were allocated WCL (Woman Community Leader). For the campaigners of women politicians, the initials were CM (Campaign Manager). Since there were male and female participants in this study, the letter 'W' was used to represent female participants and the letter 'M' was used to represent male participants.

The questions in the interviews served as a guide to the discussions while allowing flexibility to provide detailed responses. Probing and follow-up questions provided a chance for me to elicit further details on specific aspects that emerged in the course of the interviews, or when the interview digressed from the topic. The in-depth interviews were recorded using my mobile phone recorder with permission from the interviewee. Notes were also taken in the course of the interviews on emerging themes, issues that cropped up, and on matters that needed further follow-up.

Structured interviews were ideal for this study because they allowed for flexibility, a wider exploration and the generation of additional insights and data (Rubin & Rubin, 2005). The interviews were critical in understanding how the political communication dynamics took place, the type of messages that were disseminated to the electorates during campaigns, and the level of community participation in the political electoral process. The interviews also investigated whether there were enough public spaces for women to address potential voters and the effectiveness of communication in changing cultural and religious norms.

For this study, I employed both structured interviews, in which carefully worded questions were administered, and in-depth interviews, in which the interview did not follow a rigid form. In the former, there was a slight deviation from the questions in the

structured interview guides but only in the wording of the questions to ensure uniformity of interview administration. In the latter, however, I encouraged free and open responses in order to maximise the information between comprehensive coverage of issues and in-depth exploration of questions. This is according to Kumar (2005) who noted that in-depth interviews encourage capturing of respondents' perceptions in their own words, a very desirable strategy in qualitative data collection. Next, I discuss how I used document analysis for my secondary data collection.

3.5.2 Document Analysis

In addition to interviews, document analysis was another data-gathering technique that I employed for my study, relying on Yin's (2009) observation that documentary information is likely to be relevant to every case study topic and should be used for explicit data collection plans. This is because documents serve as a primary source of research and supplement the data collected by the researcher and help in the triangulation of gathered evidence. Bryman (2012) defined document analysis as a form of qualitative research in which documents are interpreted by the researcher to give voice and meaning to an assessment topic.

Document analysis added value and also helped countercheck the data I collected in other ways. The documents used were those that were relevant to my study and those that gave a response to my research questions.

I examined various documents to generate data from secondary sources of information, which included past reports, publications, journals, and electronic media including videos and radio/TV recordings. Existing documents on women's involvement in politics, the

political empowerment of women in Kenya, communication in politics, statistics on the involvement of women in politics, and case studies were analysed, thereby providing additional information to the primary data that I collected through interviews.

My decision to include document analysis in generating data for this study was informed by the assertion by Yin (2003) who argues that this type of information can take many forms and should be the object of explicit data collection plans. The same applied to the analysis of radio/TV recordings. In the following section, I show how I analysed the data that I collected.

3.6 Data Analysis

Data analysis is the process that involves making sense of the data (Creswell, 2009, p.183) and this is done through preparing it for analysis. For the interviews in my study, all the empirical data gathered through the interviews was coded and analysed through data reduction method. Distinct steps were followed to ensure that the raw data was reduced to specific groups or themes. Qualitative data included information gathered from interviews, written documents or other studies. The information was analysed through a process that followed six distinct steps: i) transcribing the data; ii) re-familiarizing with the data; iii) first phase coding; iv) second phase coding (searching for themes) ;v) third phase coding (defining and naming themes);vi) producing a report so that the data emerged as words or text. I used the method of data preparation and transcription as suggested by Clarke and Braun (2006), following their guidelines and instructions on how to prepare a transcript as well as track and store the data.

Transcription of my data led me to start the process of analysis at the outset, as I collected data in the field. Themes emerged as I made notes and I noted the ideas coming to the fore during the interviews. I transcribed some of the data soon after the interviews and also used other people to do some transcribing for me. This was because my data collection came in bursts during my holidays so, at the time, I was working outside the country. By personally transcribing some of the interviews, I was able to reflect on my experience of the interview and on the conversation with the participants. This helped me in making contextual notes in the transcription annotation to highlight the experiences of the participant (Fontana & Frey, 2005). Though it took time and effort, the interviews were transcribed verbatim. I also familiarised myself with the data by going back and forth on areas that needed more clarity by listening to the raw interview material to align with the transcribed material. This also led to the removal of repetitions and deletion of any unnecessary information.

The qualitative analysis also helped me capture, in their own words, the experiences of the participants. I then organized the data to find meaning and themes that came from the interviews, my notes and transcripts of the case study.

Analysed data was reported in the form of 'direct quotes' from individual responses and a summarized description of the responses given by the respondents. During data analysis and reporting, questions arose that helped me to further understand the experiences of the interviewed participants, the issues which perhaps were not understood before carrying out the interviews, and any unexpected responses. I was also able to confirm or refute initial instincts as well as note consistency and inconsistency with the literature that had been reviewed. This helped in realizing the impact of communication in politics

especially for women candidates and if, or how, it was affected by patriarchal culture and religion. I next explain how I endeavoured to make my study trustworthy in various ways.

3.7 Trustworthiness of the Study

Trustworthiness in qualitative studies, as defined by Jwan and Ong'ondo (2011), requires ensuring the research process is truthful and carried out carefully and rigorously enough to qualify to make the claims it makes. They argue that trust enhances the utility value of a study so that peers and other researchers feel moved to refer to it. Terms such as credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability are used to define trustworthiness in research (Lincoln & Guba, 1985 as cited in Bassey, 1999).

In judging the trustworthiness of a study, many qualitative researchers often use parallel criteria, comparable to those used in quantitative research, such as credibility (internal validity), transferability (external validity), dependability (reliability) and confirmability (objectivity) to ensure trustworthiness (Litchman, 2014; Jwan and Ong'ondo, 2011). I discuss these criteria further in the following sections.

3.7.1 Credibility

To ensure the credibility of my study, I used several sources of evidence or data which included interviews, observation and document analysis. As advised by Ong'ondo (2009), I shared my work with my peers and supervisors to guide me in reviewing my concepts, methodology, and research process. Litchman (2014) noted that it is up to the writer to make a convincing argument that the topic under review is important and that

one can learn more about an issue from it. In the findings, I have provided the different perspectives of the participants in the study, thus ensuring credibility through having varied views and voices in the report.

Using more than one technique of data triangulation—I used interviews and document analysis—made it possible for me to examine communication in politics for women from several perspectives. Yin (2009) points out that using multiple sources of evidence and not relying on only one source of information gives more accurate findings and can assist in coming to convincing conclusions.

A researcher should be able to demonstrate what he/she studied, what they found and how this connects to the larger body of research, so I have iteratively presented and reported my findings in relation to other studies. Credibility is further shown as I describe my research process, explain concepts via my literature review and refer to my notes and the interviews.

3.7.2 Transferability

Creswell & Miller (2000) suggest that transferability is affected by the researcher's perception of transferability in the study and his/her choice of paradigm assumption. As a result, many researchers have developed their own concepts of transferability and have often generated or adopted what they consider to be more appropriate terms, such as quality, rigour and trustworthiness (Davies & Dodd, 2002; Lincoln & Guba, 2005). My use of case study can enhance possible analytic generalisation of this study.

Transferability in this study was also informed by the argument posited by Yin (2003) that it is possible that what one researcher finds in a study and in the analysis of the context and research process could be found in similar circumstances elsewhere. The conclusions deduced from the findings of my study are generalized views that might be found elsewhere, such as in another county in Kenya.

3.7.3 Dependability

Dependability is the extent to which a researcher provides sufficient detail and clarity of the entire process of the research in a way that makes it feasible for a reader to visualize and appreciate, and for a researcher to replicate, the study (Jwan & Ong'ondo, 2011). I have given a thick description of each stage of my study's research process. I have also used quotations from my respondents to explain my findings and thereby clearly show the voices of the participants.

Lincoln and Guba (2005) used "dependability" in qualitative research, which closely corresponds to the notion of "reliability" in quantitative research. They further emphasized "inquiry audit" as one measure that might enhance the dependability of qualitative research. This was used to examine both the process and the product of the research for consistency (Hoepfl, 1997). In the same vein, Clont (1992) and Seale (2009) endorsed the concept of dependability as an equivalence of the concept of consistency or reliability in qualitative research. The consistency of data is achieved when the steps of the research are verified through examination of items such as raw data, data reduction products, and process notes (Campbell, 1996). To bring this concept to life, I have maintained a database of field notes, transcriptions and documents as a chain of evidence.

Patton (2001) advocated the use of triangulation by stating that triangulation strengthens a study by combining methods. This can mean using several kinds of research methods or data, including using both quantitative and qualitative approaches. The multiple methods of searching or gathering data are in order to acquire valid and reliable multiple and diverse realities. In this study, I used triangulation by using both interviews and document analysis to improve trustworthiness.

3.7.4 Confirmability

I have provided detailed accounts of my decisions and actions during the research. The vast amount of data generated is available for scrutiny and transcripts are included in my report, as samples, in the appendices.

Jwan and Ong'ondo (2011) ask the question about the neutrality of a researcher and the extent to which she/he influences the research findings. Although a researcher may influence the study, this does not rule out its trustworthiness (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995). Through reflexivity, I do reveal myself in the research, as indicated by Litchman (2014).

Jwan and Ong'ondo (2011) also note that "it is normal for researchers to carry their prejudices and experiences into the research process, so we should have an open mind and try to understand these influences on the research process." I have also acknowledged my role in the research process by explaining the decisions I made and my rationale for them.

3.8 Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations embody considerations of individual and communal codes of conduct based upon adherence to a set of principles which may be explicit and codified or implicit and which may be abstract and impersonal or concrete and personal (Zimbardo, 1984). Mason (2002) also emphasized that qualitative researchers are normally called upon “not only to carry out data generation and analysis morally...but also to plan our research and frame our questions in an ethical manner too” (p41). I endeavoured to manage my study to abide by the advice from scholars of research.

3.8.1 Informed Consent

Ethical consideration was met by ensuring that the interviewees were fully informed of the purpose of the study and were providing answers willingly. The relevant bodies, such as Moi University, were contacted to provide permission for the study. In addition, I safeguarded the privacy of the participants of the study as I sought and received permission from the respondents themselves. I explained to my respondents the purpose of my study before carrying out the interviews, assuring them that any information I received from them would only be used for my academic study. They were also informed that their participation was at their discretion and not forced and they could ask to withdraw whenever they so wished. Regardless, because my sample respondents were pre-determined, as I have already explained, all participated fully. They were reassured that all the information they provided me was confidential and they would not be identified by name at any point in the report of my findings.

I followed the advice given by Hammersly and Atkinson (1995:264) who say that people in a study carried out by social researchers should be fully informed about the research and should give their consent freely.

3.8.2 Privacy and Anonymity

Litchman (2014) states that those who participate in research expect that the researcher will not reveal their identities but maintain their privacy and I endeavoured to achieve this expectation through non-disclosure of names and instead used codes to identify my respondents using random letters and numbers that helped me connect the individual respondent to the corresponding data. I also used alphabetic codes to relay and report the findings via verbatim quotes without showing any identifiable information about my respondents. In this way, I removed any identifiable information that would connect to the respondents at every stage of the process.

3.8.3 Confidentiality

I assured my study participants that all private data they gave me would not be reported, neither would it be exposed, in line with advice from Jwan and Ong'ondo (2011) that, in ensuring confidentiality, the investigator agrees not to report private data that identifies participants. Although my respondents were all willing to offer me the interviews I sought, I still used the assurance of confidentiality to not only make it easy for me to be granted audience, but also to allay any fears they may have in participating in my research.

3.8.4 Risk of Harm

I was very conscious of the sensitivities and the cultural biases facing women politicians and that these could affect my engagement with the various respondents in regard to communication during political campaigns. To this end, I had to be careful to reduce any risks that could bring harm to the people I was interviewing for my study. This was taking cognizance of Jwan and Ong'ondo's (2011) caution that qualitative interviews on sensitive leadership topics could evoke powerful emotional responses, which obligate the researcher to protect the psychological well-being of the respondents. This is because some of the respondents I interviewed had either vied and lost, or were supporters of those who had lost, and would have been disappointed with the loss at the ballot. I therefore had to act with caution and use my experience and intuition, coupled with common sense, to behave appropriately (Jwan and Ong'ondo, 2011 citing Angrosino, 2005).

Having ensured all ethical issues were taken account of, I am able to present my study with the assurance that I ensured my participants were fully informed on the purpose of my study. To avoid any form of plagiarism, I have acknowledged all sources used for my study and I believe I was honest, open, and acted with integrity, and professionalism throughout my study.

3.9 Summary

In this chapter, I have outlined the philosophical underpinning of my study, the qualitative research approach, methodology used, sampling, data collection methods, research rigour and ethical considerations. I explain how I generated data through

interviews and document analysis, and how I analysed it. In addition, I show how I managed ethical considerations as I carried out the study. In the next two chapters, I present the findings of my study based on my research questions. The study was conducted in Wajir county which is just one of the 47 counties in the Republic of Kenya. In the geographical scope of Wajir county, the study was limited to a small group of respondents using purposive sampling to select only the respondents who actively participated in the 2013 general elections. This meant that the views of the wider public were not sought, thus limiting the findings to a specific group of people within Wajir county. Besides, the purposive sampling used in selecting the key informants relied on the researcher's specifically seeking suitable respondents involved in the elections, meaning that the findings of this study cannot be generalized to the wider population. However, it is my belief, as the researcher, that sufficient data was collected to effectively answer the research questions, and there was sufficient time to transcribe, interrogate, and compile the data that was collected for this study.

The study also limited itself to the communication dynamics of women politicians and the possible effects. This carries the implication that the study did not interrogate political communication dynamics in their totality or other related factors that could affect women political candidates.

Despite all the mentioned limitations, this study provides valuable inferences and assessments about the political communication dynamics and how culture and religion affect women politicians in their quest for political leadership. Further, due to the rigour adopted in the study, the findings can be transferable to other counties experiencing women's marginalization due to cultural and/or religious factors.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS –COMMUNICATIONCHALLENGES

4.0 Introduction

In this chapter, I present the findings of my study based on the research questions, which were premised on the two questions: What intra-cultural communication dynamics affect the performance of women politicians in Wajir County? Why do women in Wajir County experience communication challenges while campaigning for elective positions?

The questions elaborated on issues such as: What are the cultural discourses/communication that affect women's involvement in politics? What are the predominant cultural discourses/communication (folklore, poems, parables, and proverbs) that influence the perceptions of the electorate on women's involvement in politics? Do religious discourses/communication in Wajir county affect women's involvement in politics? Why do religious and cultural communication develop perceptions that are barriers for women leadership?

The findings are based on data collected from 27 respondents from Wajir county, purposely selected for this study. They included women politicians, community women leaders, election campaign team members, religious leaders (imams and sheikhs) and members of the councils of elders.

Noting that the study was informed by the theoretical considerations and literature review underpinning my research, the data I collected, through individual interviews, and analysis of documents and radio/TV recordings, was presented in narrative form using

quotes from participants and summaries from my data sources. After analysing and interpreting the interview data, other sources of data were used to cross-check in order to validate and triangulate the information. I quoted the most relevant, useful, and concise texts from the interviews. I then arranged the information into themes that emerged from analysis of the data and present the results in the following sections. The Table 4.1 below, shows the codes I used to differentiate and indicate the sources of the citations that feature in this and the following chapter.

Table 4. 1: *Codes used to indicate sources of data/interviewees*

Code No	Representing
WP1, 2, 3....	Woman Politician (women who ran for national political office or were later nominated to county assembly)
MCL1, 2, 3...	Male Community Leader (includes Imams/Sheikhs, elders, male politicians)
WCL1, 2,3...	Woman Community Leader (women campaigners, advisers, community leaders)
CM1, 2, 3...	Campaign Manager (included men and youth who supported and lobbied for woman political candidates)

Source: Author

The study focused on barriers to participation by women in politics in Wajir county, with special interest in the interpersonal discourses evident through intra-cultural communication and political language. Specifically, the study focused on seeking responses to the aspects of communication and language discourse that influenced women's involvement in politics. These included religious over tones and other cultural

discourses—such as folklore, poems, parables, and proverbs—that could act as barriers to women’s involvement in politics.

This chapter specifically looks at areas that could have impacted communication for women politicians in Wajir County in the 2013 national elections. I start by outlining some of the reasons for their involvement or interest in politics, a not-so-familiar territory for women in this community, as chances had not been given to them in the past elections.

4.1 Reasons for women involvement in politics

Kenya gained independence in 1963 and in 1969 the first woman was elected to Kenya’s parliament. During subsequent years the numbers rose very minimally, and in the 2013 general election, 303 women were candidates for the affirmatively reserved 47 women members to the National Assembly (or Women Representative) seats nationally.

In 2013, seven women contested for the Women Representative parliamentary seat in Wajir County. My study investigates why women contested for this seat in this year, as they have struggled to occupy political seats in the region in past general elections. A couple of women previously tried to compete with men for the Wajir constituency seats in previous elections without success.. From interviews that were conducted, the study found that there were two main reasons that explain the interest of the women political aspirants in Wajir county: opportunities created by Kenya’s new Constitution 2010 and passion to change the lives of women.

The most prominent reason given for their increased involvement in 2013 was that the 2010 Kenya Constitution provided a shift as women political aspirants were supported by a new legal framework which created a special seat for women, called the Women Representative seat. This seat was not confined to a particular constituency but was envisaged as a position to represent all the women in the county. The promulgation of this constitution prompted more women in Wajir to join politics to take advantage of the seat, particularly reserved for women, which was in addition to the already existing positions of 6 constituency seats for member of parliament (MP).

The new constitution also enshrined a new concept of advocating for at least a third of political seats to be reserved for either gender. This shift of mind prompted women to go for elective seats hoping to be supported by Kenyans as they embraced the directives of the new constitution. According to the participants in the study, women went for political posts during the 2013 general election relying on the promise made in the new constitution. The fact that the constitution supported women leadership motivated several political aspirants.

The women politicians who participated in this study had the following to say about this eventuality. Women aspirant (WP2), who vied for the position of Women Representative said:

I vied for the seat because I wanted to be part of the decision-makers of my community and my country. The 2010 Kenyan Constitution created a position for women to be part of the decision-makers locally and nationally. Therefore, I vied in order to get an opportunity to represent my community in decision-making in Kenya.

Woman politician, WP4, reiterated the same sentiments:

North Eastern has always been on the sidelines of mainstream Kenya. The region has not felt the benefits of independence like the rest of Kenya. The 2010 new Kenya Constitution has introduced a glimmer of hope. With that came an opportunity to govern and mind our affairs as a region through the county government. This new opportunity presented by devolved governance inspired my desire to be part of a new cream of leadership that will be part of a historical shift from marginalization to development.

Another woman politician, WP1, added:

The constitution of Kenya created a position for women representative, thus providing an opportunity to transform women's livelihood. I vied for that position because I felt that it won't be a hard position to fight for so long as I was not competing against men. It provided an opportunity to serve women and transform their lives since they have been discriminated for a long time.

From the responses above on what inspired women to seek elective positions in Wajir County, and for others to support them, most of the women aspirants who were participants in this study went for political posts during the 2013 general election because the 2010 Kenya Constitution created opportunities for them to freely and competitively participate in politics. The fact that the constitution supported women leadership motivated several women political aspirants and even awakened political admiration for women in Wajir County.

Secondly, participants in the study also felt strongly that their desire to get involved in politics was influenced by their passion and need to help women who were disadvantaged in society. According to the participants, society looks down upon women, they face discrimination from men who are considered the stronger sex and are discriminated against by society. Further, the participants argued that women do not get support from political leaders. They therefore face double marginalization.

The women aspirants who took part in this study indicated that by participating in politics, women could fight for their rights since, being women, they understood the problems their fellow women face in society. However, WCL7 warned that the discrimination also came from women themselves as the women don't listen to fellow women; they don't value woman per se, and women generally do not attend the public political rallies.

Woman politician, WP2 captured this non-support of women for fellow women thus:

Women were in fact a major challenge for us since most of the women do not expect women to participate in leadership. I think they are already colonized in the mind that women should not be seen in public places, talk in the public or vie in leadership positions. We were therefore seen by fellow women as those who are retarded; who are going against the society norms.

In regard to the desire for political office, despite the challenges, woman politician, WP1, is quoted:

My passion for becoming a politician was informed by the desire to serve women on a higher platform. It was my conviction that at a higher position, I will be able to help these disadvantaged women by fighting for their rights and changing their lives through development. Based on my experience of the problems women face during my work at NGOs, I felt this was the best opportunity to change their lives.

Woman politician, WP3, added:

I have contested for a political position twice, i.e. in 1997 and in 2013. My passion has always been to impact lives positively and make a difference, especially on social-economic challenges facing women, children and the disadvantaged in the community. This category of people, especially from north eastern region, has been marginalized since independence. This can be solved through committed political leadership.

Woman politician, WP1, when responding to the question of problems facing women that she would like to change, had the following to say:

Lack of empowerment and also women were not given opportunity in terms of decision-making; lack of jobs, especially for the girls, since a lot of them dropped out of school. A lot of women also suffer in terms of raising their children especially the widows and those who were divorced and my desire is to improve their lives.

In addition, the study also found that the women had an urge to debunk the society's perception that women are lesser leaders. This was a major drive for women to get involved in politics since they vied for various political seats in the county to prove that they were not 'lesser' in political leadership. The hope of women politicians was that, through them, the society would be able to have a first-hand experience of women's leadership, and that maybe, in future, be more willing to support others who aspire to lead.

In agreement with the sentiments by the aspirants, WCL9 stated that she supported them because she felt women understand women issues better than men, so it made sense to her to support the women political aspirants. She added that many people in the community believed women can lead better than men, however, they feared because of religion which discouraged them from doing so.

According to the Women Representative aspirants who participated in this study, their involvement in politics is a sign that democracy in Kenya has matured, and that they have equal democratic rights to men to contest for any political seat. One of the contestants, WP2 proclaimed that, "We cannot claim to be democratic when women are discriminated against in the political arena." In support of this finding, the Universal Declaration of Democracy, adopted in September 1997 in Cairo, by the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) states that, "The achievement of democracy presupposes a genuine partnership between

men and women in the conduct of the affairs of society in which they work in equality and complementarily, drawing mutual enrichment from their differences."

Besides the opportunity given by the new constitution and the passion to serve, women also indicated that they ran for office because they wanted to make a difference. They felt that the previous political leaders, mostly men, had not done justice to those who voted for them. One of the women aspirants (WP3) noted:

I vied and felt obliged to vie because I was convinced that the constituency was on a perilous course. There is a lot of disunity and discord among the constituents and political leaders, fraud, and lack of developmental initiatives by the then constituency representative in the 10th parliament and his predecessors. I vied because I had a strong opinion about what needed to be done to remedy the situation.

Woman politician, WP4, also expressed her reason for vying:

I vied to fill a political leadership vacuum I have seen within the system. I'm change-oriented and wasn't comfortable with the then leadership. I felt I could fill the vacuum, hence inspire proper leadership and progress in the county's governance dispensation.

Having interrogated the increased interest for women in elective positions in the 2013 elections as a baseline for the study, in the next section I present the communication modes and practices of the women aspirants and how the women had to be innovative in their communication styles and delivery. My study focused on the communication challenges faced by women in particular as, for many, politics was uncharted and unfamiliar territory. But besides the many factors that bedevilled their quest, which I shall touch upon in coming sections, I specifically look at their communication modes, channels, spaces and circumstances that affected their bids for leadership.

4.2 Communication: Dynamics and Effects on Leadership

Communication plays a vital role in politics as this is the medium used by politicians to pass on their political agenda to the electorate. Various factors can affect the one seeking the leadership position and I will look at these factors in more detail in the next sections.

4.2.1 Communication: Modes and Practices

Communication was the mainstay of my study research, which sought to understand the communication dynamics women experienced while campaigning for elective positions. The challenges women politicians in Wajir faced included difficulties in using public forums, negative connotations and parables propagated through cultural folklore and poems used in political discourses against their leadership. Their unfamiliarity, or limited knowledge of the language used in political campaigns, due to non-exposure to politics over the years, also played a role in the communication challenges women faced.

The study sought to establish the communication forms and practices that were employed by politicians, community leaders, campaign team members, and religious leaders. Focus was on politically skewed interpersonal communication and, more specifically, intra-cultural communication forms and practices that were adopted based on the community's patriarchal culture and religious practices that challenged women's ambitions in political leadership and engagement. This communication supported or undermined women's participation in competitive politics in Wajir county. Below, I look at some of the communication modes and channels used by the women politicians in Wajir county.

4.2.2 Communicating at Public Forums

While the mass media is a major component of communicating political ideologies, the respondents argued that political communication also calls for face-to-face meetings. The word of mouth can easily convince and develop positive influence compared to the mass media. This is even more evident in this region, where my study was situated. Electricity and telephone penetration is very low, so use of mass media like television is also low, especially in the smaller villages away from commercial centres,

One of the most common communication forms employed by politicians is use of public forums, popularly known in the region as *barazas*, which were usually called for by men and addressed by them. The women did not have equal access to this kind of meeting because of the cultural biases within the county. People would not attend a meeting called by a woman but would tolerate a woman speaking to them at *abaraza* called by their male counterparts who were vying for the other political posts within the county. This is because of the stereotyped culture that sees the men's voice as more commanding than the women's voice.

In response to this situation, the respondents noted that political communication that targets audiences such as the residents of Wajir county, whose culture does not support women leadership, only favours men. Women therefore had to go the extra mile of first convincing the voters that women leadership should be encouraged, then imploring them to vote in their favour. The respondents noted that support for them came from areas where the campaigners were able to speak face-to-face to the voters, when they got the opportunity. This brings to mind Bernard Berelson's old dictum about communication:

“Some kinds of communications on some kinds of issues, brought to the attention of some kinds of people under some kinds of conditions, have some kinds of effects.” (Nelson, 2015. p.291)

Subsequently, this study found that religious and cultural beliefs in Wajir county restricted women from addressing men in public forums. This posed a challenge for women politicians who could not interact with the electorates as effectively as did their male counterparts. Several imams/religious leaders who were interviewed indicated that Islam did not allow women to speak in public. One male community leader (MCL2) noted:

Since Islam does not permit women to speak in public, it therefore follows that women should not hold political rallies.

Restrictions of addressing open forums meant that women political leaders were forced to then rely on other less effective communication modes such as mass media to communicate with the electorate. The respondents indicated that women used social media and local radio and television stations to communicate with the electorate. For instance, when political aspirants were asked to highlight communication strategies they employed during their campaigns, a woman politician, WP2, highlighted:

I employed different communication strategies depending on the target audiences. I used public rallies when addressing all audiences, however, the reception was not good because our culture restricts women from addressing men in open forums. As a result, I used other communication channels such as op-eds and ads on the mainstream media (to professionals from the county), social media platforms (twitter, Facebook, Instagram for the youth and tech-savvy audiences), ad hoc meetings with the elders at the villages, and live interviews on TV and local radios with Q&A sessions.

In response to communication strategies employed during campaigns, woman politician, WP1, added:

I majorly used social media, radio, women and youth meetings. I used social media frequently, especially Facebook and Twitter. In addition, I used media houses especially radio and TV to sell my agenda for the people of Wajir. But more importantly, I used actual group meetings and had campaign teams who would spread my messages. Flyers was also part of the messaging. I also used patriotic songs.

Noting that political communication is best done through face-to-face public meetings, with mass media being used to mobilize the electorate to attend public forums, women politicians had to contend with other forms of communication as reiterated by woman community leader, WCL4, who said:

Using word of mouth and speaking face-to-face can easily convince voters and cause a positive influence compared to communicating through the mass media. However, our culture does not support women to address the public through public forums. Therefore, women sometimes fear public backlash when they address audiences through public forums. Sometimes, the audiences can shout at them to tell them to sit down and keep quiet.

Based on these findings, it is possible to infer that inhibiting women politicians from using public forums as a communication channel for their political ideas meant that male politicians were more privileged. They had access to the most preferred communication medium that the female politicians did not have. This, in essence, undermined women in their pursuit for political leadership and engagement and reduced their communication modes and channels by creating gendered spaces to which they did not have access.

4.2.3 Culture: Folklore in Political Discourses

In order to beat the competition, male political aspirants and community leaders used folklore and poems with coded messages to discourage community members from voting for women. Respondents were asked to give examples of such socio-cultural discourses in Wajir (folklore - poems, parables, and proverbs) and how they influenced the

perceptions of the electorate on women candidates in politics. The poems mostly dwelt on the weaknesses of women, especially in juggling between meeting their household duties and leading the people as well. Those who were against women leading the community used these poems to discourage the electorate from voting women into leadership. The poems focused on depicting women as individuals who lack the abilities to lead.

For WP4, she noted that many people in these areas (Wajir county) are illiterate and so one has to use verbal or oral communication such as community radio and mobile phone, and messaging those who could read. She also said posters with one's campaign message were also helpful to let the electorate know the candidate.

Woman community leader, WCL4, on her part, agrees that Somalis are an oral society and they also believe that Somalis may tell lies but their proverbs and sayings are based on truth. So, whenever the men use the negative proverbs and parables to undermine women to suit their situation, it is taken for real. She provided the following examples of beliefs, sayings, parables, and proverbs that were used against women politicians through use of proverbs and parables:

'Naag waa caruur caga weyn' or 'Naag waa dhallaan raat weyn' or 'Naag waa ciyaal cagweyn' meaning *'women are children with big feet'* implying women are like children hence cannot hold serious leadership positions like an elective post. Women were portrayed as weak and cannot lead particularly when the community is faced with difficulties. In other words, they cannot be trusted with leadership.

'Naag waa ninkeeda' literally meaning a *'woman is her husband'* indicating a woman leader will take orders from her husband thus women take orders from men and should not be leaders.

'Naag nin walba uu hooyataa' or 'Naag nin walba ayeey keenta' meaning *'a woman goes home to all kinds of men'* implying that a woman can be married to

another clan/community and therefore does not actually fully belong to her clan of birth and so people shouldn't invest leadership in them.

'Naago hiil ha ka sugin' meaning *'don't expect a woman to side with you'* implying that in case of a clan dispute, a woman could take her husband's side and therefore cannot be trusted with leadership. This was most relevant to women who were married outside their clans and were seeking leadership roles especially in this patriarchal society. Some of the women were married outside of their clans and so this was a problem for them. Instead of looking at their leadership capability, the community was being made to look at such petty details which wasn't the case for men.

Woman politician, WP6, reiterated another example, below, of proverbs that were used to demean women politicians and portray them as bad leaders. She believed that such lies repeated many times become truth; a strong perception that became mainstream belief:

'Naag cool ay kicisa mooyaanee, madamisa' – *'a woman only ignites wars and does not end them'* indicating, in this context, that women are bad leaders who lead people to war.

On this same issue, a male community leader (MCL1) remarked that:

There are a lot of proverbs that are insensitive towards women. The proverbs imbue strong information that men are better than women in leadership. Folklore and poems are usually used both as communication tools of encouragement or discouragement. Sometimes, these proverbs, poems and folklores are used to discourage women and incite the community to make sure that a particular person (woman) is not elected.

In the Wajir community, religion and culture cement the conviction that the ideal woman should confine herself to the role of mother and wife, as noted by woman politician,

WP6:

There are cultural factors that sabotage women in leadership. For instance, some Somali proverbs advocate women as household elements and shouldn't appear in leadership position. Some cultural norms insist that women are not fit for any political position but only good for baby-sitting or being subordinate to men.

However, in a few instances, these same cultural discourses of poems, folklore and proverbs, and parables, usually used to discourage women's involvement in politics, played out differently. They were sometimes used to encourage as noted by woman politician, WP2, who said:

Poems are used to encourage participation in supporting women. For me specifically, there are people who did poems for me to help me campaign, and in fact the poems helped support my campaigns. In the poems used in song form like the 'buraanbur' (a Somali praise folk song), women would sing their support for me conveying messages that shared my mission and ideologies (talking about my political candidature), encouraging people to give me an opportunity. In addition, I believe these discourses are both positive and negative. Positive way is that it enables people to buy into your vision and understand and get sincere about your intentions. Negatively, people will abuse and turn the proverbs and poems into abusive languages that aim at undermining you and discouraging your election. In my case there were also poems that were used to praise me - that I was young, energetic and should be given an opportunity.

Religion and culture are intertwined in the community in Wajir county. Islam, which is the main religion, is part and parcel of daily life. The majority of residents in the county are Somalis whose cultural norms and traditions and religion are highly integrated in their lives. An example of how religion meshed with culture is indicated in this much-quoted hadith (saying of the Prophet Muhammad) when he said, "Never will succeed such a nation as makes a woman their ruler/leader". Campaign manager (CM2) on the same matter agrees:

Religion is largely the culture of the electorate hence the proverb: 'A community that is led by women does not prosper.' This results in a major decline in self-esteem among women.

The study found that majority of people in Wajir county who were against women political leadership used specific proverbs, parables, and poems to discourage the electorate from voting women into leadership. WP6 remarked that:

While women are progressively being accepted into politics, the Somali society remains patriarchal in nature as in most African cultures. It's only the constitutional requirement that forces space for women. Had that not been in place, our men would continue to dominate our political arena. However, we see women included in some songs, and other discourses as a bandage to the male group candidates.

Other folklore, sayings and poems used to disparage women and discourage the electorate from voting women into leadership roles mostly talked about the weaknesses of women, especially in being able to juggle between household duties and leadership. A woman's role was mainly expected to be in their husband's home. Woman politician, WP6, shared these sayings to illustrate this mentality:

'Gabadhi wa guur u joog' - A girl is just waiting for her husband to be.

'Gabadhi xabaal ku asturrayd ama nin ku asturrayd' - A girl's worth is only in death or in her husband's home.

'Gabar guri ha kaa gasho ama good ha kaa gasho' or *'Gabadhi ama good ha kaaga jirto ama guri ha kaaga jirto'* - It is best that the girl is in a hole (grave) or at her husband's.

Agreeing with the above assertion, one male community elder, MCL2, who participated in the study argued that:

Poems were actually used during the 2013 general election to rally votes. Communities were mocked for supporting women leadership. Through the poems, such communities were asked who would lead them when their female leaders were in the labour ward or on maternity leave.

Expounding on the same point, another male community leader (MCL1) added:

Folklore and poems are used both as tools of encouragement or discouragement depending on the circumstances. When it fits the bill, the communities use them well to show the reason why a certain eventuality should happen. When it is against, it is used to discourage to divide votes to make sure that the person is not elected. There are a lot of proverbs that are insensitive to women that prove what

men can do and women can't and so on. Poems were also used in the last election to rally votes where the candidates are shown in good light and songs praising their abilities and so on. In northern Kenya, there are clichés that were created, such as, when a community wanted to elect a woman, they were told that, "What will you say, that your MP is in a maternity giving birth or in the labour ward?" That has been used to show that people are actually at a loss if they elected a woman. It is presented in a format used to discourage because childbirth takes her away from work for a period. In communities such as the Somali in northern Kenya, folklore is male dominated. Even when poems are created by women, they are used to perpetuate a male-dominated environment and leadership. It is not always that men are doing this to demean women; sometimes women do it because of their upbringing. Folklore, poems, and proverbs are used both positively and negatively, but in the case of women looking for elections, I doubt whether they were positive. If they are, they are not wholly accepted.

Further, and putting this in perspective, some women politicians faced rebellion from their opponents due to pregnancy. One female politician, WP1, commented:

The main challenge was that I am a woman. Further exacerbating my problems was that I was pregnant. Those who were not supporting me argued that if I was elected, I will spend a lot of time on maternity leave and therefore I will not be available to serve the community.

A majority of the women political contenders during the 2013 general election confirmed that these poems acted against them and eventually made them lose votes. Woman politician, WP3, commented that:

The poems that were used to discourage the election of women had a great effect since if you look at the results, there was a difference of over 2000 votes between the governor's and the women representative's votes. This means that 2000 people decided not to vote for a woman, yet they voted for the men. Considering the small population of voters in Wajir County, 2000 voters can make a big difference.

According to Yang and Stone (2003), politics in its nature is talk and when women are not able to talk, they cannot be politicians. The respondents argued that the language they used in public rallies during their campaigns was largely informed by their cultural practices. On this issue, WCL4 had this to say:

In my view women are better communicators than men; they are mavens when it comes to selling their ideas and can convince the electorate better since they are more persuasive, but they are handicapped by cultural barriers and stereotypes perpetuated by male chauvinism. Women can communicate more effectively than men but financial inability and clannism, coupled by cultural narratives under the guise of religion is the reason they cannot convince the electorate since society is already having a predetermined mind.

Politics demands the employment of words or language that is appealing to the electorate. This therefore includes the poems, proverbs, and parables that make messages clearer and in tune with the context of the targeted audience. As regards the kind of language used in politics, it is noteworthy that politics is about persuading the electorate to vote in favour of a certain candidate. In many communities, there is a language that resonates with the electorate and communication was enhanced when a candidate used language that depicted the tradition of the community. Language was therefore a very important component of campaigning and in Wajir county the political language uses Somali folklore and poems. However, there was a belief that most female politicians were not familiar with the proper use of political language that the electorate was used to. One male community leader (MCL5) argued that:

Women do not understand the language used in political campaigns because they are not involved in creating the poems, proverbs and folklore that are used in public meetings.

Another male community elder (MCL4) added that:

Women have a hard task, compared to men, in communicating with the electorate; women hardly use the language that the electorate expect during campaigns. This is because men create the language and women do not understand it fully.

Woman politician, WP2, underscored the importance of poems and folklore:

In expressing yourself as a politician, there is a need to use language, stories, poems, folklore and proverbs as these depict what the community has lived with for a long time. Mentioning what you plan to achieve as a politician with relevance to the history of the community can go a long way to convince those voters you understand or are in touch with their problems.

Unfortunately, women were found to fail in communicating to the electorate in a language that could easily convince voters in their favour. In support of this finding, Hay (2002) argued that politics is inherently dependent on language; hence the notion that “language is (an instrument of) power”. Edwards (2009) supported this by arguing that communication in politics is also affected by the language the politicians use in their campaigns. As long as women are trying to communicate in a language system not designed for their use, they will not be able to fully articulate what it is to be a woman.

To show this challenge more vividly, Wood (2009) notes that culture refers to structures and practices, particularly communicative ones, through which society announces and sustains its values. She adds that gender is a significant issue in our culture, so abundant structures and practices serve to reinforce our society's prescriptions for women's and men's identities and behaviours.

According to Yang and Stone (2003), politics in its nature is self-expression and when women are not given an equal playing ground to express themselves, they can hardly succeed in politics. The respondents argued that the language they use in public rallies during their campaigns is largely informed by their cultural traditions, norms and practices. Politics demands for the employment of words or language that is appealing to the electorate. This, therefore, includes the poems, proverbs, parables, and folklore that make messages clearer and in the context of the targeted audience.

From these findings, we can conclude that women politicians lacked the knowledge in the use of local political discourse, particularly poems and folklore, which affected how they performed during the last elections. Considering that no woman had been elected in over fifty years since independence and the community were only used to male politicians, the women candidates had a difficult task understanding and using the familiar yet coded political language that the electorate was used to.

4.2.4 Other Communication Means

Although the women politicians generally agreed that face-to-face communication in public forums like *baraza* (open public forums) was the best medium in gaining the support of the electorate and in coming to the realization of the challenges they faced in achieving this mode of communication, they had to rely on other modes of communication to get their messages across.

The women resorted to audience (electorate) segmentation that allowed them to meet with groups of men, women and youth in smaller gatherings, and not the public forums open to their male politicians.

Another of the more common alternative means of communication, since women were restricted from addressing the electorates via public forums, was the use of mass media to effectively reach out to the electorate. The women used radio and TV channels to reach most of the population in the more urban and commercial centres and sometimes villages where people had radios that used batteries, as many of these areas were not connected to an electricity supply. Woman politician, WP1, observed that, “Though face-to-face communication was the most effective method in getting followership and in convincing

voters, I tried to arrange for some public meetings *barazas* to address the electorate, but this was rarely possible due to lack of support from the elders.”

Yang and Stone (2003) argued that politics and mass media are intertwined in such a way that the success of the one depends on the other. They went on to suggest that this relationship may be complex but yet simple, because they depend on each other. In one aspect of this relationship, politicians depend on the media to get their messages across to the public and the media rely on the politicians for news. To make the relationship more interesting, the public needs to be part of the equation because these factors interact on a daily basis. This relationship is well characterized by Ansolabehere, Behr, and Iyengar, as cited in Zaller (1999):

Today, political leaders communicate with the public primarily through news media that they do not control. The news media now stand between politicians and their constituents. Politicians speak to the media; the media then speak to the voters.(1993, p. 1)

Another female political politician, WP3, shared the alternative modes of communication she used:

During the 2013 general elections, my communication channels included the social media, radio and television. My major target group was the youth and therefore I mainly used social media. Most of the youth electorate got access to social media through smartphones. I also had interviews with the print media including the Standard and the Nation newspapers. I used community radio (Wajir Community Radio and Star FM both vernacular stations). These were modes of communication that enabled me to reach the other groups that I could not have a face-to-face meeting with. For example, most of the people in the rural areas listened to the radio, and they made decisions based on what they listened to. I only targeted smaller *barazas* when I wanted to talk to specific individuals.

The respondents who participated in this study generally concurred that, with regard to the use of media, the women used social media, local radio, and television stations to communicate with the electorate. However, due to the religious and cultural norms women politicians faced, they had difficulties in addressing open rallies. They therefore had to rely on mass media and social media to communicate with the electorate.

To take advantage of folklore and poems, some women politicians managed to appropriate these traditional communication means in their social and mass media campaigns, something that endeared them to the electorate. One of the women candidates, WP2, said:

During my campaigns, I used different rallying calls to bring people together. I used “*dhikri* (devotional acts used mainly in religious gathering where phrases and prayers are repeated aloud praising God. In the Somali community, women gather together and sing/chant praises as a form of worship.)” in certain areas and people were able to come in large numbers. Initially, some residents had already been advised by their local MP to vote for a different candidate but when I used the term “*dhikri*” in my campaigns, I got votes! However, I think it is important to understand your audience before you use certain community songs, poems or proverbs. There are places in Wajir where I could not use “*dhikri*”; for example, in Habaswein, a district in Wajir south, where it would have been considered inappropriate. In Habaswein, you need to use “*dhantoo* (a style of traditional Somali music and folk native to areas inhabited by the Ogaden clan of the Somali-speaking people and majority inhabitants of Wajir South constituency of Wajir County come from this clan.)” instead of “*dhikri*”. In Wajir Town, I used modern songs which attracted many people. In western Wajir, I would use “*balaqlay* (a dance common to the Degodia clan also inhabiting Wajir county)” In north Wajir, I would use a dance called “*salbaloni* (also a song/dance used by the inhabitants of Wajir county)” which is a song sang for cows. The voters would love it and this attracted them to my campaigns.

In essence, some women politicians chose an innovative communication path. Instead of giving up because they did not know how to use folklore and poems used by men, they created a new path through the use of songs, memorable phrases and dance in a different manner. The ingenuity in using memorable phrases lay in the fact that one female

politician adjusted the campaign communication dances/poems/folklore to suit each geographical region within the Wajir county, having realized that using a single form of communication would not have resonated with all county residents. This is because the different clans have their own kinds of songs and dance.

Another way the women politicians got their messages across to the electorate was through appropriate audience segmentation that allowed them to meet with groups of men, women and youth in smaller gatherings, the larger public forums being mainly more accessible to their male politicians. This segmentation and meeting with smaller groups of community members helped them share their vision and plans for the community and also allowed them to get feedback on the expectations of the people. These tactics attracted voters to their political campaign meetings even though it was considered out of place for men to listen to women in public forums. This was however possible in these smaller gatherings which were not out so public.

Most of the women aspirants used songs and music to engage and connect with the electorate. Women are more flexible in dance and song compared with the men in the community. Use of music and dance was therefore much more prominent with the women's campaigns. An example of a modern song that was created for one of the women aspirants is transcribed below. The Somali song helped with her general call-to-action for support from women and especially with her personal candidature.

The region of North Eastern,
The Progeny that dwells (there),
Be they men or women,
(Both) are well educated.

It is a land of plenty,
 (A land) teeming with livestock,
 Of flowing rivers,
 And plenty of pastureland and farms,
 Provided by the Generous Lord.

O ye people of North-Eastern,
 Your wise old-men and custodians of knowledge,
 To compete with neighbours that we share the country with,
 Of importance to consider is,
 in the 'political' struggle and the elections,
 For the region to be led wisely,
 Women have a big role to play.

Fatuma: a lady of great forbearance,
 Of Patience and immeasurable fortitude,
 Is vying for political leadership,
 Elect her, it is upon you to elect her.

In spite of the communication challenges facing the women political aspirants, there was a ray of hope, particularly from some campaign team members who worked with the Wajir women aspirants. They argued that women were not weaker in leadership nor incompetent in articulating their views to the electorate. But they did note that women politicians' ability to effectively communicate their political ideas during campaigns was hampered by the treatment they received from a patriarchal society. Campaign manager (CM1) felt that, "The problem is that the male-dominated electorate does not want to listen to views of women politicians," thereby shutting them down and not giving them the opportunity to engage in open forums like their male counterparts.

On the other hand, although many of the respondents felt women were side-lined, some of the respondents in this study disagreed that women are challenged in articulating their views to the electorate. WP2 notes that, "The electoral process in Kenya is bound by legislative measures that ensure women who are involved in politics are well educated, so

personally I do not feel that women are challenged in terms of being able to articulate their views. The problem is that they do lack ears willing to listen to their views”.

According to another respondent WCL3, “Women are not disadvantaged in terms of their skills and competency in communicating effectively to the electorate. Their self-efficacy in communicating effectively during campaigns is challenged by the perception and the treatment they receive from the society”. According to her, women can communicate far better in political rallies and campaigns, but the society has an already stereotyped mind that they are meant to be mothers and not leaders and therefore should not seek leadership roles.

Additionally, other challenges such as male dominance and the cultural belief that men are better than women made it hard for women to seek leadership. In addition, religious edicts restricted women to assume leadership and limited the ability of women to communicate especially in campaigns involving competition against other male aspirants. A culture that is characterized by patriarchal norms and values, such as the culture in Wajir county, often exhibits communication patterns that are dictated by male-centric overtones, rules and regulations (Maathai, 2006).

Next, I present my findings on how culture and religion play a major role in creating gendered spaces and what, how, and where, women can and cannot communicate as they seek political office.

4.3 Culture and Religion: Dynamics and Effects on Leadership

Despite having solid reasons for participating in politics as articulated in the previous section, most women in Wajir county found succeeding in that realm a very arduous task. My study would not be complete without looking at other factors, besides communication in and of itself, that affected women politicians—factors that led to restrictions being placed upon them in how they communicated and where they could communicate.

4.3.1 Gender Stereotypes and Cultural Beliefs

One of the factors that affected women's political ambitions was cultural belief surrounding the notion of women as leaders. The culture of the community in the county—mainly pastoralist, patriarchal and Muslim—did not support women leadership and preferred men in such roles. These cultural beliefs were one of the reasons that restricted the communication spaces and modes for women and affected their performance in politics in the 2013 general elections.

In relation to the pastoralist lifestyle of the community, according to recent statistics from World Initiative for Sustainable Pastoralism (WISP) a total of over 200 million nomadic and transhumant pastoralists throughout the world generate income and create livelihoods in remote and harsh environments. The areas where pastoralists live are believed to be areas of hardship where conventional farming is limited or not possible. Hodgson (2000) notes that the process of marginalization of pastoralists has not been experienced evenly throughout pastoralist societies. Often, it is the women who suffer the greatest losses. Naomi and Andrew (2008) expound on the level of marginalization of women by stating

that the women's marginalization is twofold: they are 'doubly marginalized'. This is because women pastoralists experience discrimination and marginalization from the government and communities with more economic power, as well as living in remote, under-serviced areas, leading a lifestyle that is misunderstood by many decision-makers, let alone the discrimination from their male counterparts. Compared with male pastoralists, women are even less able to participate in the decisions that affect their lives and livelihoods.

In such communities, there is a high illiteracy rate among women and girls, as only 3 per cent attend school (Tapia & Flintan 2002). This is due to the lack of family resources (boys tend to get priority though this is changing as opportunities for women's employment increase), the distance from houses to schools and the fact that traditionally girls have not attended school. All household property is under the husband's control. When he dies, it is his family who will take over the control and not his wife. Other traditional practices continue to diminish women's rights; for example, early marriage and widow inheritance.

On the issue of culture and women leadership, a woman community leader, WCL1, points out how communication spaces are gendered, and women's voices are not heard by noting that:

The Somali culture does not allow women to give opinions on matters affecting the community. Opinions and decisions are only entitled to men. Women are not involved in decision-making process. Additionally, the culture discourages women from sitting where men are, let alone talking to men in a meeting. This is the reason why women are not participating in the electoral process where men are involved.

WCL1 also adds the following challenges women faced:

The fear of being cursed by both elders and religious leaders and the fear of a super-natural being whose name is invoked in the curse made women fear to go against the cultural wishes in terms of seeking leadership and voting for women candidates. These cultural beliefs were indoctrinated from childhood, so the folklores have created a strong perception that have become mainstream belief.

On her part, WCL4 states:

From my perspective, there is ignorance among the population between the real Islamic teaching and the Somali culture in regard to women and leadership. Another reason is due to the patriarchal nature of the Somali society that tends to feel leadership is a male preserve and women are meant as supporters only. When strong women come up to vie for elective position, men feel their leadership role is under threat and they do whatever is at their disposal to discredit women even if it means using culture under the guise of religion. The challenge is that women themselves are not well versed with the Islamic teaching hence are exploited by men to suit their narratives.

The results of the study also indicate a lack of support for women political leadership in the county to an extent that there would be a conflict in the event that a woman emerged as a leader. According to a community leader (MCL1) in Wajir County:

Cultural practice generally discourages the participation of women in politics. As a matter of fact, communities get angry when a nomination process brings through a woman. We have seen, at different levels, anger from communities that complain they have just been given a woman representative (position). I have been involved in discussions where we had proposed that the people one of the 6 constituencies in Wajir seek support for the Deputy Governor and the Women Representative positions and leave the other posts for other communities in Wajir county. This backfired completely, precisely because the position of the women representative post they were to negotiate with other community members, was not seen as a worthy position for the community despite the position being a member of parliament post for the entire county. The disagreement between the main Wajir county and this specific community was that we had proposed (negotiated for) a post for a woman as our share and therefore the community felt that we were marginalized.

Women also faced other issues, linked to culture, such as the issue of clans. Although all the communities living in this county are from the Somali tribe, they are divided along clan lines. Women not only had to deal with culture and religion but also cultural biases, within the clan-based leadership structure, of male versus female candidates. One of the women politicians, WP4, noted:

Clannism is a challenge. Convincing voters from other sub-sections of my family was very hard since they felt one of their own, a man, was contesting on another position and that voting for him was like a family obligation and a better bet compared to me, a woman.

For woman politician, WP2, who had to contend with being a woman, clan bias, and also her youthful age, remarked:

My challenge was delinking clan-based voting from the system, as electorates were used to clan voting. It was a challenge to campaign on a blanket platform (bringing all electorates together regardless of their clan), detached from clan structures. Age was another factor. I had to struggle to ensure my electorate put me into consideration during the voting day as the locals have the perception that youth cannot take up leadership role.

On the same, WCL1 had several issues on chances for women including her gender as she enumerates these challenges as follows:

Social-cultural factors including clannism, gender of the candidate and traditional leaders' anointment or endorsement of candidates; Economic factors – Resource worth of the aspirants; Ethnic dominance – is the candidate coming from the dominant clans; Caste – is he/she an outcast or mainstream clan member; Religious factors; Cultural myths that women are weak and meant to be housewives only.

The study also found that, in Wajir county, women are seen as lesser beings in the community and even if, at local level, they are selected as leaders, that does not hold much significance—implying a woman's position was not of much significance to them.

Adding to this notion, community leader (MCL2), reported that:

I have seen where, in the distribution of positions in the Community Development Fund (CDF) committees, women from specific communities were nominated to leadership posts in a certain constituency so as to ensure equal distribution amongst the community. However, the community that was given a women committee member still complained that they have not been represented in the committee. They felt this was a very serious decision-making committee, in terms of dispensing CDF funds and a man would have been preferable. The argument is that the community which gets a woman into any leadership role, such as on this committee, has not been given anything. Communities that are given women slots

feel belittled and so we see that it is not just in political leadership, but all leadership, that the community prefer men over women.

The same community leader was quite pessimistic about women political leaders and added that:

This is the most likely scenario in other counties where women were elected to parliament simply because the position was reserved for women. In Wajir county with 6 constituencies, there is no woman that has been elected as a member of parliament (MP) and I do not see that happening any time soon. This is entirely due to ignorance and the community's cultural practices and beliefs that women cannot represent the people. Therefore, it is a major impediment to women as they fight for political space in Wajir county. Right now, we have women in parliament but they are coming in from reserved positions for women where men were not participating, or they are nominated at a party level. Those are the two major sources of women leadership in parliament or the senate.

In Somali culture, a majority of the people believe that it is disrespectful for women to compete with men for leadership positions. In fact, most think that it is a curse for a woman to lead. This type of culture and stereotyping is a major drawback for women who are seeking political leadership. It was one of the challenges that women faced as explained by woman politician, WP1:

Culturally, the community does not give women opportunity to give opinions and believe that decisions are only made by men. Women are not involved in any way in decision making and women are not entitled to come and sit where men are and talk. That, according to the Somali culture, is not expected and in terms of politics, it is even worse. The community believes men are superior to women therefore whatever men decide is what they shall come and share with women. Religion reinforces this because the sheikhs and imams preach against them in the mosque, and especially so when a woman is competing against a man. In a situation where women are competing against women it is better because the position is only for women. Women going for political posts or competing against men are considered bad women since they do not respect their religion or their families.

On the same issue of culture, and how it inhibits women's political opportunities, another male community leader, MCL2, tried to explain away the bias by implying it is quite widespread even in other parts of the continent and said:

In Africa, cultural practices influence elections. They make significant contribution. In fact, elections are largely dependent on cultural practices. Culture affects which political candidates get nominated, who gets what votes and so on. It decides whether a man is elected or a woman is elected and even though, in the current era, young candidates aspire to look for seats, ultimately it is the community's council of elders or the family/clan that decides which candidates go through to the elections.

In addition to data gained from interviews, from document analysis I found that the FIDA Kenya report of the 2013 election indicated that women political aspirants from Wajir county faced cultural and gender stereotyping. In the report, one women candidate was quoted:

People in my clan, other clans, and other candidates kept saying to me, 'What are you women looking for... your place is not in politics... go and stay with your family... you don't respect men...you are Muslim... you're not supposed to be in politics.'

She further said:

In my region there has never been a woman elected. Women have never represented men in that region. They have never been elected even at the council level – we have only had one woman councillor who was nominated in the region – only men should lead not women – this is the people's attitude.

These findings clearly show how gender stereotyping in a patriarchal society like Wajir county affects women's aspirations in political leadership. FIDA Kenya (2013) reports that, in Kenya, women's leadership still suffers setbacks by virtue of cultural and patriarchal stereotypes and beliefs, and this supports this study's findings.

Another interesting cultural dynamic highlighted by the study was the low literacy levels, especially of the women in the county. This study found that education was a major impediment to women's participation in politics. This is because the communities in Wajir county do not generally support the education of women. According to community elders who took part in the study, the education of women is not as much a priority as is the education of men. Respondent MCL3 put it this way:

Wajir is still in a situation where the daughter is educated only if there is enough money beyond educating the son. If the money in the family is just enough for the son, the daughter misses school. This is, therefore, a culturally inherent thing that discourages women leadership since they are not educated enough to take up political leadership.

Indeed, lack of education among a majority of women in Wajir county is an impediment to their participation in political leadership. According to the 2013 report by the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS) and the Society for International Development, there are high levels of illiteracy with over 15 counties in Kenya having more than 30 per cent illiteracy levels. Wajir county is second in this list with 76 per cent illiteracy level. The constitution of Kenya 2010 demands that those in leadership positions should have a certain level of academic education based on the political seat they are vying for. For example, one cannot be a governor of a county if he/she does not have at least an undergraduate degree. In addition, members of parliament are expected to have attended tertiary level education. Lack of education also makes it more difficult to change the cultural and religious mindset of the voters, especially the women. Infact for WP4, she notes that in Wajir county, because of illiteracy, during elections, women have to get seek help from their husband or brother to guide them who to vote for, and in the end, perhaps

the vote ends up not being cast for the woman's preferred choice but will be at the discretion of these male relatives.

4.3.2 Religious Beliefs and Bias

Besides cultural beliefs, the study expected that religion would be a major impediment for women's involvement in leadership during the 2013 general election. The residents of Wajir county are mainly Muslim and because religious and cultural beliefs do not allow women to address men in public, it was a challenge for women politicians who could not interact with the electorate as effectively as their male counterparts. Several religious leaders who were interviewed for the study also noted that Islam does not allow women to speak in public. One imam, MCL4, confirmed this by saying that "Islam does not permit women to speak in public. This, therefore, follows that women should not hold political rallies." According to a majority of the respondents, the religion permits women to sit and listen, but only to allow their men to make the decisions. This is also supported by the community's cultural practices.

However, when the study's respondents were asked whether they thought religion affects women's participation in politics in Wajir county, responses from various participants were surprisingly mixed. Some agreed that religion affects them while others stated that religion wasn't necessarily against women leadership. A majority of respondents stated that religion discouraged women leadership, with some of the respondents arguing that "Islam does not allow a woman to work, mingle with men, be in a public place and talk in front of men," while quoting the Muslim religious scriptures to reinforce their statements.

On her part, WCL7 noted that:

Islam does not allow women to go out without their *mahram* (a close male relative usually a husband, son or brother), so it was difficult for women aspirants to go out on their own to campaign. Some religious leaders propagated the idea that women should not contest for political seats and encouraged the community not to vote for women saying it was a sin. They even announced the same in the mosques adding that women's voices are *awrah* (something that should be hidden from public), and should not be heard, especially by men. The mode of dressing in a *hijab* (the religious veil worn by women in the presence of any male outside of their immediate family, which usually covers their full body head), was also made clear by the expectations from community.

WP1 had this to add regarding religion and effect on women leaders:

Religion affected the politics because the imams were the first people preaching about the new constitution and informing people about what the constitution was saying on the one-third representation of women in politics and leadership in general. The community had no voter education on electing women representatives and this was affecting them. On the other hand, according to the imams, Islam does not allow a woman to go and work, mingle with men, be in a public place and talk in front of men. They were using that against women because according to them women should sit in their houses and wait for their husbands to go and work. According to them, Islam does not allow women to be leaders.

One campaign manager (CM1) explaining the non-support for women indicated that:

Religion is the culture of this community hence strict adherence to the teachings of Islam. Islam religion explains why women should not hold positions of power: women have more vital role to run the home including childbearing and child nurturing, women are physically weaker hence cannot withstand the strain that comes with positions of leadership, temperament of women is influenced by hormonal activities throughout her lifetime hence her decisions will be influenced by emotions. In addition, there is cultural perception that the woman cannot deliver much on their political docket - it is a proven reality too because the community has not felt the positive impact of previous women who have held positions of power i.e. the women do not give back to the electorate but uplift only their personal status.

The women candidates also had differing sentiments regarding religion's effect on their communication and political bids. Woman politician, WP6, said:

Speaking of Islam as religion in question, I would say partly yes, it affects women participation in political leadership. Some scholars believe that women should be household agents but most Islamic jurisprudence has no reservation or objection to women leadership so long as they observe Islamic etiquettes.

Woman politician, WP5, felt that the religious leaders were not supportive and noted that:

The religious people, especially the Muslim religious leaders, have negative perception about women contesting for elective post. They think those are positions for men, thus, women competing with men in those positions are disrespectful and going against Islamic rules.

Besides the women politician's misgivings, their female supporters were more vocal and a woman community leader (WCL1) felt strongly that:

Religious leaders decide who should be elected a leader. They evoke religion in a way that fits their definition. As a result, there is a lot of religious misinterpretation on women's rights and leadership. These misinterpretations mislead the community on women political leadership since the community strongly belief in what the religious leaders say.

Another woman community leader, WCL2, was even stronger in her indictment of culture and religion and how it impedes women from leadership by saying:

Islam does not allow a woman to work, mingle with men, be in a public place and talk in front of men. The Somali culture does not allow women to give opinions on matters affecting the community. Opinions and decisions are only entitled to men. Women are not involved in decision-making process. Additionally, the culture discourages women from sitting where men are, let alone talking to men in a meeting. This is the reason why women are not participating in the electoral process where men are involved.

The sentiments above show how religious communication about women's engagement in politics by religious leaders influence women's participation and performance in the political arena. For most people in the county, the religious commands, which are

generally believed to be decreed from God, were used to discourage women's endeavours in political leadership. This is because religious preachings were portrayed as discouraging women from competing in politics, thereby leading to women's limited chances of succeeding in politics.

As mentioned earlier, however, there were a few surprising sentiments in those that believed religion was not an impediment to women politicians. Woman community leader, WCL4, was one of the rare naysayers in regard to religion being an obstacle to women leadership and noted that:

From my experience, I have not seen opposition or propaganda by religious groups against women candidates during electioneering period. A lot of people confuse Somali culture with Muslim religion and give unfavourable views when asked about women leadership, especially in politics.

On the other hand, an ambivalent male community leader (MCL3) said:

On whether religion affects women participation in politics in Wajir County, I can say 'Yes and No'. In Islam, women are not supposed to seek leadership positions and "cursed are nations led by a woman", as our prophet said in one of his *ahadith* (prophetic reports). But rarely do you find a person quoting the same to reject a woman's election into a leadership position. They would rather reject her based on her gender and say, "She is weak, she can't represent 'us', she is this, she is that."

The study also found that there were instances where Muslim religious leaders (imams and sheikhs) supported women leadership, with a caveat. With the new constitutional dispensation that created the position for Women Representatives, the religious leaders were charged with the responsibility of educating the community on these new positions and rallying them to support the women.

WP4 noted that the religious perception had some negative impact but that it was outweighed by the cultural factor. She felt some religious people think that, as Kenya is not an Islamic state, women have equal rights to vie for any elective post. This response was one of the more positive in support for women's political aspirations.

In addition, and arising from the cultural practices in Wajir county, and the edicts of the religious leaders, an election of a woman leader was only possible if there were no male contestants in similar posts or positions. The religious leaders supported women in positions where there was no competition from men. However, in instances where women dared to challenge men in the same political positions, the religious leaders were categorical in discouraging such practices. A community leader, MCL4, interviewed during the study mentioned that, "In Wajir county, in cases where women were elected, it is definite that they were elected simply because the position was reserved for women."

On her part, WCL4 notes that:

In the last general election, there was no female candidate who contested against a male candidate. All the female aspirants went for the women preserved seat, however there were challenges in terms of party politics, clannism and financial resource. The electorates were not interested in candidate's policies and that was a major challenge. Generally, Somalis are a patriarchal society and it is difficult to convince them that a woman can be a better leader than a man. Where women contested, they were not elected due to cultural beliefs and male chauvinism. To make it worse, even women prefer to elect a male candidate than a woman.

This then meant that the support of the male community and religious leaders was confined to particular positions which they allowed women to participate in. This cultural dynamic affected the Wajir women politicians as their leadership was only supported for positions reserved for women. The study found that, when religious leaders supported

women leadership, they only talked about leadership positions where there was no competition from men. So, the positions that women could run for were also restricted.

The main reasoning for this finding indicated that the practice of Islam in Wajir county did not support leadership roles where women would have to lead men. In fact, several respondents (MCL6) said that, “Women are not competent to lead men; we are only willing to vote for a woman for positions that are reserved for women such as Women Representatives.” Consequently, this meant that in Wajir county, an election of a woman leader would only be possible if there are no male contestants for that position.

One of the women political politician, WP5, agreed that:

The imams and the sheikhs were preaching in the mosque against women leadership, especially in instances where women were competing against men. However, in a situation where women were competing against women, it was better because the position was only for women. Women who were competing against men in political positions were considered as individuals who do not respect their religion or their families.

Despite having solid reasons for joining politics, as articulated above, most women in Wajir county found succeeding in politics a tall order to overcome. Generally, the study found that cultural practices and religious beliefs of the communities living in Wajir county, do not support women’s involvement in politics. From the responses on culture and religion, it is clear that Wajir county is largely a patriarchal society which is supported, to a large extent, by Islam, the religion professed by the majority of inhabitants. Although a surprising minority of respondents felt that religion was misconstrued and misrepresented to restrict women from seeking leadership positions. The respondents also clearly indicate that community members get annoyed whenever a

woman seeks to contest for a political seat alongside her male counterparts. This implies that whenever women emerge as leaders, their leadership and performance is marred with a lot of political disagreements within the community. These are the cultural and religious beliefs that affected women's performance in politics generally, and particularly in the 2013 general elections where no woman was elected to any elective position in Wajir county apart from the Women Representative position, which is the position reserved for women.

4.4 Other Challenges faced by Women Politicians

Women political aspirants face many challenges in their political engagements, and these have been documented by various researchers and institutions that look at gender issues. The women of Wajir county, just like their colleagues across the country, also faced similar challenges as revealed from the interviews and document analysis for this study.

4.4.1 Lack of Enforcement of Election Laws and Insecurity

The Elections gender audit report of 2013 by FIDA Kenya highlighted that women need a conducive environment that is free of violence and where electoral malpractices are at a bare minimum. To achieve this, Kenya has taken a number of initiatives to promote such a favourable environment to encourage women to participate in political leadership.

One of these was the enactment of the Elections Act, which provides for stiffer penalties for electoral malpractices such as violence during campaigns and voting days and vote bribery. This aims to provide an equal playing field for anybody to participate in politics regardless of gender, race, age, etc. However, women politicians from Wajir county

contend that, despite recent legislation on the electoral process, there is a lack of effective enforcement of these laws, particularly related to electoral offences. As a result, women candidates get subjected to challenges such as threats and intimidation, underhand actions by opponents, and smear campaigns by their opponents, especially male opponents.

Woman politician, WP1, said:

When I was doing my campaign, I faced a lot of challenge in handling youths who frequently attacked my campaign team members. Some sponsored youths used to come to my rallies and cause a lot of unrest. They will shout at me when I am addressing the electorates and cause chaos by confronting my supporters. The youths sometimes will come with branded T-shirts of my opponents and start causing violence and chaos.

On the same` point, WP2 noted that:

On challenges faced while campaigning, sometimes I would feel undermined because I would go to a place where I had high expectations and do a rally, but men would come and say that the position she is going for is for men. They did not understand the women representative position and thought it is a position for the area MP. They would then bully me. The bullying was especially done by political leaders.

In support of the above assertions by the woman aspirants, a report by FIDA Kenya on Elections gender audit of the 2013 general elections revealed that there were few reported incidences of actual direct violence against women candidates. In some instances, incidences of violence were perpetrated on their associates (e.g. agents, supporters), particularly during the campaign period. However, the threat of violence was rife and used as an intimidation tactic by opponents. This fear restricted women from moving far away from familiar areas, thereby reducing their area of influence and opportunities to communicate with the voters.

The Election Act of Kenya states that political candidates should be provided with security during campaigns. However, responses from women politicians and aspirants from Wajir county indicated that they were never provided with enough security during their campaigns. For instance, woman politician, WP4, said:

Providing security for women political aspirants is like a dream. We did our campaigns without any security. The only security I had was my local arrangement with some electorates to provide me with security.

Another woman politician, WP2, added:

I experienced a lot of violence during my campaign period in terms of intimidation from men, propaganda, threats, verbal abuse, and use of derogatory language. These came from the supporters and campaign team members of my opponents with an objective of demeaning me and my candidature. As women politicians, we need our security beefed up during campaign period and voting day.

The communication in terms of abusive and derogatory language used against women and their supporters prevented the women candidates from moving and mingling freely with voters thereby restricting their communication spaces and silencing the women who could not enter in shouting matches with the men.

The African Women and Child Feature Service, as cited in the FIDA Kenya report of 2013, also found that the main forms of violence against women included intimidation, propaganda, and physical assault. Others included threats, destruction of property, abductions, verbal abuse, and use of derogatory language to demean women. During the campaign period, the National Cohesion and Integration Commission (NCIC) expressed concern over harassment and intimidation of women candidates, as the March 4, 2013

election drew near. International elections observer reports also noted some of these incidents.

Supporting the concerns of the women, the FIDA Kenya report on the 2013 general elections revealed that security of women candidates was inadequate. The report notes:

Although the law provides security for candidates, it was not adequate due to the large number of candidates. Some of the women candidates interviewed paid for security, while others completely avoided any movement at night in response to perceived threats. Observers of the 2013 general election in Wajir county noted isolated incidences of violence and intimidation against women candidates and their supporters (FIDA Kenya, 2013).

The final report of the general elections of 2013 by the European Union Election Observation Mission to Kenya also indicated that there were incidents of violence reported in Mombasa, Marsabit and Wajir, on the election day. Insecurity was therefore a major concern for the women candidates as they campaigned for political seats and is a matter that needs constant oversight to allow more women to be brave and seek political leadership.

4.4.3 Campaign Finances

Document analysis revealed that women political aspirants face financial constraints thus limiting the chances of being elected as political leaders. FIDA Kenya (2013) reported that, “Financial resources are important during campaigns for items including logistics, campaign materials, and media, as well as recruitment and sustenance of campaign teams. All these are very important to enable candidates to effectively reach voters.” FIDA Kenya (2013) also noted that, “National and international observers reported huge campaign expenditures in an environment where campaign expenditure was not

regulated, which tilted the playing field to the disadvantage of candidates from marginalized groups and smaller parties.” This would include women who usually do not have huge financial muscle to campaign with and an in-depth interview with woman politician, WP1, from Wajir county confirms that financing of campaigns was a major challenge. She said:

I had a big challenge in financing my campaign which required a lot of money, manpower and facilities. I was supposed to traverse every corner of Wajir county and sell my manifesto to Wajir electorates. I did not have enough money, thus there are areas I didn't go. That affected me so much since it influenced the outcome of the election.

In another interview, woman politician, WP2, had this to say:

One of the major problems I had during my campaign period was finances. My political party did not provide me with sufficient campaign funds to facilitate the campaign discourse. I had to go out of my way to raise more funds for my campaign. I even raised funds through a funds drive but it was not enough to enable me to traverse the whole county well. This affected my campaign since I was not able to reach every electorate in Wajir county and sell my political agenda.

Woman politician, WP5, reiterated:

Women generally have lower access to financial resources especially those from marginalized areas like Wajir county. This is a major challenge and men use that to demean women in competitive politics. It is hard for a woman from marginalized areas like Wajir to compete with men due to lack of financial facilitation. The political parties and the government at large should find an effective way on how to adequately fund women political candidates during campaigning period. Political seats like the women representative need a lot of funds since candidates have to travel the whole county as compared to seats such as members of parliament which cover a small electoral/constituency area. Sometimes, lack of finances deters qualified and performing women from seeking political seats.

Woman politician, WP3, also noted:

Managing a campaign with my limited resources against opponents who had a lot of money was a challenge. To go for any elective post in Kenya, especially in Wajir county, you need enough money for campaigns to traverse the geographically wide region, and giving handouts to members of the electorate, which is ethically and constitutionally wrong, but would hinder your chances if you are not able to pay voters and your campaign team.

Woman politician, WP6, on her part agreed:

I had a challenge of funding my campaign. Wajir county is vast, geographically, and for women, in terms of finance, it was difficult to reach the electorate because the position of women representative required that I traverse the whole county and talk to people. It was a challenge financially.

Agreeing with the women politicians, woman community leader, WCL4, notes that this challenge is not confined to Wajir county and is a countrywide challenge for women:

Kenyans in general are not worried about policies but what the campaigner can give at that moment and Wajir residents are no different. This reason makes it difficult for women since women do not have the financial muscle to compete with men. This is a general observation and Wajir residents are no different

These findings have demonstrated that a lack of campaign finances constitutes a major drawback, particularly for women political aspirants. The challenge of access to resources is further compounded by the non-regulation of campaign financing, as noted by some of the interviewees. Candidates with enough campaign finances have advantages over aspirants with no access to campaign finances regardless of the leadership qualities they possess. The lack of finances also impeded the women from reaching out and communicating to potential voters in the geographically vast (55,841square kilometres) county of Wajir. We also see the challenge of restricted communication space in this finding as the women could not traverse the vast area due to insecurity.

4.5 Summary

In this chapter, I have presented findings as obtained from the interviews that were conducted and the document analysis. Further, I explain the findings of the study with regard to communication dynamics for women taking part in competitive politics in Wajir county in Kenya and the reasons women in Wajir county joined politics. Women got involved in politics to take advantage of the opportunities created by Kenya's new constitution that created a seat reserved for women. The constitution also mandated that atleast a third of political seats be reserved for either gender. The findings also highlight that women also joined politics out of a passion to change the lives of their fellow women who they felt remained poor despite having had male leaders over the years. The chapter showcased why women politicians in the county faced communication challenges, which included the restrictions that prevent women from speaking in public forums, negative connotations propagated through folklore and poems used in political discourses, and women politician's unfamiliarity with the language used in political campaigns. However, though religion restricted communication for women, it also was not as strong an impediment as culture. Infact, some religious leaders were helpful in disseminating the new constitutional dispensation with regard to the Women Representative position and the one-third gender requirement.

In this chapter, findings on communication forms and practices that were employed by women have been presented and these included use of smaller group forums, folklore and poems, social media platforms, among other communication forms. The study also found that cultural beliefs and religious restrictions, as well as low literacy levels among the

women in Wajir county, contributed to the poor performance of women in elective politics.

Further, other challenges that similarly face other women across the country such as insecurity, lack of political party support and campaign funds, reduced the communication spaces for women because they were not able to reach as many voters as possible due to the large area of the county and their inability to overcome the earlier-mentioned challenges. This resulted in only one female legislator getting elected to the national assembly in the entire county during the 2013 elections. No woman was elected to the county assembly which should have had at least ten elected female members.

In the next chapter, I will present findings in relation to the third question of the study, which was: What strategies do women in Wajir county employ to overcome communication challenges in their quest for elective positions?

CHAPTER FIVE

FINDINGS –MITIGATING COMMUNICATION CHALLENGES

5.0 Introduction

This chapter synthesizes and interprets the findings pertaining to communication dynamics for women participating in competitive politics in Wajir county in Kenya, as provided in the preceding chapter of the study. The discussion focuses on my third research question which was on what strategies, if any, women in Wajir County employed to overcome intra-cultural communication challenges while campaigning for elective positions? To mitigate against the many communication challenges that faced the women political candidates as described above, they found a way to package their political messages in modern songs, dance and memorable vernacular phrases. This was a coping mechanism to counter cultural restrictions that threatened the success of their campaigns.

5.1 Mitigating Communication Challenges

The study found that cultural and religious beliefs that confine women aspirants only to affirmative political positions and low literacy levels among the women in Wajir county made it difficult for most women politicians to get elected. Despite these cultural impediments, the study found that women in Wajir county nevertheless got involved in politics, initially to take advantage of the opportunities created by Kenya's new Constitution that mandated a third of political parliamentary seats be reserved for either gender. Secondly, women politicians said that they joined politics out of a passion to

change the lives of women who remained poor despite having had male leaders over the years.

The study confirmed that women politicians in Wajir county faced several communication challenges. One of the major challenges faced was a restriction from addressing public forums, particularly those attended by men. This restriction made it difficult for women to communicate effectively in public, unlike men who had access and support to articulate their ideas in public forums using folklore and poems to articulate their political ideas.

The men folk, especially male politicians in the community, also used folklore and poems to depict women negatively, particularly painting women as weak leaders whose role should be restricted to homemaking. A further challenge for women politicians was that they were unfamiliar with the language used in political campaigns, particularly how to package their political messages through the use of folklore and poems. This made it difficult for women to articulate their ideas in the language that electorates associate with political discourse, making it harder for the women to connect with the electorate.

Women politicians in Wajir county relied mainly on mass media to communicate with the electorate since, in most cases, they were not allowed to address public rallies. WP2 notes that women's communication methods should centralize on the radio as it is a very important source of information especially the local community radio stations. She reiterates that reaching everybody in the county could be a daunting task, but the radio can reach many. In addition to community radio, use of traditional legacy media, such as TV and radio, were supplemented with social media campaigns targeting the youthful

electorates who were active on social media and who were well positioned to influence their parents' voting patterns.

To counter the communication and cultural challenges they faced, the women politicians in Wajir county found ways around these problems and adopted a four-step communication strategy, discussed in detail later in this chapter, to communicate their political agenda innovatively. Firstly, they coined political messages that resonated with the voters, packaged in memorable vernacular phrases and modern songs, which they propagated via radio, TV and social media to communicate with the electorate. They also had praise songs composed for them seeking support from voters.

Secondly, they used some of the folklore like dances and poems to their advantage by segmenting their audiences and using particular types of folklore with the different clans. WP2 advised that women should focus on things that are appreciated by the community and they should develop poems and songs that are able to attract the people to listen. She felt that when community songs and poems are being played, it is easy to attract the people and they are actually really effective in campaigns.

Thirdly, they carried outdoor-to-door campaigns by inviting women and female youth to attend small group rallies organized in homes or communal spaces such as school compounds so as to achieve the face-to-face connection with voters. For a few of the women aspirants, who had aligned themselves to men running for office from the same political party, they tried, as much as possible to benefit from political rallies organized by the party or the men competitors and asked for a minute or two to greet the people. In this way, they were able to address public rallies which would have a fairly good

attendance by the people who heard them speak through the mass or social media. They took such opportunities to remind the community that they were also in the race for the Women Representative position and sought their votes. Those not aligned to any party or male competitors could not access similar public forums or *barazas*. The fourth and final step was when the women politicians asked their male campaign managers to talk on their behalf to the voters, especially the men and male youth. This four-step communication strategy adopted by some women politicians in Wajir county proved very effective in countering cultural and religious stereotypes against women political leaders.

Several other mitigating measures were recommended as a way of helping women address the challenges they faced during political campaigns. These included eliminating the patriarchal culture in Wajir county, promoting civic education in support of women participation in politics, and building the capacity of women political aspirants and religious and cultural leaders to support women political candidates. The next subsections discuss the findings in detail, synthesizing them with the literature and making interpretations.

5.2 Four Step Communication Strategy

According to Houston & Kramarae (1991) and Hargittai & Shaw (2015), to counter the muting as per MGT, there are several strategies people can use. These include naming the silencing factors (whether men or media news agencies); reclaiming, elevating and celebrating women's discourse; creating new words that are inclusive of marginalized groups; and using media platforms (traditional and new) to give voice to groups. The findings in my study indicate that the women in Wajir county used all these strategies.

To compensate for their lack of proficiency in packaging political messages with folklore and poems, one of the ground-breaking findings of this study is that women politicians in Wajir county adopted personal and innovative communication strategies. The new four-step communication strategy helped women politicians appear more credible and more persuasive in their campaigns. Brehm *et al.* (2009) argue that a source is viewed as being credible when it is considered competent to deliver valid information on a topic and when it is trustworthy, honest and presents a balanced argument. The use of these culturally acceptable communication methods helped increase the credibility and trustworthiness of women politicians.

Wajir county is largely homogeneous in terms of both religion and ethnicity, so any form of communication, and particularly political communication, is received and interpreted within a largely homogeneous cultural environment. To be elected, therefore, women politicians not only have to communicate effectively, but also take into consideration a cultural context that is characterized by patriarchal norms and values in a county that espouses communication patterns that have male-centric overtones, rules and regulations. The use of folklore, poems, parables, and proverbs to pass cultural messages from one generation to the next is mainly the preserve of male elders who are clan spokesmen. Such cultural discourse, when well used in political communication or campaigns, has the ability to encourage the electorate to vote for women (Kaimenyi *et al.* 2013).

The four-step communication strategy, which entailed innovatively packaging their political messages, was a coping mechanism to counter cultural restrictions that threatened the success of their campaigns. Initially, they commissioned modern music/songs, dance and used memorable vernacular phrases put together in an appealing

manner. This helped women politicians solve two problems: first, the use of modern songs, dance and memorable vernacular phrases compensated for women's lack of proficiency in using traditional poems and folklore as used by men, not only to engage voters but also to castigate women candidates. Second, and most important, by packaging political messages in memorable vernacular phrases and delivering those messages on radio, TV and through social media, the women politicians attracted potential voters. The use of memorable phrases in the vernacular helped women break one of the main communication barriers because men were now more willing to listen to women politicians, having heard them on local radio or TV stations. Ordinarily, men in Wajir county would stay away from gatherings organized by women because it was culturally unacceptable for men to listen to women address them in public. However, attracted by the new memorable vernacular phrases, the women's messages reached men through other means and channels of communication.

To counter restrictions on the use of public rallies, women politicians used the mass media and social media to enable them to reach a majority of the population at one go. Mass media has been found to be a major component of communicating political ideologies. Yang and Stone (2003) argued that politics and mass media are so intertwined that the success of the one depends on the other. They further argued that this relationship may be complex yet simple, because they depend on each other. One aspect of this relationship is that politicians depend on the media to get their messages across to the public and the media rely on the politicians for news. Ansolabehere, Behr, and Iyengar (cited in Zaller, 1992) noted that "today, political leaders communicate with the public primarily through news media they do not control. The news media now stand between

politicians and their constituents. Politicians speak to the media; the media then speak to the voters” (Zaller 1999: 12).

The second step was audience or voter segmentation that made the women receive a positive reception in the community areas they visited. This was done through targeted songs, poems and folklore that were appreciated and valued by the clans in different parts of the county.

Thirdly, the women addressed small groups of women and youth in their homes (door-to-door) or in communal spaces such as school grounds, which would have fairly good attendance by the people who had heard them speak through the mass media or who had followed them on social media.

The final step of the Wajir women politicians’ innovative communication strategy entailed their male campaign managers addressing the public on their behalf, especially the men, in places where the electorate was opposed to women addressing men.

The Wajir county women politicians, therefore, adopted the four-step communication strategy—depicted below in table form—to communicate their political agenda innovatively. This four-step communication strategy proved very effective in countering cultural and religious stereotypes against women's political leadership.

Table 5. 1: *Four-step communication strategy*

<p>1. Innovative Use of Folklore and Music</p>	<p>2. Audience/Voter Segmentation</p>
<p>Use of memorable vernacular phrases and modern songs; used in radio, TV and social media to communicate political messages</p>	<p>Audience or voter segmentation by using particular types of folklore - different dances, songs, poems that resonated with the different clans. In this way, messaging was targeted and received positively</p>
<p>3. Smaller Group Forums</p>	<p>4. Using male campaign managers to speak for them</p>
<p>Face to face meetings with small groups of women and female youth usually organized in homes (door-to-door) or communal spaces such as school compounds in villages/towns</p>	<p>Having male campaign managers speaking on their behalf and campaigning for them with the voters, especially the men and male youth. They shared their campaign vision and promises to the electorate</p>

Source: Author

In the use of the innovative four-step communication strategy, atleast one woman got elected to the post of Women Representative to parliament during the elections of 2013. This breakthrough finding means that women political aspirants now know the approach that worked for women politicians who made it to parliament. Therefore, political aspirants in the county, and indeed in other culturally restrictive counties, can package their political messages in similar modern songs, dance and memorable phrases to increase the odds of getting elected in future.

Several other mitigating measures helped women address the challenges faced during their political campaigns. The following sections explore the use of innovative communication strategies by women politicians to compensate for the lack of

opportunities to address their voters in more detail. This was prompted by the religious and cultural restrictions on their use of public rallies. The chapter concludes with a summary of these mitigating opportunities.

5.3 Other Mitigating Measures

Respondents in the study were also asked to propose how the community could assist future female aspirants in Wajir county to mitigate communication challenges brought about by cultural and religious restrictions. While all the respondents agreed that there is hardly a one-size-fits-all solution to ensuring women's leadership, several suggestions were made, including eliminating the patriarchal culture in the county, promoting civic education in support of women's participation in politics, building the capacity of women political aspirants, and the active support for women politicians by religious and cultural leaders. WCL4 has summarised the mitigation measures in her statement below:

In my opinion there must be deliberate effort by women leaders to sensitise and raise the awareness of women so that they can understand their rights. Women also need to be educated to understand Islam and what the Quran says about women and leadership, and also, understand their rights in Islam. Because this is one area where women are really exploited by men since men are the ones translating the teaching of the Quran. There is need for women role models and mentors to sensitize the young girls and even boys to value women leadership. Wajir County has community radio, and it can be used to sensitive the community to better understand the strengths of women by giving examples of successful women who have done great work for the community. Civil society groups should be engaged to educate the society on how to overcome the negative narratives about women leadership. The media should be engaged to give publicity on the importance of women leadership and how to change the negative perception about women and women leadership. Myths and misconceptions about women and their capacity to lead must be engaged head on through massive media campaigns to educate the masses. Educational campaigns should be undertaken to counter the negative Somali proverbs that demean women leadership. Finally, women must find male allies to support their cause since not all men are anti-women.

Agreeing that there are other ways to assist women, WCL4 said there was need to educate women so that they understand Islam and what the Quran says about women and leadership and, to also understand their rights in Islam. She felt this is one area where women are really exploited by men since men are the ones translating for them the teachings of the Quran.

In addition, WCL4 advocates for women role models and mentors to sensitize the young girls, and even boys, to understand the value of communication regarding women leadership. She also advises that the media should be engaged to give publicity and communicate better on the importance of women leadership to change the negative perception about their leadership. She felt strongly that myths and misconceptions communicate about women and their capacity to lead must be engaged head on through massive media campaigns to educate the masses. WCL4 also pushes for educational campaigns to be undertaken to counter the negative Somali sayings, proverbs, and parables that demean women's leadership. She concludes by pushing for women engaging male allies to support their cause as not all men are anti-women. WCL2 concurs that women role models need to come together and hold awareness meetings to change the perception of the society. She felt that it is only through communication and mentoring that women can overcome the negative perceptions about women leadership. I discuss these and more suggestions in the following sections.

5.3.1 Tempering Patriarchal Culture

To give women politicians a level playing ground, respondents suggested that the existing system, which is male-dominated and which shapes women's participation in

politics, should be countered by supporting, nominating and electing more women into political office. This will help in creating a better balance in politics in terms of gender, and slowly eliminate a politics based on patriarchal culture. For instance, one respondent noted that dealing with patriarchy prohibits the exercise of policies, procedures and regulations that give women an equal right to men in participating in social, economic and political interactions and involvement.

A patriarchal system privileges man over woman, particularly in leadership and on economic fronts. Within families, the social environment and the political system, men use force, direct pressure or indirectly through rituals, tradition, law, language, custom, etiquette, education, and the division of labour, to determine what part women shall or shall not play. Consequently, within the political system, women in Wajir county are subsumed under men as can be seen when a woman candidate from Wajir county in the FIDA Kenya report on Gender Audit of 2013 Elections reported:

People in my clan, other clans, and other candidates kept saying to me ‘What are you women looking for, your place is not in politics, go and stay with your family, you don’t respect men, you are Muslim, you’re not supposed to be in politics.’

To provide women politicians with a level playing field, respondents suggested that the existing patriarchal system, in which decisions are made by men in the form of councils of elders, or by religious leaders who are all male, should be discarded. It was also noted that dealing with patriarchy requires a review of policies, procedures and regulations that give women equal rights to men in participating in social, economic and political interactions and involvement. According to a woman community leader, WCL3:

It should not seem as if women are second-class citizens even on decisions that affect them directly. To motivate women into politics and any other leadership positions, or positions of power, it is important that they feel equal to men and enjoy the same status as men in power politics.

In support of women, a male community leader (MCL3) advised that the current patriarchal system should allow women to participate or decide on political affiliation and contesting of elections just as men do:

Where effort has been made, support came through, even if gradually, when they used professionals and the business communities to come together and recommend a lady for a seat and presented that to the elders and the rest of the community. Even if psychologically, some were not satisfied, some success was achieved as in previous elections women got negligible support from the elders. However, supporting women requires much more resources and support than men because for men it is taken for granted that when he wants a position, he can go for it: the question is whether he has the money and knowledge. For women the question is why she wants the position. Crossing that hurdle requires a lot of support and resources. For women, the support they need; I can rate it as twice as much compared to men. However, where I was involved in Wajir county, it was proven that organized support and positive communication on and for women can actually bear fruits, and significant effort can change the perception of the elders, the youth and the women.

To counter these challenges, a woman politician, WP6, also suggested:

Developing a campaign on eradicating such negative socio-cultural discourses by putting in place communication strategies on various platforms; from the traditional modes to the contemporary mechanisms to enlighten the public.

Women should not be treated as second-class citizens even on decisions that affect them directly. To motivate women into politics and any other leadership positions or positions of power, it is important that they are given the same status as men. The standpoint for feminists is that society should be moving toward the goal of “a structure of social relations in which the division of labour... is unaffected by gender” (Brighouse, 2008, p. 360). According to Brighouse “unaffected by gender” is defined as a situation when no

specific activities would be thought of as men's work or women's work, nor would any activities be seen as more appropriate for men or for women.

To provide a level playing field for women, the study found that the current patriarchal system should allow women to participate or make decisions relating to political affiliation and the contesting of elections just as men do. In essence, Wajir county needs a civic and sensitization campaign to eliminate patriarchy and entrench egalitarianism. Going back to the study's theoretical basis, one of the proponents of egalitarianism, Gordon (2008), argued that egalitarianism is central to justice. Egalitarianism places its emphasis on the full equality of men and women while maintaining a professed commitment to scriptural inspiration and authority. I certainly prescribe to and support these mitigating suggestions.

5.3.2 Civic Education for the Electorate

Another way to empower women politicians in Wajir county is to sensitize and communicate with the electorate on the importance of women's participation in politics. The electorate determines who gets elected. It is for this reason that civic education and communication is required to convince men and women to vote for female candidates.

An elder, (MCL4), who participated in the study said that the electorate should be made fully aware, through targeted communication, that women's leadership can contribute to the economic and social development of Wajir, which remains largely underdeveloped despite having many male leaders over the years. He said:

Wajir county has elected men leaders for the past 50 years and has nothing to show for it. I think women should be elected on the basis that bringing a change in leadership can bring some changes in development. If you look at Wajir county

in 1900 and Wajir county now, it is underdeveloped and the leaders over the past 50 years have been men. I think with half a century of trial, it is good enough to try other people. We all know that in rural Africa, it has been proven that the mother is more reliable than the father. This is an indication that women can be better leaders and we should communicate this to the community to accept them.

When asked to highlight the mitigating measures that can be taken to empower women politically in the county for the future, one male community leader (MCL5) had this to say:

In Islam, historically, the role of women in leadership is known and clearly cited over and over. However, because of the various cultural influences, the male dominance in leadership has shut out women. This incessant appetite of the menfolk for politics and leadership, makes them use religious interpretations to subjugate women and deny them opportunities to lead. The current constitution, with or without the wish of the male, requires the participation of women in leadership roles. It presents an opportunity to have a discourse around women leadership in Islam and in Somali community - a discourse, where, without the constitutional pressure, would have been impossible. Women should not wait for men to continue to determine their participation in politics. They should use this new opportunity to expand their political and leadership space.

On her part, woman politician, WP2, suggested the following as measures that can be taken to empower women politically in Wajir county for the future:

Creating awareness on women and leadership through the mainstream media (with case studies of women who played great leadership roles in the society from ancient days), engaging the traditional elders at the villages in the county, consistent campaigns on social media platforms (Twitter, Facebook, YouTube), town hall forums across the county (from the county capital to lowest administrative units). In addition, developing educational materials (pamphlets, brochures, etc) to disseminate the information on women and leadership across the county.

To avert the prevailing negative perceptions, it is important that the electorate be sensitized on the role of women in competitive politics, the role of women as leaders and

the value the community will get from allowing women leaders to become involved in solving societal issues.

5.3.3 Capacity Building for Women Politicians

There is a need to educate women political aspirants about what elective politics entail. It is not enough to give women the space and communication freedom to vie and campaign for elective positions or to sensitize the electorate to vote for women. Women must be ready and willing to take up elective leadership positions. The study found that most women in Wajir county perceive politics as a ‘dirty’ game characterized by corruption, which has persuaded many women not to offer themselves to participate in the political process. Because of this perception, women choose not to offer themselves to participate in political processes. On this, woman politician, WP5, agreed:

Although I contested for the women representative position, somehow, I had a feeling that I was getting into a dirty game where, at one point in time, I will be forced to soil my hands by doing wrong things. Somehow, it contributed to my failure in politics because it traumatized me that politics in Kenya sometimes involves wrong decisions or actions that are detrimental to the society at large

Women in Wajir county need to be educated that corruption and poor behaviour by politicians are rooted in most political systems, not just in Wajir county, but in Kenya and other countries as well. The many cases of women politicians who manage to campaign without getting involved in corrupt undertakings should be showcased to them.

There is also need for financial assistance to women because those that are not financially empowered perceive political campaigns to be very expensive and hence do not offer themselves for elective positions. Campaign manager (CM4), also noted that:

It is important to sensitize women politicians that elections do not necessarily have to involve corruption. Most women in Wajir county, especially those who are not empowered financially, fear venturing into politics because they view the undertaking as expensive and unaffordable.

To further stress the need for civic education, woman politician, WP2, explained:

There are several channels of communication now since people are on the internet and mobile communication has increased. There are national and community radio and television station. There is the social media as well and such communication channels can be used. Right now, the media, such as the local and community radio, are more powerful since even reading and writing hasn't reached some communities (the community is majorly illiterate). Using channels that can easily reach the community talking about virtues of women leadership, will be appropriate. I think a little cultural shift, the presence of women leaders and the successful women at the national level; in the cabinet, parliament and the senate, speaking to the young women and men will probably be a good beginning. This is because ultimately you need to bring up a significant critical mass of women who are able to challenge men on big jobs. Wajir is still in a situation where the daughter is educated only if there is enough money beyond the son. Therefore, this culturally inherent thing should be solved from that level. More girls should be empowered through educational scholarships and if we are able to have equal number of men and women competing for the jobs, perhaps women will be able to take a bigger stand.

In 2013, Wajir county had an opportunity to have women leadership, both at national level with the woman representative at the national assembly, and in the county assembly. However, the people only voted for the woman representative to parliament. The county had to nominate 15 women so as to meet the 'one-third' gender rule as per the Kenya constitution 2010 thereby bloating the Wajir county assembly to 40 (30+15(1/3 of 30)). This was because all the 30 wards went to men and not a single woman was elected even though several women presented their candidatures for the seat.

5.3.4 Support from Religious and Community Leaders

Finally, the study found that religious and community leaders can play a critical role in altering negative perceptions about women's involvement in politics by encouraging

women to participate more fully in politics. Participants of the study proposed that leaders need to begin with a cultural shift focusing on communicating the successes of the current women in leadership positions in the country's cabinet, parliament, senate and also, at local level, the county assembly. Such successes will help shape the perceptions of women leadership among the Wajir county electorate in general, and among young women and men in particular. A gradual cultural shift will act as the starting point for developing a critical mass of women from the county interested in participating in politics. Woman politician, WP2, urged that:

Religious and cultural leaders should support women to participate in politics. This is because ultimately you need to bring up a significant critical mass of women who are able to challenge men on big jobs.

In agreement, woman politician, WP4, added:

Engaging the religious scholars to demystify the narratives on women and leadership, to give more clarification on this issue, and educate the public. This should be done through the various media and social platforms.

Male community leader (MCL3) was also supportive and thought that women should be given a chance to lead in the county:

Even in business, in financial services, lending and credit, the funds that go to the mother become useful. The element of trust has been proven more on the women side than the men side so I think it is the right time to change the dialogue. Wajir women dedicated and for every talented educated man, you can find a similar lady. I think the perception of women being a lesser being should be challenged by giving women leadership positions. Currently, there are county ministers in Wajir county who are women. People need to be shown the performance-based evaluations between women representative and male MP, women minister and the male minister, and that can now be used to change the perception of the community in Wajir and show that their women are a resource and a talent, knowledgeable and that they are more reliable and caring and they are more concerned about the wellbeing of the community.

Women politicians in Wajir county are unlikely to succeed without support from religious, cultural and political leaders. Such support must, however, encompass all elective positions and not merely elective positions reserved for women. This is because the study found that leaders, including religious leaders, in Wajir county, supported women leadership only when the women vied for posts reserved for women. Kenya's new constitution provided for women leadership and, therefore, local leaders, including religious leaders, have the responsibility of supporting women leadership for all elective positions. This position is buttressed by the Islamic teachings that gave women all human rights and equated them to men in all civil rights from as early as 1400A.D. (Qassim Amin, 1899). Islam never put women under the control of their fathers or husbands. Some western women did not have these advantages until the beginning of the twentieth century. Therefore, religious leaders should support and encourage women from the community to participate in all elective positions without fear of discrimination based on gender. Through their religious platforms, such as sermons and regular preaching, the religious leadership should sensitize the electorate to identify women with leadership characteristics and push for their election.

The good news is that, following the 2013 elections where one Women Representative was elected and 15 women nominated to the county assembly, the voters in the county have experienced female leadership. They can now attest to their leadership value in assisting the community improve their lives. This should make women's quest for leadership a little easier in future.

5.4 Summary

In this chapter, I have analysed findings relating to research question 3 that focussed on mitigating communication strategy that women in Wajir County employed to overcome the challenges of communication during political campaigns. I have highlighted a four-step strategy used by women and demonstrated how it helped them overcome restriction that culture and religion placed upon them in their political campaigns. In addition, I have also discussed some of the other strategies used in attempt to provide a conducive environment for political engagement among women aspirants. These include tempering patriarchal culture, civic education for the electorates, capacity building for women politicians and support from religious and community leaders.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS, DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

6.0 Overview

In this final chapter, I present a discussion of my key findings, followed by the conclusions and recommendations. I make these based on the purpose of the study, the research questions, and key findings. I indicate the study's contribution to communication scholarship and show the probable implications for policy and practice, as well as suggestions on areas for further research. To conclude, I reflect on my experiences during the period and process of this PhD study.

6.1 Summary of Key Findings

The purpose of this study was to establish the communication dynamics for women participating in competitive politics in Wajir county in Kenya. The study set out to determine the factors affecting communication in the political arena, especially for women politicians, by seeking to answer three research questions: What intra-cultural communication dynamics affect the performance of women politicians in Wajir County? Why do women in Wajir County experience communication challenges while campaigning for elective positions? And What strategies do women in Wajir county employ to overcome these intra-cultural communication challenges? This was achieved by conducting qualitative research using Wajir county as a case study. Communication dynamics affecting women political leaders from Wajir county were explicitly explored.

Having purposively sampled my respondents, face-to-face interviews were used to seek answers from women politicians, campaign team members, religious leaders and members of the councils of elders in Wajir county. Below is a summary of the key findings in relation to the objectives of the study.

6.1.1 Intra-Cultural and Religious Communication Dynamics

This section discusses the key findings that relate to the first research question of the study which aimed to investigate how intra-cultural dynamics in Wajir county affected women's performance in politics. Cultural beliefs and religious restrictions confining women aspirants to affirmative political positions and the low literacy levels among the Wajir county women made it difficult for most women politicians to get their campaign messages to the voters, thereby affecting their chance to get elected. Each finding is discussed below.

6.1.2. Cultural Beliefs and Communication

Generally, the study found that cultural practices and norms of the communities living in Wajir county do not support women's involvement in politics but instead, favour men. Most of the respondents agreed this was the case. The study found that there was a prevalent religious and cultural belief that women cannot represent the people of Wajir county in leadership roles. The study finding corroborates the assertion by Mwatha, Mbugua and Murunga (2013) who found that, although the population of women and men in Kenya is almost equally matched at all levels, political representation is heavily skewed in favour of men. While some countries have met the ideal 33% or one-third mass threshold of women's representation in decision making, with a country like Rwanda going further and currently having 56% of women's parliamentary

representation, Kenya still lags behind. A study by Jayachandran (2015) found that many countries that are poor today have cultural norms that exacerbate favouritism toward males. This is the same in Kenya.

In Wajir county, there is a stereotyped culture that sees men's voices as more commanding than the women's, due to the patriarchal nature of the Somali community. Religion is also used to reinforce this norm as men usually quote a verse from the Qur'an (4:34) that states, 'Men are in charge of women by [right of] what Allah has given one over the other and what they spend [for maintenance] from their wealth.'

Discrimination goes against most of the international conventions including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1979. This Convention calls for equal access to and equal opportunities in political and public life and these include the right to vote and to stand for election (see Ivanus, 2014, p.59). Unfortunately, the culture in Wajir county offers no semblance of equality between men and women politicians. This view confirms what Dumitrescu *et al.* (2013) asserted; that female leaders often get punished for "competitive assertiveness" since they will violate a deeply held and unconscious expectation about how women ought to behave. In the previous chapters, this sentiment was confirmed by some of the women aspirants who reported that they were told it was not their place to seek leadership and it was disrespectful of them to compete with men.

Consequently, women politicians had to work around the challenges they faced and many of them received support through the help of their male campaigners who could talk face-

to-face and lobby the voters, especially the men. Relying on campaign managers to articulate their political ideas on their behalf meant that the women had to make do with how well the campaigners could sell their policies. In addition, it would mean that female politicians needed to engage educated and highly articulate male campaigners, unlike their male counterparts who did not need campaigners to speak on their behalf and could do it themselves in public. Hiring these high qualified campaigners would be an additional campaign expense for the female politicians. To campaign for elective positions, let alone to win, came at a very high price for women. Bongiorno, Bain and David (2013) argued that a female candidate will pay a higher price than the male candidate when the female candidate lacks competitive assertiveness. However, women in Wajir county do not necessarily lack assertive competitiveness but it was unfortunate that the culture denies them the chance to articulate their views and communicate with the voters in public.

Additionally, women politicians had to go the extra mile of first convincing the voters, through various means of communication, that women leadership should be encouraged, then imploring them to vote in their favour. In their 2007 study, Aalberg and Jenssen argued that any politician trying to cross the line within the realm of male and female politicians will stand out as misplaced and risk becoming a laughingstock among both women and men. Consequently, very few women are involved in political leadership in Wajir county for fear of cultural backlash. Not surprisingly, therefore, almost all political positions are taken by their male counterparts (Kaimenyi *et al.* 2013). Yet, gender equality is a basic human right and closing the gender gap is key to achieving many of

the development goals espoused by the international policies and declarations discussed above and in detail in previous chapters.

6.1.3 Cultural and Religious Restrictions

Religiosity is usually tied to doctrinal or dogmatic beliefs. Sometimes a sacred text or story is used as a guiding symbol for understanding difficult concepts. At other times, the religious belief system as a whole is a symbolic model through which people lead their lives (Bellah, 2000). The study found that religion could also have non-spiritual dimensions such as ethnic identity or belonging and this is evidenced in Wajir county. The community, largely Muslim in terms of religion, and Somali in ethnicity, is culturally tied very closely to the Islamic faith—the two are intertwined. The Somali cultural restrictions are buttressed by the teachings of the Muslim faith. Information from women is not given any priority by men and, by extension, even by other women. Agreeing with religious edicts, the respondents generally argued that the Somali culture does not allow women to give opinions on matters affecting the community. Opinions and decisions are only entitled to men. Women are not involved in any way in decision making. Politics is about leadership and making decisions for the community and women are excluded from this role. This was a main motivator for the willingness by many more women to consider joining politics in the 2013 elections.

The study indicates that religion was a major impediment to women's involvement in leadership. Religious leaders who took part in this study postulated that, Islam does not permit women an opportunity to speak in public. It therefore follows that women should not hold political rallies. According to other respondents, Islam does not allow a woman to engage in leadership, mingle with men, be in a public place and talk in front of men.

The religion encourages women to stay at home and handle house chores as religious teachings do not allow women to freely mingle in public. This is also supported by the community's cultural practices. Additionally, the culture discourages women from sitting where men are, let alone talking to men in a meeting. These findings are supported by the assertion that people are conscious of religious messages and they tend to believe the news about religion is extremely important (Buddenbaum, 2008).

These aspects of religious teachings have discouraged women's participation in politics where it is necessary to address the public, thereby technically muting their voices. The women were therefore prevented from having opinions about issues affecting society, and from participating in deciding and choosing priorities and better solutions to existing societal problems. Although during the 2013 general election, some contemporary religious leaders focused on sensitizing the community about the new constitution, emphasizing that times have changed and that women should be accorded equal opportunity in the society as men, there is still much to be done.

6.1.4 Confinement of Women Politicians to Affirmative Positions

The study found that, in Wajir county, election of a woman leader would only be possible if there are no male contestants for that particular position. This situation is not very different from what happens in the rest of Kenya. According to Kaimenyi *et al.* (2013), almost all the political positions are taken by male counterparts. This comes at a time when closing the gender gap is key to achieving many development goals, as in the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal #5. It is a common view that empowering women is paramount to economic, political and social development (Naomi & Andrew, 2008). Moreover, the legislative system is encouraging political empowerment of women

by providing slots for women in the government through the one-third gender rule enshrined in the Kenya Constitution of 2010 (EUEOMK, 2013).

According to the report on “Religion, Politics and Gender Equality”, a project carried out by the Heinrich Boll Foundation in collaboration with the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD) during 2007-2010, religion to a large extent bolsters the marginalization of women in the society. Religion and cultural impediments have been the main obstacles to women's involvement in politics. In Wajir county, religious leaders such as imams and sheikhs only supported women in positions where there was no competition from men. However, in instances where women dared to challenge men in political positions, these religious leaders were categorical in discouraging such practices and used the mosques to preach against women's leadership.

Campaign managers for Wajir women politicians, in their responses, argued that women were not weaker or incompetent in articulating their political views. They confirmed that women politician's effectiveness in communicating their political ideas during campaigns was affected by the treatment they received from the society. “The problem is that the male-dominated electorate does not want to listen to their views,” said one of the campaign managers. Another campaign manager involved in peace building noted that women are not disadvantaged in terms of their skills and competency in communicating effectively to the electorate. To the contrary, “Women can communicate far better in political rallies and campaigns, but the society has an already stereotyped mind that (women) are meant to be ‘mothers’ and not leaders and therefore should not campaign,” she added.

Campaign managers noted that the challenges facing women included male dominance with cultural beliefs such that men are better than women, religious restrictions that said women are not supposed to assume leadership, and clannism which limits the ability of women to campaign in public forums for leadership positions. Maathai (2006) noted that a culture that is characterized by patriarchal norms and values, as is the case in Wajir county, often exhibits communication patterns dictated by male-centric overtones, rules and regulations.

6.1.5 Low Literacy Levels among Women

A life in politics is generally considered an occupation for the educated. In fact, the constitution of Kenya 2010 demands that those in leadership positions should be sufficiently educated to be leaders. For example, members of parliament are expected to have attended tertiary education and have degrees in specific areas of interest. The results of this study indicate that education was a major impediment to women's participation in politics during the 2013 general election. This is because the communities in Wajir county do not fully support the education of women. According to community elders who participated in the study, the education of women is not the priority it is in the case of educating men. In fact, as stated by several respondents of this study, Wajir is still in a situation where the daughter is educated only if there is enough money beyond the son. If the money in the family is just enough for the son, the daughter misses school. This is, therefore, a culturally inherent attitude that discourages women leadership since women do not become educated to a high enough standard to be able to take up political leadership. This also hinders the women in communicating effectively in various

languages—English, Swahili and Somali—which are the languages spoken in the county, so as to reach the voters.

6.2 Discussions

This section discusses the findings of the research question that focused on the communication challenges facing women politicians in Wajir county. These included being restricted from speaking in public forums, negative connotations propagated through folklore and poems used in political discourses, and women politicians' unfamiliarity with the commonly used language in political campaigns.

6.2.1 Communication Challenges facing Women

Communication, culture and politics are concepts that have been studied widely. To succeed in politics, women politicians must communicate in a way that persuades the electorate to vote for them. Often, cultural dynamics affect the level of success experienced by women politicians. Cooper and Croyle (as cited in Theoharis, 2008) argued that the concept of persuasive political communication is of extreme importance since politics, to a great extent, governs the status quo of the modern world. Effective communication in politics also demands lobbying people as well. Within the European Union (EU), lobbying is defined as activities carried out with the objective of influencing the policy formulation and decision-making processes of the European institutions (European Parliament 2008), therefore political proponents who try to communicate effectively to voters are essentially engaging in lobbying.

Whether it is persuasion or lobbying, the essence remains the same. Although choice of, persuasive language and demeanor during discussions and meetings is of paramount

importance, on the strategic level much more needs to be done – “the ‘who’ says ‘what’ to ‘whom’, ‘when’ and ‘how’” described by Mack (2005). In politics, it is always important to lobby other politicians to support you as well as persuade them and the voters as well to support you. Without effective persuasion and lobbying, one is deemed a failure (McGrath, 2007). This study found several dynamics that affected the ability of women politicians to communicate and lobby successfully.

6.2.2 Inaccessibility to Public Forums

The study found that women politicians in Wajir county were restricted from addressing public forums particularly those attended by men. The possibility that women could communicate in public, just as men did, was therefore negatively affected as the women politicians were restricted from communicating with the electorate through public rallies. This was due to religious beliefs and cultural restrictions.

Being prevented from addressing public forums meant that women politicians relied on other means, such as mass media, to communicate with the electorate. While the mass media is a major component of communicating political ideologies, the respondents argued that political communication makes more impact with the electorate through face-to-face public meetings. Woman politician WP2, noted that, “Using word of mouth, spoken face-to-face, can easily convince voters causing a positive influence compared to the mass media.”

The respondent also noted that in order to supplement traditional mass media, such as local radio and television stations, women politicians in Wajir county used social media to communicate with the electorate. Restricting women politicians to mass media, social

media and small meetings to communicate their ideas left male politicians in a privileged position since they had access to a communication medium—face-to-face public communication—which the female politicians did not have. Women did not get the same space to communicate with voters and these restrictions affected them in their quest for leadership.

6.2.3 Negative Folklore Against Women Politicians

A further communication challenge that women politicians faced is how men used folklore and poems in their political discourses to depict women negatively, particularly painting women as weak leaders whose role should be restricted to homemaking. The study also found that many cultural proverbs, parables, and sayings from folklore used during political campaigns are insensitive and demeaning to women, marking them unworthy to be leaders.

WCL4, noted that negative communication from men in the community impacted on the women candidates who were portrayed as weak. She acknowledged that the Somalis are an oral society, and they have a perception that their proverbs and sayings are based on truth. So, whenever the men use negative proverbs to undermine women to suit their situation, it is taken for real. The example she gives of such a saying is;

‘Kal caana galay kas ma galoo - Brains and milk cannot be in the same container.’ The connotation is that women have milk for breastfeeding so they cannot also have brains. They are depicted as not being intelligent enough to lead people. These are some of the proverbs and saying that support the myths and misconceptions about women and leadership roles.

Unfortunately, this mentality is found in Wajir county where we see the various roles that language, speech and communication play in relations between the sexes and illuminates the processes involved - such as stereotyping, social categorization and discrimination. In the English languages, Smith, (1985) says that. “Feminine words with negative connotations outnumbered negative masculine words by about 20 per cent in spite of the predominance of masculine words overall” (pp. 37-38). Spender (1980) also asserts that gendered language is one of the ways that men “intimidate and belittle” women into silence, and this assertion can all too easily be supported. Textbooks given to school children have historically told the stories of males and they present a world in which everything important that has ever happened has been primarily because men have done it. “Women have ‘made’ just as much ‘history’ as men but it has not been codified and transmitted” (p. 53). There are also substantially more words in the English language that describe sexual promiscuity of a female than a male (Kramarae, 1981, p.43) and Spender points out that there are no male equivalents to “chatter, natter, prattle, nag, bitch, whine, and, of course, gossip” (1980, p.107). These words are reserved for women only just as there are negative words used in the Somali community in Wajir county that depict women in bad light.

When these cultural discourses are used in political communication or campaigns, they can discourage or encourage the electorate, who subscribe to such cultural discourses, in voting for women (Kaimenyi *et al.* 2013). Wajir county is homogeneous both in terms of religion and ethnicity. This means that any forms of communication, particularly political communication, are received and interpreted within a largely homogeneous cultural environment.

6.2.4 Women's Unfamiliarity with Political Language

Inherent in the women politicians was the challenge of their unfamiliarity with the language used in political campaigns. The women in Wajir county, until 2013, did not have the benefit of participating and competing for political seats. A couple of women had tried to compete with men for constituency seats in the preceding years but did not get far in the contests. This was the first time that the women had the Women Representative seat reserved especially for them courtesy of the new constitution. This barrier therefore made it difficult for women to articulate their ideas in the language that the electorate had come to associate with political discourse, posing a challenge to their campaigns. Women find it difficult to articulate their ideas as men's experience are dominant. Kramarae argues that English is a "[hu]man-made language" and that it "embodies the perspectives of the masculine more than the feminine", while supporting "the perceptions of white middle-class males. Men are the standard." According to Kramarae, men use language to dominate women, so that women's voices become less present, or "muted". This assertion can also be seen in my study as men's language is the norm in the culture and traditions of the community and women had to play catch-up and learn the language the community was used to so as to be understood.

6.2.5 Communication and Theory

This study was undertaken through the prism of Egalitarianism and the Muted Group Theory (MGT). In regard to Egalitarianism, this study assumed that the rhetorical obstacles to getting involved in politics are gender-linked. This arose from a woman's disempowered position in society and the community's oppression by denying women their right to speak in public as espoused by Dow (1995), However, even Islam gives

women their rights and equality as humans, as noted by Kia (2019) who states that in the Quran, 4:34, God says:

Men are the protectors (Ghawamoon) and maintainers of women, because God has given the one more (strength) than the other, and because they support them from their means. Therefore, the righteous women are devoutly obedient, and guard in (the husband's) absence what God would have them guard [...]

Kia continues that the word “Ghawamoon” means a person who is responsible for someone else, or “one who stands firm in another’s business, protects his interest, and looks after his affairs, ...” as God made men responsible for women because God has given them some excess strength compared to women. He also notes that in the society, as a whole, men have the responsibility of providing protection and sustenance for women. This part is only relevant to what men and women share, e.g., the country, the property, etc. The Arabic word “Ghawamoon” translated as ‘protector’ does not mean that men have the right to control women’s personal, private and public rights. Women have complete control over their own personal and individual activities. This is reiterated by the verse from the Quran 2 :234

If any of you die and leave widows behind, they shall wait concerning themselves four months and ten days: When they have fulfilled their term, there is no blame on you if they dispose of themselves in a just and reasonable manner. And God is well acquainted with what ye do.

Consequently, as with Egalitarianism, women have their own independence in keeping and defending their individual and public rights and reaching their goals and they can resort to any source they wish (Kia, 2019).

Focusing on the other theoretical viewpoint of Muted Group Theory that I discussed in chapter two, I noted three basic tenets that have been identified by the main proponents

for MGT, in regard to how dominant and sub-dominant groups communicate. Firstly, it is about dominance, as MGT addresses the issues that result from unequal participation in generating and expressing ideas. Acceptability is the second concern, where MGT addresses the realities and values of sub-dominant groups when they are inadequately recognized by the dominant group. Thirdly, MGT looks at subordination and identifies the mechanisms that limit access to arenas where societal rewards are obtained. In the study, all three have been identified as muting issues for the women political aspirants in Wajir county.

However, there is a fourth tenet held by the main proponents of MGT, not stated by the main scholars in MGT, the Ardeners and Kramarae, which has been named by Mary Meares *et al.* (2004). This vital component of MGT is that resistance and change are possible, and this keeps MGT from being a pessimistic labelling of the marginalized and turns it into an optimistic tool for providing hope and voice to the marginalized. MGT not only states that change and resistance are possible but provides tools that can be used for confronting and resisting the muting of marginalized groups. Houston & Kramarae (1991) and Hargittai & Shaw (2015), also advocated for the use of resistance strategies to avoid the "muting" process.

6.2.6 Mitigating Challenges

To work around the communication challenges they faced, the women political aspirants in Wajir county used innovative means to counter the problems. Firstly, women politicians packaged their political messages in memorable vernacular poems, folklore, dances and songs that appealed to the different clans in the county. The songs, poems and folklore were the ones that the clans in the different parts of the county appreciated and

valued. This was the second step of audience or voter segmentation that made the women receive positive reception in the community areas they visited. The third step was to address smaller groups of women, and youth, by going door-to-door to their homes or congregating in communal spaces like school grounds which would have fairly good attendance by the people who had heard them speak through the mass media or who had followed them on social media. The final step of the Wajir women politicians' innovative communication strategy entailed their male campaign managers addressing the public face-to-face on their behalf, especially the men, in places where the electorate was opposed to women addressing men. This four-step communication strategy adopted by women politicians in Wajir county proved very effective in countering cultural and religious stereotypes against women's political leadership.

The study also found several mitigating measures that could be emphasized to empower women politicians in Wajir county and make it easier for them to communicate and engage more freely with the electorate to sell their political ambitions and vision for the community. These include eliminating patriarchal culture; civic education for the electorate on the importance of women's participation in politics; building the capacity of women political aspirants and getting active support from religious and cultural leaders for women politicians.

The Muted Group Theory posits that "the language of a particular culture does not serve all its speakers equally, for not all speakers contribute in an equal fashion to its formulation" (Kramarae, 1981, p.1). Spender (1980), on the other hand, defines language as our means of classifying and ordering our world: our means of manipulating reality. In its structure and in its use, we bring our world into realization. In Muted Group Theory,

the term “muted” does not always mean “silent”: it might result in silence, but in the larger sense, it simply refers to whether women are able to say all they would wish to say, where and when they wish to say it (Wall & Ganon-Leary, 1999). From the study findings, we note that women in Wajir county were not able to say *what* they wished or *where* they wished in or *when* they wished, as time and distance of the large county constricted their movements.

Kramarae (1981) considered Muted Group Theory as a framework for looking at the ways a language, and the accepted methods of using language, present images of what women are ‘supposed’ to be, and of what is ‘natural’ and ‘unnatural’. Muted Group Theory supports the concept that “language reflects a worldview” and that the dominant group within a society creates a language system that “supports its conception of the world and then calls it the language of the society, while at the same time subjugating others to experiences that are not reflected in that language” (Kramarae, 1981, p.3). Scientific research has revealed that women have been largely excluded from creating language. In fact, for more than one hundred years, etiquette books have explicitly told women to avoid creating new words because “slang is unladylike” (Kramarae, 1981, p.33).

Looking at these cultural biases with the Muted Group Theory (MGT) lens, West and Turner (2010) present four methods that can cause muting; one of which is control. They point out that many social decisions are controlled by men, including mainstream media and communication practices. In addition, with the other muting method of ridicule, Houston and Kramarae (1991) both suggest that women have been silenced in many ways by, for example, ridiculing women's related lexicon, trivializing their opinions,

ideas, and concerns, and censoring women's voices. As long as women are trying to communicate their experience in a language system not designed for their use, they will not be able to fully articulate what it is to be a woman.

Researchers also found that women's voices can also be censored by social rituals, which advocate for the subordination of women. This is reinforced by my findings as the culture and rituals of the community muted the women's voices through subordination. Finally, harassment, the fourth method of muting, happens in public spaces. It would usually be naturalized by men, and women's experiences and concerns about harassment would be ignored or despised in the context. The respondents to my study, as presented in the previous chapter, shared how women aspirants were harassed when out seeking votes from the community. Another main challenge that women aspirants met was not being able to address the public in open forums like the men. This muting method really came out clear in my study in line with the findings of other researchers.

Muted Group Theory, which was the prism through which I viewed findings in my study, has been used as a framework for examining language and communication for more than 30 years. There are three basic assumptions that are the foundation for the theory: a) Women and men perceive the world differently; b) men are politically dominant and their ideas are considered "normal"; and c) women need to conform to the male "norm" if they are to be heard (Foss *et al*, 2004, p.21).

Foss *et al* (2004) argue that, since women are unable to express their structurally generated views in the dominant masculine discourse, they are neither understood nor heeded, becoming inarticulate, 'muted', or silent. Even if they talk a lot, they may not

express their own different social reality (Wall & Gannon-Leary, 1999). This is clearly seen in my findings which showed that women had difficulty in expressing themselves effectively in the intra-cultural language that was familiar to the electorate and that had been used by men before them for many years.

In support of this finding, Hay (2002) observed that politics is inherently dependent on language; hence the notion that “language is (an instrument of) power”. Edwards (2009) supported this finding by arguing that communication in politics is also affected by the language the politicians use in their campaigns.

Despite all the challenges women faced in communicating their political manifestos and messages, to compensate for their lack of proficiency in packaging their political messages in folklore and poems, one of the ground-breaking findings of this study is that the women politicians in Wajir county found an innovative solution.

6.2.7 Culture and Community Governance

There was a generally dismal performance of women in the 2013 general election in Wajir county compared to men. The positions of governor and deputy governor, all 6 constituency seats and all the 30 ward seats for the county assembly were won by men. The only seat that a woman won was the one that only women could vie for and the community was obliged to vote for the woman because of the requirement of the Kenya Constitution 2010 that created the Women Representative position. Even for this affirmative post, some people skipped voting as they were made to believe it was sinful to vote for a woman to lead the community.

Several factors played to their disadvantage and these included religious restrictions on

association, on free expression of women and discouraging women from seeking leadership positions. The non-viability of female leadership was propagated through religious discourse that presented teachings and practices that discourage free association of women with men and participation in public issues. To add to this was the cultural norm where the community simply preferred men to lead them. The men also used folklore, poems and cultural beliefs to deter women from seeking leadership, thereby discouraging the community from supporting the women in their quest for political posts.

In addition, society portrayed women to be reluctant, committed to childbearing and lacking an understanding of community issues, issues which should be addressed by political leaders. In 2013, the only women holding political office in Wajir county included the 15 women nominated to the county assembly (as none were elected to the thirty wards) and the one Women Representative elected to the national assembly.

The findings of my study indicate that the culture and governance structure of pastoralist communities such as in Wajir county have no space for female leadership. Pastoralist communities are still strongly attached to their traditional systems and customs, under which women are subjugated to the men, and men generate, own and control resources, either through production or inheritance, even when generated by women. The women are therefore always at a dependence level and lack the resources to compete with men for electoral positions. Men exercise control, not only in resource management, but in social, political, and economic areas.

Respondents pointed out that, even before elections, the political scene in the county is determined by meetings of male council of elders in which women do not generally

participate. Male elders exclusively take the lead in identifying, profiling and lobbying for their preferred male aspirants from their respective clans, and decisions made are binding and final. As a result, the community continues to be reluctant to embrace women's leadership largely due to religious and cultural influence. These discriminatory processes and religious restrictions discourage women from venturing into politics, threaten women's rights to political representation and participation, deprive them of their constitutional rights, deny women the right to support and/or challenge the candidature of women and male aspirants, limit women's competitive advantage on a level ground against their male counterparts in elective seats and relegate them to compete only for the Women Representative position.

6.2.8 Communication Restrictions by Religion

A majority of Wajir county residents subscribe to the Muslim religion. Respondents reported that the religious teachings and cultural communication expect women to be subordinate to men and women are encouraged to stay in their homes. The community believe that Islamic teachings do not allow women to work, mingle with men, and attend public meetings. Additionally, Somali culture, which is predominant in the county, also teaches that women should listen and obey while allowing their men to make the decisions.

These aspects of religion and culture have discouraged women's participation in politics where it is necessary to address the public, have opinions about issues affecting the society, and participate in making decisions, choosing priorities and better solutions to existing societal problems. Although during the 2013 general election some

contemporary religious leaders focused on sensitizing the community that times have changed and that women should be accorded equal opportunity in the society as men, there is still much to be done.

The dominance and influence of these cultural and religious structures have created a situation where all women who are interested in political leadership are boxed into vying for the Women Representative seat only. It should be noted that the cultural structures which are largely characterised by clannism and religion enjoy significant influence in the community. This situation not only threatens women's right to participate in a free, fair, competitive, and credible election. It also limits women's chances to take up leadership positions which can lead to a constitutional crisis in the county.

The study also found that these cultural and religious beliefs confine women aspirants to affirmative political positions. This is exacerbated by low literacy levels among the Wajir county women which made it difficult for most women politicians to participate fully in the political process and also to fully understand the rights given in the new constitution of 2010. Politically, there is still much work to be done to demystify the political opportunities for women leaders as most clan elders and religious leaders are not fully aware of the push to full implementation of the constitutional provision on leadership. Political parties also fail in their support for women aspirants and the lack of enforcement of election laws also contributes to difficulties for women leaders.

The above cultural and religious limitations to women's communication opportunities were not the only challenges facing women in Wajir county as they also had to contend with a large county, in terms of size and geography, and a shortage of resources - financial, logistics, manpower – to reach as many of the electorate as possible. The

county also borders a lawless neighbouring country, Somalia, making it more difficult to access some areas for fear of armed terrorist groups. Insecurity was therefore a big challenge for all competitors but even more marked for women who are considered at more risk.

The responses to the study do not suggest a one-size-fits-all solution to women leadership; rather, solutions lie in a commitment to various measures identified to improving the current situation. These include countering patriarchal culture through sensitization and communication campaigns; providing the electorate with adequate civic education on the importance of women's participation in politics; encouraging positive perception of the ability of women to lead; and the elimination of the patriarchal culture in the county. If the global sustainable development goals on gender equality and the gender provisions of the Kenya Constitution 2010 are to be achieved, there is an urgent need for civic engagement targeting cultural changes, especially in the communities where women are marginalized. Finally, yet importantly, is the need to eliminate or revise teachings and cultures that do not support women leadership in society. The proposed mitigation measures require a lot of commitment and active support for women politicians from religious and cultural leaders and, most importantly, the community at large.

6.3 Conclusions

This study sought to investigate the communication dynamics as they relate to women participating in competitive politics in Wajir county, Kenya. The study set out to address the factors affecting communication for, and by, women politicians. This was done by seeking to answer three research questions: What intra-cultural communication dynamics

affect the performance of women politicians in Wajir County? Why do women in Wajir County experience communication challenges while campaigning for elective positions? And What strategies do women in Wajir county employ to overcome these intra-cultural communication challenges? Using a case study of Wajir county, I held interviews with 27 respondents comprising women politicians, campaign managers and supporters, community elders and religious leaders. To supplement the data collected from the interviews and to also triangulate my findings, I used document analysis. The findings are presented thematically.

The study found that many women did not participate so much in the politics of Wajir County, and the few who sought political positions did not get elected. This was due to the cultural and religious beliefs which restricted the open communication by which they were to reach the voters. There was also a restriction by confining women aspirants to affirmative political positions such as the Women Representative post.

The low literacy levels among women did not help the situation either as the pool of potential candidates was limited and the women from the community were also easily misled on women leadership due to lack of proper knowledge. This made it difficult for women to win seats in the elections.

Despite these cultural and religious impediments, the study found that some women in Wajir county did get involved in politics, first to take advantage of the opportunities created by Kenya's new Constitution of 2010 which mandated that a third of political parliamentary seats be reserved for women. Second, women politicians said that they

joined politics out of a passion to change the lives of women, who remained poor, despite having had male leaders over the past fifty years.

One of the major challenges that women politicians in the county faced was an obstruction to their addressing public forums, particularly those attended by men. This made it difficult for women to communicate effectively in public, unlike men who had access and support to articulate their ideas in public forums using folklore and poems to articulate their political ideas. Besides, male politicians also used folklore and poems to depict women negatively, particularly painting women as weak leaders whose role was restricted to homemaking. A further challenge for women politicians was their unfamiliarity with the language used in political campaigns. This made it difficult for them to articulate their ideas in the language that electorates associate political discourse with, making it difficult for them to connect with the electorate.

However, to counter the communication and cultural challenges they faced, the Wajir county women politicians adopted a four-step communication strategy to communicate their political agenda innovatively. First, they coined memorable vernacular phrases and modern songs and used the media - radio, TV and social media - to communicate these political messages to the public. Secondly, the women segmented their audience, targeting them directly with locally specific songs, poems and folklore that the clans in the different parts of the county appreciated and valued. This made the women receive a positive reception in the different clan community areas they visited. The third step was to address smaller group forums which would have a fairly good attendance by people who had heard them speak through the media. And the final step was for the women politicians to ask their male campaign managers to talk face-to-face to the voters on their

behalf. This four-step communication strategy adopted by women politicians in Wajir county proved very effective in countering cultural and religious stereotypes against the women's political leadership.

Based on my findings, this study concludes that despite the constitutional requirement for gender representation in leadership, intra-cultural communications dynamics largely undermine women's political engagements thereby making it difficult for them to compete effectively with their male counterparts in the political arena in highly patriarchal societies such as those in Wajir county.

My Thesis:

My thesis is, therefore, that although the Constitution of Kenya 2010 entitles women from Wajir county, like all Kenyan women, to compete on a level playing field for elective, nominative and appointive positions, these legal liberties are not sufficient to overcome the discriminative, rigid and gender-biased community governance structure, the cultural norms, and religious restrictions that have run counter to these provisions to date. This is manifested through various communication barriers and restrictions that women political candidates face, as seen in this study's findings. This is in addition to the other challenges faced by most women seeking political leadership countrywide - lack of adequate finances, lack of support from political parties, insecurity, and low literacy levels.

More importantly, the question of communication for women politicians, which is the focus of this study, requires a concerted advocacy campaign and support from clan and religious elders. This is because they still uphold culture and traditions that are gender-

insensitive and male-oriented. This will encourage the community to open, and make accessible to all political aspirants, the closed gendered spaces they have created. As the community is still very reluctant to open up space for women leadership, despite the provisions of the one-third gender principle enshrined in the new constitution, it is imperative that they are urged to fully embrace the constitutional requirement and put firm measures in place to incentivise its implementation.

6.3.1 Contributions of the Study

This study contributes to the body of research on interpersonal communication, especially intra-cultural communication. In the first instance, it contributes to the discourse on gendered communication in Kenya, by adding to research data on communication from the perspective of women in politics in one of the counties that still uphold culture and traditions that are gender-insensitive and male-oriented.

The study also portrays the challenges women face in communicating their candidature in the political field and offers suggestions to policy makers at both county and national levels on ways forward to mitigate these challenges and create more open forums and spaces for use by women in politics. Lastly, most previous studies on women in politics in Kenya have focused on other challenges facing women, such as lack of finances, lack of political party support, insecurity during campaigns and similar issues. This research takes a different approach in looking at the issue of communication for women politicians in a pastoralist patriarchal community. It also highlights how culture and religion affect communication from women, and about women, in the political field, bringing new insights from their own and others' perspectives.

Furthermore, the study demonstrates that religion and culture influence the way communication is carried out and the places in which it can take place. These are mainly driven by the social and cultural norms of the community. This study also notes that communication in political campaigns should be participatory, free for all regardless of gender, and unrestricted in terms of place. This is so as to engender greater community participation in communication campaigns by women in politics. The communication approaches should foster inclusivity in order to challenge the social and religious norms that restrict women in their communication.

From the methodological perspective, this study makes a major contribution on the use of qualitative research. Ongo'ondo (2009) notes that "Quantitative surveys are considered the more acceptable way of doing research", implying that much of the research conducted in Kenya uses quantitative methods. To this end, this study adds to the library of qualitative research and acts as a reference for academicians, communication students, and policy makers, and solidifies qualitative methods as a suitable methodology for the study of communication.

Policy makers need to address the problem of women's under-representation by increasing their participation in politics. In the latest annual report from the IPU (2021), UN Women Executive Director, Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka said:

No country prospers without the engagement of women. We need women's representation that reflects all women and girls in all their diversity and abilities, and across all cultural, social, economic and political situations.... We still need bold decisive action across the world to bring women into the heart of decision-making spaces in large

numbers and as full partners. There's no doubt this can and should be done. It should be done now.

Adding his voice, the IPU Secretary General, Martin Chungong said:

This year's growth in the number of women in political decision-making is just not good enough. Especially when you consider that 70 per cent of health, care and service workers during this pandemic are women. It's up to all of us, both men and women, to keep pushing for greater representation of women in politics. We have the tools to make it happen. What we need now is the political will.

6.3.2 Recommendations

This study has shown how various communication dynamics, rooted in culture and religion, influenced women's participation and performance in competitive politics in Wajir county. Based on the findings, this study makes various recommendations. The first two involve enhancing communication, and the remainder are general recommendations to open up communication spaces to encourage more women to participate in politics.

Adoption of the 4-Step Communication Strategy - women politicians in Wajir county, and indeed in other marginalized counties, need to adopt the innovative four-step communication strategy used by Wajir county women politicians in the last elections. The four-step communication strategy entails i) packaging political messages in memorable vernacular phrases, modern songs and dances and disseminating them in various ways including via radio, TV and social media to communicate the political messages; ii) carrying out audience or voter segmentation based on clan and area they come from in the county, and the folklore, dance, and music they prefer, so as to engage

them more effectively; iii) speaking face-to-face with the electorate in small gatherings in confined spaces like homes or school compounds; iv) using male campaign managers to address the voters directly, especially the menfolk, as spokespeople on behalf of the women politicians, in places where the electorate are completely opposed to women addressing men.

Capacity Building - policy makers, religious organizations and not-for-profit outfits should endeavour to build the capacity of women political aspirants by first of all expanding the pool of women candidates. This can be done by establishing a potential women politician data base as well as profiling them through various communication channels. These potential politicians can also be trained to enable them to package and deliver their messages through culturally cherished discourses such as songs, memorable phrases, dances, poems, folklore and proverbs. Following on the training and capacity building of women aspirants, their agents and observers can also be trained to campaign for and mentor first-time candidates in skills such as planning and managing successful campaigns, fundraising skills, message development, media relations and communication strategy.

Advocacy and lobbying—there is a need to set up county-based forums to lobby for the inclusion of women in clan structures for peaceful coexistence. This can be achieved through the development of strategic partnerships with all stakeholders. Lobbying can also be carried out to increase interest and goodwill by political parties, government and not-for-profit agencies to profile and support the participation of pastoralist women in decision-making. Kamau (2010) in the preface of her book quotes,

Political parties must embrace policies of inclusion, where gender forms a central part of this inclusion. Civic education needs to condemn all forms of gender-based violence, and especially violence that is targeted at women during political campaigns. Such education needs to go further to re-socialize people on gender equity principles and should start at an early age during which boys and girls receive messages that encourage them to aspire for political leadership (p. iv).

There is also a need to set up a monitoring structure for women aspirants, community mobilization, civic education, and to establish communication dissemination strategies employed for the purpose of learning and maximizing support for women in politics.

6.3.3 Suggested Further Research

This study suggests a comparative quantitative study in several marginalized counties to test the applicability of the four-step innovative communication strategy employed by women in political leadership. The findings of such a study will be compared with this study's findings, which focuses on Wajir county, thus making it possible to make scientific generalizations on the efficacy of the use of the four-step innovative communication strategy in helping women politicians from marginalized areas to communicate their political ideas effectively.

Further, it is recommended that another similar interpretive qualitative study be done after the next general elections in Kenya scheduled to take place in 2022. We would then have studies that cover two sets of general elections over a period of ten years – 2013 and 2017. Focus should be on the impact of civic education and the capacity building initiatives recommended by this study on women's political leadership in Kenya. It could also establish whether the communication modes and channels have evolved and whether the gendered spaces have been opened.

6.4 Reflections on my PhD

I am a communication professional who has been in the public relations and communication management field for over three decades. My working career has spanned practice in the private sector, including in a major media house in Kenya and a bank; in an international UN agency; and in the government of Kenya culminating in independent consulting in the communication field and currently with the World Bank Somalia Program. In the 2013 and subsequent general elections in Kenya, I was involved in the community negotiations as part of the professionals' group from the county. I also spearheaded the process to choose our woman political flagbearer. My study as a PhD student in the communication field was in line with, and, benefitted from my professional knowledge. This study also benefitted from my grassroots experience with the political process in my community in Wajir county. However, I have taken great care to ensure that this did not unduly influence the study and its outcomes.

Over the past few years, while working on this study and reflecting on the PhD process, I can say that it has influenced me in more ways than one. There are times that I felt I did not know as much as I thought because new knowledge and insights kept cropping up. This made me more critical and reflective in my interaction with the issues that I was studying. Second-guessing and questioning myself on matters probably helped fine-tune the study even further.

Academically, I learnt a lot more about research and the various methodologies, especially regarding qualitative study and my background in communication and public relations probably swayed my bias towards the use of qualitative methods in my study. As a PR and communication practitioner, the research methods—such as interviews,

document analysis and email questionnaires—that we normally use for our work processes are more qualitative than quantitative, so it was a natural progression to use the same for my study. The topic on interpersonal communication in politics was informed by my personal interest in the political process. In addition, the non-election of women to political positions in my community, and in the country at large, was of concern to me as a woman. In terms of methodological paradigms, this study helped me reflect on the varied ontological and epistemological paradigms existing in the social sciences.

In terms of data collection and fieldwork, the process, though challenging because I was working outside the country at the time, provided me with useful experience. The challenges included scheduling time and location for the interviews during the short holiday periods I was back in the country. The complexity of the interviews, and the ethical issues surrounding the data collection process made me appreciate the hard work involved in research. Challenges included accessing the interviewees for face-to-face interviews at their convenience or via electronic media. Ensuring the confidentiality, anonymity, and privacy of my respondents, was also a huge responsibility that I had to uphold. I am now more appreciative of the extent of commitment and involvement researchers have in the case of qualitative data collection, analysis and report writing. I spent several years in the analysis and writing of this report, that required an unexpected but inevitable back-and-forth iterative process. This was partly due to distance, as I lived abroad in the initial stages of data collection and analysis. Later, this was exacerbated due to my work commitment, as I had been appointed to an executive government role which was very involving and allowed me limited time to fully work on my study. All in all, I am grateful that I managed to complete and was able to present my study.

I am thankful that my study highlights the many challenges, especially in terms of communication, that women in politics, especially those from patriarchal and marginalized communities, face in seeking political leadership roles. I am also glad that there appear to be various opportunities to change the narrative and the perceptions of the community towards women leaders. I believe this study can help improve the communication challenges women leaders will face in the future as they seek political seats. Finally, I endeavour to continue being involved in changing the status quo through further research, or at my own personal level. This study has been, without doubt, a worthwhile and fulfilling experience.

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APPENDIX I: RESEARCH PERMIT



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This is to Certify that Ms. FATUMA HIRSI MOHAMED of Moi University, has been licensed to conduct research in Wajir on the topic: Communication dynamics for women participating in competitive politics in Kenya: a case study of Wajir County for the period ending : 18/March/2022.


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APPENDIX II: SAMPLE INTERVIEW GUIDES

Women Politicians

1. What informed your desire to vie for a political leadership position in Wajir County?
2. What were the major challenges you experienced in selling your policies to the electorate during the campaign?
3. Why did you experience any communication challenges? What were the challenges and how were they affecting your ability to convince the electorate?
4. Are there cultural discourses (such as folklore, poems and proverbs) that influence women involvement in politics? Which examples of such cultural discourses (folklore, poems and proverbs) are you aware of and how do they influence the perceptions of the electorate on women's involvement in politics?
5. In the context of religion, what is your opinion on its contribution to politics in Wajir County?
6. In your opinion, do religious discourses in Wajir County affect the ability of women to be involved in politics?
7. What are the major reasons why religious and cultural communication may develop perceptions that are barriers for women empowerment?
8. In your own opinion, what are the mitigating communication measures, if any, that can be undertaken to politically empower women in Wajir County?

Campaign Managers (Male and Female)

1. What drives you to campaign for a female aspirant?
2. What are some of the major challenges you experienced during the campaigns in relation to being able to sell your candidate's policies to the electorate?
3. Do you think women are disadvantaged in being able to communicate effectively and convince the electorates? How?
4. What are some of the characteristics that a politician should have in order to be able to convince the electorate during campaigns?
5. Based on your experience during the campaigns of 2013 general elections, what are some of the major challenges to women's involvement in politics in Wajir County?
6. Are there cultural discourses (such as folklore, poems and proverbs) that influence women involvement in politics? Which examples of such cultural discourses (folklore, poems and proverbs) are you aware of and how do they influence the perceptions of the electorate on women involvement in politics?
7. In the context of religion, what is your opinion on its contribution to politics in Wajir County?
8. In your opinion, do religious discourses in Wajir County affect the ability of women to be involved in politics?
9. What are the major reasons why religious and cultural communication have perceptions that are barriers for women empowerment?
10. In your own opinion, what are the mitigating communication measures, if any, that can be undertaken to politically empower women in Wajir County?

Imams/Religious Leaders

1. What is the contribution of religion to politics?
2. Are there religious teachings that support politics? In your own opinion, do such teachings affect the decision of the followers during elections?
3. What are some of the religious teachings that support women involvement in political positions?
4. In your own opinion, how does religion discourage women involvement in politics?
5. Are there measures taken by the leaders to support women involvement in politics? What are the measures and how have they contributed to women involvement in politics in Wajir County?
6. What are the mitigating communication measures, if any, that can be undertaken to politically empower women in Wajir County?

Male Community Leaders/Council of Elders

1. What is the contribution of cultural practice to political elections?
2. Are there cultural practices that discourage women involvement in politics? In your own opinion, do such practices affect the decision of the followers during elections?
3. In your own opinion, how do cultural discourses discourage women involvement in politics in Wajir County?
4. Kindly name a few examples of cultural discourses (folklore, poems and proverbs) you are aware of and how they affect women involvement in politics

5. Are there measures taken by the Council of Elders to support women involvement in politics? What are the measures and how have they contributed to women involvement in politics in Wajir County?
6. What are the mitigating communication measures, if any, that can be undertaken to politically empower women in Wajir County?

APPENDIX III: SAMPLE INTERVIEW

Interview with Women Politician

1. What informed your desire to vie for a political leadership position in Wajir County?

Always wanted to impact lives positively and make difference, especially social issues.

2. What position did you vie for?

I contested twice, 1997 - Wajir East Constituency, 2015 Wajir County Women M.P.

3. What challenges (if any) did you experience in selling your policies to the electorate during the campaigns?

Patriarchal community always believe women belong to the kitchen and taking care of home and children. Many challenges e.g. illiteracy of communities living in these areas- pastoralist community. Husbands preventing women to vote or attend political rallies. Distances of voting centres were far from villages. The candidates have to arrange transporting to many voting centres and you need to have enough finances to cover the whole county which is 66,000sq km. Vote buying, manipulation, violence, insecurity and corruption of security personnel, culture, religion, sexual labelling.

4. What communication strategies did you employ during your campaigns?

Many people in these areas are illiterate, you have use any communication as; verbal, oral and community radio and mobile phone and messaging to those who could read. Posters were also helpful to know who you are.

5. In your view, are there cultural discourses (such as folklore, poems and proverbs) about women involvement in politics?

Not much, though some candidates used Somali poems and traditional dances. As women contester it was very difficult to arrange for those dances and the few you mobilised were only from your clan.

6. Which examples of such socio-cultural discourses in Wajir (folklore, poems and proverbs) are you aware of and how did they influence the perceptions of the electorate on women candidates in politics?

According to me it did not affect me in my campaign. The songs and manipulations didn't really distract me.

7. Are these cultural discourses on women in politics positive or negative?

These cultural discourses did effect women negatively and also could cause conflict among clans where the women candidates came from. Others were positive for them when arranged by clans.

8. If so, how do they affect women's involvement in politics?

Unless you are empowered and prepared to face these discourses, you can be intimidated by men.

9. Do you think that religion affects women participation in politics in Wajir County?

I don't think so. There are other norms Muslim women go through; getting permission from husband and family, if not married from families; how you dress (hijab) also matters a lot.

10. In your opinion, do religious discourses in Wajir County affect the ability of women to be involved in politics?

Many Muslim women were elected and others contested this time (2013). Religion did not affect them.

11. Do religious and cultural communication methods hinder or aid women empowerment politically?

In Wajir due to illiteracy women have to enquire permission from husband and brothers who to vote for. Cultural is really stronger than religions in these areas. Women have very little knowledge in Religion teachings.

12. In your own opinion, what are the mitigating communication measures that can be undertaken to empower women politically in Wajir County?

Creating awareness in time will be helpful. Using our Constitution chapters allowing women to be voted and be voters. Using Community Radios in vernacular languages will create enough awareness.

14. If yes, what communication strategies will you employ to aid your cause?

Enough finances to cover the whole county in time, on awareness. Selling your policies what you will do differently than men. Use of posters, use of radio (community radio).

Interview with Male Community Leader

I am from Wajir County and one of the community leaders also was involved in the last general election. I had a significant role in selecting up the community leadership in terms of how the candidates are picked and so on as well as creating county level and intercommunity harmony so that we run a conflict free election.

1. What is the contribution of cultural practices in political elections?

In Africa cultural practices influences elections. They make significant contribution. As a matter of fact elections are largely dependent on practices. Culture affects which candidates gets nominated, who gets what votes and son on. It decides whether a man is elected or a woman is elected and even though in the current era young candidates aspire to look for seats ultimately is the community council of elders or the family that decides which candidates go through to the lections

2. Are you aware of any cultural practices that discourage women involvement in politics and do they have effect on women participation in politics?

I am aware that it do discourage because they did discourage the participation of women in Wajir County. As a matter of fact communities get angry when a nomination process brings through a woman. We have seen at different levels anger from communities that they have just been given a woman rep. I have been involved in discussion where we had proposed that the people of Wajir South seek the deputy governor and the women rep and negotiate with other communities on that and that has backfired on us precisely because the women rep, which is an MP for the entire county, was not seen as a worthy position for the community to ask. I have seen in other areas where part of the distribution of positions including CDF committees and so on that women from certain communities were added to the committee, but the communities are still complaining that they have not been represented in the committees which is a very serious decision making committee in terms of dispensing CDF funds in Wajir South. The argument is that the community which gets a lady into the committee has not had anything. The disagreement between Wajir and Wajir south communities was that we had proposed candidate so and so be elected for women rep and that had a negative backlash from that community not giving the votes because they thought they had marginalized because the proposal to elect a woman rep from their community was not accepted. So, it is definitely the case even in places where women were elected, they were elected simply because the position was reserved for women. And in Wajir with six constituencies a woman has not been elected as a MP and I do not see that happening soon and that is entirely as a result of ignorance and cultural practices and that inherent belief that the women cannot represent the people. So it is a major impediment⁶ to women. Right now we have women in parliament bit they are coming in from reserved position for women where men were not participating, or they are nominated at a party level. Those are the two major sources of women in parliament or the senate.

3. In your opinion how do cultural discourses such as poems folklore and proverbs discourage or encourage women involvement in politics?

Folklore, poems products are used both as tools of encouragement or discouragement depending on the circumstances. When it fits the bill, the communities use them well to show reason why such should happen. When it is against it is used to discourage to divide votes to make sure that the person is not elected. There are a lot of proverbs that are

insensitive for women that prove that men can do, and women can't and so on. The poems were used in the last election to rally votes. The candidates are shone in good lights, songs that are created about them their abilities and so on. In northern Kenya there are places where clinches were created. For example, a community who wanted to elect a woman was being told that will you say that your MP is in a maternity giving birth or in the labor ward. That has been used to show that people are actually are at loss if they elected a woman. It is presented is aformat when it is used to discourage. In communities such as the Somali in northern Kenya folklore is male dominated. Even when folklore is created by women who create a lot of it they are directed towards male dominated environment. It is not always that men that are actually doing this to demean women sometimes women do it because their upbringing

So folklore, poems and proverbs are used both positively and negatively but in the case of women looking for elections, I doubt whether they were positive. If they are they are not wholly accepted.

4. Are there any examples of such proverbs, poems, or folklore?

I will send them to you later

5. Are there any measures taken by elders to support women in politics?

Where effort has been made support came through even if gradually where they used professionals, business communities to come together and recommend a lady for a sit and presented that to the elders and the rest of the communities. Even if psychologically, some were not satisfied, some success was achieved. We saw that in the previous elections where women got a lot of support based on the elders. However, supporting women requires a much more resource and support than men because for men it is taken as given that when he wants a position, he can go for it. The question is whether he has the money and knowledge. For women the question is why she does. Crossing that hurdle requires a lot of support and resources. For women the support they need, I can rate it as twice as much compared to men. However, where I was involved in Wajir County, it was proven that organized support for women can actually bare fruits, and significant effort can change the perception of the elders and the youths and the women.

6. What are the mitigating communication measures that can be taken to empower women politically in Wajir County for the future?

I think Wajir County has elected men for the past 50 years and we have nothing to show for it. I think women should be elected on the basis that bringing a change in leadership can bring some changes in development. If you look at wajir in 1900 and wajir now, it is retarded and the leadership over the past 50 years were men. I think with a half a century of trial it is good enough to try other people. We all know that in rural Africa it has been proven that the mother is reliable than the father. Even in business, even in financial services, lending and credit, the funds that go to the mother become useful. The element of trust has been proven more on the women side than the men side. So I think it is the right time to change the dialogue, women are now dedicated, wajir women are dedicated. In every talented educated man, you can find a similar lady, I think the perception of a woman being a lesser being should be challenged by giving women leadership positions. Currently there are cabinet ministers in Wajir County who are women. People need to be shown the performance-based evaluations between women rep and men MP, women minister and the man minister and that can be used now to change the perception of community in Wajir and show that their women are a resource and a talent and

knowledge and that they are more reliable and caring, they are more concerned about the wellbeing of the community.

7. Communication measures to show that women are good leaders

There are several channels of communications now since people are on the internet and mobile communication is increased. There are national and community radios and televisions. There is the social media as well. I think a little cultural shift, the presence of women leaders and the successful women in the cabinet, parliament and the senate speaking to the young women and men will be probably a beginning. This is because ultimately you need to bring up a significant critical mass of women who are able to challenge men on big jobs. Wajir is still in situation where the daughter is educated only if there is enough money beyond the son. If the money in the family is just enough for the son, the daughter misses school. This is therefore a culturally inherent thing that should be solved from that level. More girls should be pushed through scholarships and if we are able to have equal number of men and women competing for the jobs, perhaps women will be able to take the stand. Such communication channels can be used but right now the medial such as the local radio are more powerful since even reading and writing hasn't reached some communities. Using channels that can easily reach the community talking about virtues of women leadership such as the community radio will be appropriate.

8. In your opinion, do you think that in the coming elections there will be women running for other post meant for men?

I frankly think so but at this point I am not aware of any with interest. Wajir is a county that has bold women who have become ambassadors and gone to higher levels of leadership, and higher national offices. So, I think in the nation, wajir is not the least exposed in terms of the abilities of the women. I am not definitely ruling out the idea that there will be a lady in the governor's seat or senate seats which is not reserved for men. I am not aware of any right now, but I would really wish that it would happen.

APPENDIX IV: CONSENT LETTER

Good morning/afternoon. I would like to thank you for coming today. My name is Fatuma Hirsi Mohamed. I am a student at Moi University, and I am conducting a study on communication dynamics for women participating in competitive politics in Wajir county, Kenya.

I am here to talk with you and learn about factors affecting communication in the political arena, more so for women politicians, and whether intra-cultural communication dynamics and gendered spaces affect women's political engagement and leadership. I also want to learn more about how intra-cultural communication dynamics support or undermine the performance of women politicians in Wajir County. Another issue is what communication challenges women experience while campaigning for elective positions as well as what strategies women employ to overcome intra-cultural communication challenges while campaigning for elective positions. I feel that by talking to people like you I can best find out about these issues in order to help improve the communication challenges for women in the County.

During this discussion, there are no wrong or right answers. I am interested in your views, so please feel comfortable to say what you honestly feel. Although I do not envisage any of the questions to be sensitive, if you are uncomfortable with any of my questions, please feel free to let me know. I assure you that the interview is completely confidential. Your name will not be written anywhere and will never be used in connection with any of the information you tell me. You do not have to give me an answer to any questions that you do not wish to respond to and you may stop this interview at any time. However, your honest responses will help me to understand better what people think, say and do with regard to women in politics and communication in this community. Regarding the language, I would like you to feel comfortable throughout the discussion, so please just use the language that you are most comfortable with – English, Somali or Kiswahili. You may ask questions at the end of the discussion.

During the discussion, I will be taking notes to keep track of what we have covered. However, so that I do not have to worry about getting every word down on paper, I will also record the discussion. The information you share in confidence will be kept safe and not shared with anyone else. After writing the report, all the recordings and written notes will be erased.

As part of ethical requirements for this research, please sign this form as a confirmation that you voluntarily agree to participate in this research.

Thank you for taking time from your busy schedule to talk to me. I expect that the discussion will take between 30 minutes and 1 hour. Once again, I assure you that this discussion is confidential and your responses will be used only for this study.

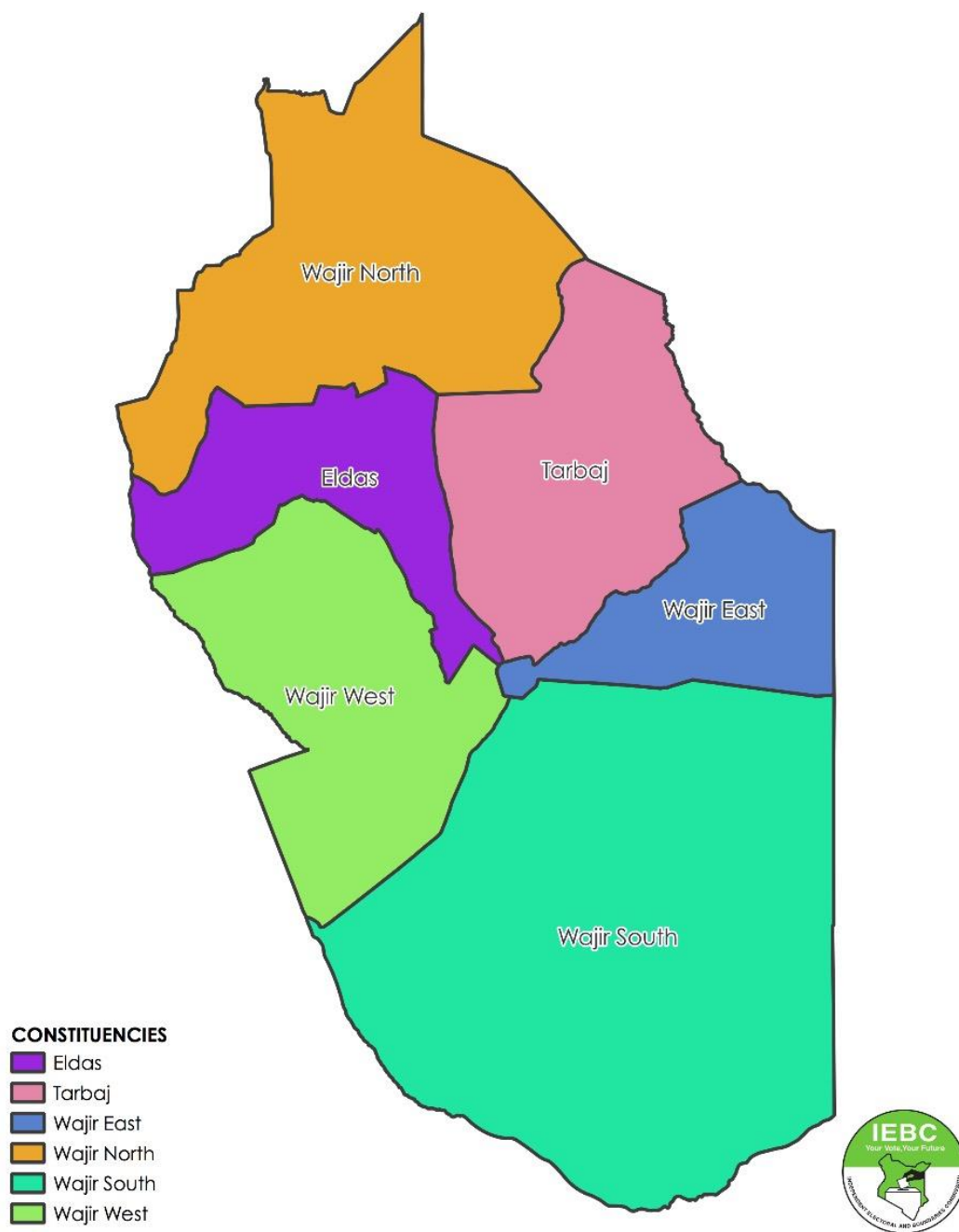
Signature _____

Date _____

APPENDIX V: BUDGET

Below is the estimated cost of the research process.

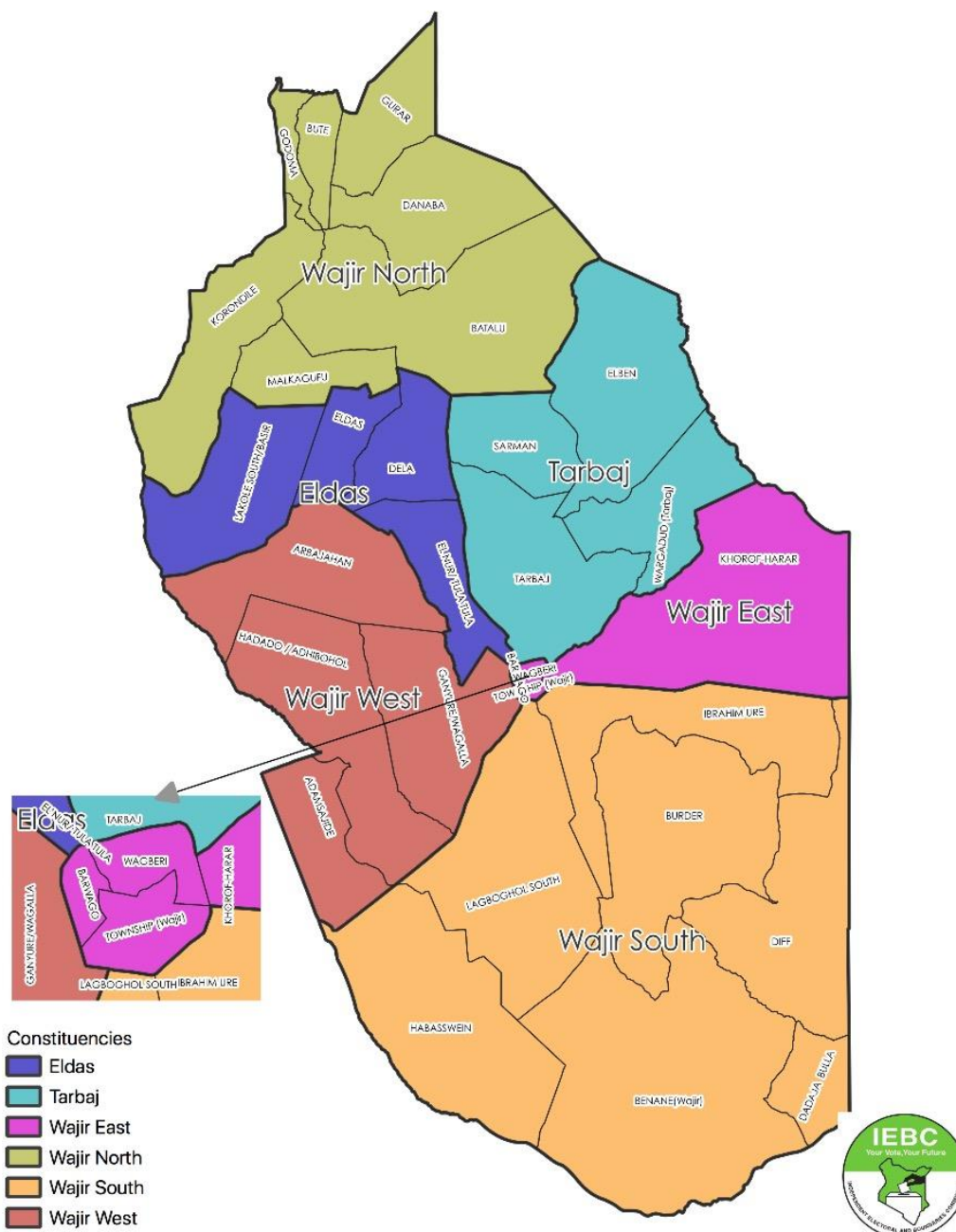
No	Activity	Cost	Total
1	Proposal writing		
	- Literature review (travel costs and photocopying)	50,000	
	- Typing, photocopying and binding	10,000	
	Data collection		
2	- Research instrument (typing, piloting and copies)	20,000	
	- Field costs (transport, accommodation)	50,000	
	- Miscellaneous	10,000	
	Data Analysis	10,000	
3	- Coding and entry into SPSS	10,000	
	- Data editing and screening	10,000	
	- Data validation and Print out		
	Research Reports writing	30,000	
4	- Draft typing and copying	20,000	220,000
	- Presenting using SPSS tools, generation of tables and graphs		
5	Thesis compilation		
	- Thesis edit	200,000	
	- Final copying for presentation		
	- Final copy submission	20,000	
	- Miscellaneous	20,000	
		40,000	280,000
6	Transport, stationery & telephone costs		
	Travel costs	250,000	250,000
	Grand Total		750,000

APPENDIX VI: SIX CONSTITUENCIES OF WAJIR COUNTY**CONSTITUENCIES OF WAJIR COUNTY**

Source: Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC), Kenya

APPENDIXVII: THIRTY WARDS OF WAJIR COUNTY

CONSTITUENCIES OF WAJIR COUNTY



Source: Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC), Kenya