Women Opportunities to Show Talents in Leadership Positions in Primary Schools in Maralal Zone Samburu County, Kenya

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Abstract The purpose of the study was to determine the influence of women opportunities to show talents in leadership position in primary schools in Maralal zone Samburu County, Kenya. The study was guided by Educational Change Theory by Fullan's and the gender, educational and management theory by Wallace's. The study used the mixed method research approach which combines quantitative and qualitative approaches. The Descriptive survey design was used. The study population involved 26 head teachers and 26 deputies totaling to 52. Purposive sampling was used. Questionnaires and interview guide form were used to collect data in this study. The quantitative and qualitative data was analyzed using descriptive (mean, standard Deviation) and inferential statistics (Pearson Product Moment). The findings indicate that results were statistically significant (p-value = 0.002<0.05) that there was a significant influence of women opportunities to show talents on their leadership position in public primary schools. The findings revealed that women opportunity to show their talents in leadership positions had not been fully achieved in public primary schools. The findings conclude that there few female staff who have opportunity to show their potential talents in their leadership positions due to male dormance in leadership position in public primary schools in Maralal zone Samburu County, Kenya. The study recommends that government and other gender related Non – governmental organizations should encourage stake holders to follow the policy and improve on the self-esteem of women so as to encourage them for management positions in their schools.

Keywords: influence, opportunities, talents and women's leadership positions

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1. Introduction

The perception that African women should be allowed to participate in management and leadership is a constant question always asked as observed by [1]. The major setbacks to democracy are unfair reporting of information by media houses in terms of promoting societal role, but it basically continues to assault the African women leadership in position. Education feminism one of major promoters of women leadership and advancement is a result of gender mainstreaming. According to [2] in a patriarchal society like Uganda, male preference is common. The patriarchal society was characterized as favoring African men than women. This favoritism is in terms of marriage and divorce practices, inheritance cultural systems and property ownership by men over women. This gender imbalance has hindered the women to access leadership positions in high institutions. She further argues that, women leadership progression in education is a collective duty and responsibility for everybody to promote them to take up such positions in leadership. Therefore, to enable women achieve their status of being recognized in the leadership position, attention must be provided to women. To encourage and promote the enrolment of female children from poor and below average families, provision of utilities like scholastic materials to attract them to pursue their opportunities.

In terms of pursuing their education, socio-economic factors may not be all to enable girls achieve their goal in education but also the perspective and support of the society can enable them to achieve their target. Women accessing top leadership positions in Kenya corporate business have become practically difficult though they have qualifications and experience on the same jobs. By 2010 the Government of Kenya established that women in management leadership were underrepresented, hence the government introduced a management policy of a third on employment position in the country must be reserved for women representation [3].

In Kenya a majority of the secondary schools are managed by male head teachers according to report by the

[4]. This is further observed, whereby no specific tertiary institution of higher learning offers the experience on training leaders. However, in a Kenyan Development Plan (1997-2002) the general aim of education system was to produce an individual with necessary knowledge, properly socialized with attitudes, talents, and to build the nation, however this has not been achieved [4].

According to [5] socio-cultural beliefs as one major obstacle that prevents women from advancing to senior management positions. Male dominance over female in most communities is emphasized by the beliefs of socialization perception in the society. This therefore, enables an individual develop ideas, attitudes, belief and values over the years. At management levels of education, the talents of most women have not been utilized by the government of Kenya. Not involving women in formulating policy and encouraging them in making decisions in the education sector of the country [6]. This has further revealed that women are marginalized in both public and private educational institutions [7].

Many authors support the studies of [8,9] who also established that, there was marginalized presence among academicians in management of higher institutions in Kenya. According to [10] women in educational leadership position in both Kenya and Pakistan were a minority compared to the men and in other parts of the world as well. This is contrary to outside African nations in regards to female presence in leadership position especially education leadership at management level, hence their absence at decision making level questionable. For example, experienced female teachers in both Kenya and Pakistan made up only 40% and 31% respectively. This scenario clearly depicted that women participation in teaching profession was low [11].

Insecurity, cultural traditions, poverty, were among several reasons affecting girl-child and female education. That at higher level jobs, three perspectives reflected three sets of factors in explanation of women under-representation: individual, cultural and structural or institutional influences [12]. The stereotypes connected of male and female was based on different roles perceived at individual level. The provision of opportunity to improve women skills, training, coaching and mentoring them were policies implemented at the individual perspective. In the organization context, the organization's culture, ideology, policies, and history limits attainment of high position of women based on the cultural perspective. Leadership of women in schools may be hard to change people's cultural habits towards women. Development of Education was a solution to all in terms of equipping people with skills in addressing escalating poverty and ignorance in Kenya as well as many developing countries [13].

The county was affected by various challenges, drought and famine are persistence and people move looking for pasture and water and it affects pupils learning. Insecurity is also another challenge that affects the Samburu county. Civil war within the county was always frequent and also with the neighboring counties such as Baringo, West pokot. This attitude by cattle rustling was implemented by the government of Kenya because women marginalization became one of the major issues to be addressed and achieved by everybody in the country. The study investigated the influence of women opportunities to show talents in leadership position in primary schools in Maralal zone Samburu County, Kenya.

2. Statement of the Problem

The policies implemented by the Kenyan Government concerning women marginalization in leadership in the education sector in order to gain consensus is yet to gain success. The underlying factors and causes that curtail the women success in achieving balanced representation in terms of equality and equity in education leadership have persisted in leadership positions in learning institutions. Male dominance in leadership of education sector has contributed to low involvement of experienced female leaders in managerial leadership, teaching and education sector [14]. The absence of girls and women in education profession, leadership position was also attributed to several factors among these include cultural traditions, insecurity and poverty. The women composition and leadership of School Management Committee and Boards of Governors has marginalized female leaders compared to male counterparts [15]. A similar situation was not different in the primary schools, whereby women leaders were still under represented compared to their male counterparts who possess similar qualifications.

This situation was not different with the report by Education ministry of 2011 posited and revealed that female head teachers in schools were 1998 (12.8%), whereas their counterparts were 13630 (87.2%) in primary schools and 1099 (27.3%) female head teachers and 2933 (72.7%) male in secondary schools nationally. Therefore, the persistence of this situation among Kenyan women was not different from Maralal Zone of Samburu County. The majority of leaders are led by their male counterparts in primary schools. There were 367 teachers in the zone compared to 233 women while the rest were male teachers. The county agents promote more male teachers in the leadership position than women.

Beside female teachers being not promoted in the leadership position equally as male teachers. The girls also dropped out of school more than boys due to cultural biases such as early marriages and preference of sending the boy child to school while girls are left at home to care for their families thus gender discrimination. This study therefore, tries to answer the question; What is the influence of women opportunities to show talents in leadership positions in primary schools in Maralal zone of Samburu county, Kenya?

3. Purpose of the Study

To examine the influence of women opportunities to show in leadership positions in primary schools in Maralal zone Samburu County, Kenya.

4. Research Questions

What is the influence of women opportunities to show talents in leadership position in primary schools in Maralal zone Samburu County, Kenya?

5. Literature Review

Men make better leaders than women in leadership, because leadership was regarded as men dominated job [16]. In order to handle discipline in work place predominantly men position of Board of Education, and to deal with political influence public perception tend to favour men. Previously occupied managerial positions by men have been recently changed in of nature, structure and composition by many organizations. Women employees currently were now dominating the top managerial positions in career with many opportunities at the top [17]. The current changes in education sector many opportunities have enabled women to join in the administration of schools. According to [18] the women administrators have improved the education sector by applying more robust administration and leadership styles more than men in child upbringing, learning and teaching. Women have strongly incorporated the values of teaching, learning to children hence opening more avenues for more women to join the struggle of becoming school administrators. [19] revealed that in management position of education sector, female leaders do not show any interest in seeking for its leadership as compared to male leaders.

Female dominated schools with men head teachers have experienced great changes due to the new management of female head teachers more so at primary schools. In most school's management and other education institutions in Kenya, with female heads have contributed to improvement in terms of performance in national examinations, discipline and standards of the schools, however, these standards have also only been attained through efficient corporation in management and leadership with other colleagues in school [20]. In Kenya male counterparts dominate head teachers' role in the majority of rural primary schools. Female head teachers in schools have always been recognized due to their performance. As stated by [21] that international research indicates that in developed and third world countries in educational leadership minority are women. According to [22] opined that different scholarly research done in Greece have supported the same. Another by [23] in California, then in the Solomon Islands by [23], also in Turkey by [21], plus of course in East African specifically in Uganda by [24] and finally in Papua New Guinea by [25] has greatly emphasized on women being marginalized in all levels of education institutions in leadership positions. Many factors have been documented why women have difficulties in attaining the leadership positions in all levels of education sector.

In Uganda situation researchers like [26] felt there was need for urgent consideration for women to attain leadership position. They further argued that for educational leadership to operate cultural and gendered, resource provision. For any specific population proper guide should be designed to cater for the preparation of the program. Different studies conducted by [28] on women leadership being faced with the challenge of culture, another study by [29] also on women discrimination in terms of leadership in schools and [30] on schools confirmed many female leaders were not considered in management positions in schools. [31]

stated that women leadership was under mind by the community. She further posited that the community cultural factors considered male to female head teachers to be head teachers in all schools.

According to [30] established that 64.5% respondents suggested that due to cultural stereotype preferred working with male head teachers than women head teachers [29]. However, most teachers felt working under female head teacher was better compared to male head teachers [31]. Therefore, the different ethnic communities' diversity has perceived women are not called up to administration of leadership position in Kenya. Therefore, most communities find women leadership as boring and not suitable to participate in leadership position in Kenya [32]. There many factors ranging from level of education and awareness, cultural practices, customs and different traditions and economic development of the country contribute to women leaders being under mind in the leadership position. In determining the status of women in leadership positions factors like women perception of their status, economic, political, cultural attitudes and roles and rights.

6. Research Methodology

Mixed methodology approach was adopted in the study. Both quantitative and qualitative research techniques were used in the study. This methodology was suitable because it allowed the researcher to collect quantitative and a qualitative data by use of standardized instruments [29]. The study utilized concurrent triangulation design, this study actualized through a single-phase framework, the use of the quantitative and qualitative methods during the same period and with complementary weight, the collection of enrolment data and opinions of subjects that enriched the interpretation and discussion of findings [30]. Primary schools in Maralal zone, Samburu County, Kenya composed the study. There were 26 head teachers, 26 deputies, 26 senior teachers and 263 teachers who had a total number of 341 teachers. The study sample size constituted a total population of 341 respondents, a sample of 10% of schools was picked that is 26 schools. From each school, the head teacher, deputy and senior teacher automatically become a sample to the study; 233 female teachers and 108 male teachers was studied giving a total of 341 respondents. [32] recommended that in descriptive survey a sample of 10% is considered sufficient from each group. Respondents were stratified selected having the criteria of sample size in mind. The researcher ensured balance on gender by considering schools with at least 2 male and 2 female teachers to avoid biasness on the research. Purpose sampling was used in the school with more than 5 teachers to determine the schools with the desired ratios and to sample schools based on gender and leadership position. A questionnaire and interview schedule were used to collect data. Both Descriptive (Means, Standard Deviation) and inferential statistics was analyzed. Pearson Product Moment coefficient was used to analyze inferential statistics. Analyzed data were presented in form of frequency table, mean, standard deviation and Pearson Product Moment coefficient with the assistance of Statistical Package for Social Science

7. Data Analysis and Discussion

(SPSS version 25) to establish the influence. Qualitative data was presented in themes [33].

The study was to determine the influence women opportunities to show talents in leadership position in primary schools in Maralal zone Samburu County, Kenya. The respondents were given statements in likert scale to show the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with each statement. The findings were presented in Table 1.

Table 1 shows that 37.7% of the respondents strongly agreed that women face criticism in leadership position, 20.3% of the respondents agreed, 15.1 % were undecided, 18.9% of the respondents disagreed. Lastly, only a paltry 8% of the respondents strongly agreed that women faced criticism in leadership position in schools. On the same note, 28.3% of the respondents strongly agreed that women had high self-esteem to take up management positions in school, 30.6% agreed, 26.4% were undecided, 5.7% disagreed and lastly only 9% of the respondents disagreed that women had high self-esteem to take up management positions in public primary schools. In the same vein, 30.2% respondents strongly agreed that assertiveness encouraged women in management positions in school, 26.4% of the respondents agreed, 20.5% were undecided, 15.9% of the respondents disagreed and lastly 7% of the respondents strongly disagreed that assertiveness encouraged women in management positions in public primary school. The results on Table 1 further revealed that 30.2% of the respondents strongly agreed that women accepted responsibility challenges in school, 34% of the respondents agreed, 5.7% of the respondents were undecided, 15.1% of the respondents disagreed and lastly 15.1% of the respondents strongly disagreed that women accepted responsibility challenges in public primary schools. At the same time, Table 1 revealed that 28.3% of the respondents strongly agreed that availability of position encouraged women to compete for management positions in school, 22.6% of the respondents agreed, while 1.9% of the respondents were undecided, 26.4%

of the respondents disagreed and lastly 28% of the respondents strongly disagreed that availability of position encouraged women to compete for management positions in public primary schools. In the same spirit, Table 1 further revealed that only paltry of 9% respondents strongly agreed that gender policy was effectively followed in school, 12% of the respondents agree with the statement, 13% of the respondents were undecided, 32.1% of the respondents disagreed that the gender policy was not effectively used and lastly 34% of the respondents strongly disagreed that the gender policy was effectively followed in public primary schools. Finally, Table 1 revealed that 20.8% of the respondents strongly agreed that opportunity to show talent was encouraged among women staff in school, 15.1% of the respondents agreed and only 6% of the respondents were undecided, while 22.3% of the respondents disagreed with the statement and lastly 35.8% of the respondents strongly disagreed that to opportunity to show talent was encouraged among women staff in public primary schools. In conclusion, the findings reveal that women opportunity to show their talents in leadership positions had not been fully achieved in public primary schools. The findings do not concur with [17] asserts that women employees currently are now dominating the top managerial positions in career with many opportunities at the top. The current changes in education sector many opportunities have enabled women to join in the administration of schools.

Table 2 shows Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Analysis which generated a correlation coefficient of $r = 0.746$ with a corresponding significant level (p-value) of 0.002 which was less than the predetermined level of significance, 0.05, that is, p-value = 0.002<0.05. These results indicate that there is a significant influence of women opportunities to show talents on their leadership position in public primary schools. This results indicate that, there is a relationship between opportunities to show talents and women's leadership position in public primary schools. This positively affects the rate at which women grow in their leadership positions with the available opportunities in public primary schools in Maralal zone Samburu County, Kenya.

Table 1. Women Opportunities to Show Talents in Leadership Position

Statement	SA	A	U	D	SD	Mean	S.Dev
Women face criticism in leadership positions in my school.	37.7%	20.3%	15.1%	18.9%	8%	3.85	1.133
Women have high self-esteem to take up management positions in my school	28.3%	30.6%	26.4%	5.7%	9%	3.91	0.883
Assertiveness encouraged women in management positions in my school	30.2%	26.4%	20.5%	15.9%	7%	3.57	1.105
Women accept responsibility challenges in my school	30.2%	34%	5.7%	15.1%	15.1%	3.68	1.221
Availability of position encouraged women to compete for management positions in my school	28.3%	22.6%	1.9%	26.4%	28%	3.5	1.153
Gender policy was effectively used in my school.	9%	12%	13%	32.1%	34%	3.87	1.038
Opportunity to show talent was encouraged among women staff in my school.	20.8%	15.1%	6%	22.3%	35.8%	3.77	1.154

Source: Research 2020.

Table 2. Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient Analysis Showing the influence of women opportunities to show talents in their leadership position in primary schools in Maralal zone Samburu County, Kenya

		Opportunities to Show Talents	Women's Leadership Position
	Pearson Correlation	1	.746**
Opportunities to Show Talents	Sig. (2-tailed)		.002
	N	16	16
	Pearson Correlation	.746**	1
Women's Leadership Position	Sig. (2-tailed)	.002	
	N	16	16

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The interviewees also concurred with the assertion that they faced criticism in management encourage women from management positions in their school. This implies that many female leaders were not considered in management positions in schools. On further probing, head teacher, HT1 noted;

"Female teachers dominated schools with men head teachers who had great experience to changes due to the new management of female head teachers more so at primary schools. In most school's management and other education institutions in Kenya, managed by female heads have contributed to improvement in terms of performance in national examinations, discipline and standards of the schools, however, these standards have also only been attained through efficient corporation in management and leadership with other colleagues in school. In Kenya men are dominate head teachers in majority of rural primary schools. Female head teachers in schools have always been recognized due to their performance" (HT1, Female, March, 2020).

These views thus support the sentiments expressed by [25] that international research indicates that in developed and third world countries in educational leadership minority are women. In Kenya men dominate head teachers in majority of rural primary schools [25]. Female head teachers in schools have always been recognized due to their performance. There many factors ranging from level of education and awareness, cultural practices, customs and different traditions and economic development of the country contribute to women leaders being under mind in the leadership. In determining the status of women in leadership positions factors like women perception of their status, economic, political, cultural attitudes and roles and rights.

8. Conclusion

The findings conclude that there few female staff who have opportunity to show their potential talents in their leadership positions due to male dormance in leadership position in public primary schools in Maralal zone Samburu County, Kenya. The cultural factors have to some extent generated to the male dormance in leadership positions in Samburu county, Kenya.

9. Recommendations

The government and other gender related non-governmental organizations should come up with strategies and the ways that will raise the self-esteem of women so as to encourage them for management positions in their school and therefore accept responsibility. The Ministry of Education should also provide enabling environment for the female staff to attain leadership positions in public primary schools. The implication of the study revealed that women should be encouraged to take up leadership roles in schools.

Acknowledgements

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