

Political Environment and Women Participation in Development Activities in Uasin Gishu County, Kenya.

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ABSTRACT: Women's political participation has been recognized internationally as an important measure of the status of women in any particular country. Hence, in recent years, women's participation in politics and development activities has received significant attention across the world. The central objective of this study was to determine how political environment affected women's participation in development activities in Uasin Gishu County, Kenya. In this study, two theories were used: feminism theory and empowerment theory. Using a mixed approach, the study employed the Convergent Parallel Research Design. The target population was 804 women who were enrolled with CBOs in Uasin Gishu County. The study employed purposive random sampling to select participants. Among the 84 female CBO officials using purposive sampling 30 officials were chosen from 84 officials for qualitative data. The sampling formula developed by Yamane Taro (1967) was used to calculate the size of the sample taken from the entire population of 720 non-official registered women. The respondents for quantitative data were 257 while that of qualitative data was 30. Therefore, the sample size for this study was 287 respondents. The tools used were interview guides and questionnaires. The results of the data analysis were presented in tables and figures using SPSS version 25, and theme analysis was utilized to analyze the qualitative data. Data presentation was followed by recommendations and conclusions. The results indicated that a weak correlation ($r=0.00$) between political environment and women's participation in development activities. The study urges and makes recommendations to stakeholders in education and leaders of county governments in cooperation with the national government to strive further towards creating awareness on addressing the importance of women empowerment.

I. BACKGROUND

"Freedom cannot be achieved unless the women have been emancipated from all forms of oppression. All of us take this on board that the objective of reconstruction and development program will not have been realized unless we see in visible practical terms that the condition of women in our country has radically changed for better and that they have been empowered to intervene in all aspects of life equal with any other member of the society" Nelson Mandela.

The possibility for all citizens to participate in the management of public affairs is at the very heart of democracy. At the same time full and equal participation of both women and men in political decision making provides a balance that more accurately reflects the composition of society, and may as such enhance the legitimacy of political processes by making them more democratic and responsive to the concerns and perspectives of all segments of society. Despite these facts in the majority of countries of the world, the political

arena remains largely dominated by men, and is even an exclusively male bastion in some countries. As we know in democracy the voice of all is being heard equally. But, throughout history, women which constitute fifty percent of global populations are underrepresented in decision-making processes at all governance levels around the world and even they are dominated and marginalized politically, socially, economically, physically and psychologically by their counter parts. Therefore, the participation of women in the political discourse is a recent phenomenon. The participation of women in political decision-making positions was recognized as a political right after the adoption of the Universal Declaration (UDHR, 1948).

Practically for example the government formulated national policy on women in 1993 with the objective of speeding up of equality between men and women, so that women can participate in the political, social, and economic life of their country on equal terms with men, ensuring that their right to own property as well as their other human rights are respected and that they are not excluded from the enjoyment of the fruits of their labour or from performing public functions and being decision makers. Hence the article centers on two main substantive parts. The first part focuses on the factors that hinder women political participation in Kenya and secondly the importance of women political participation.

The exclusion of women in politics has been identified in recent times as one of the major setbacks for economic development. Women's groups are a strong pillar for grassroots politics; and a drive for more women participating in politics at the grassroots still faces a lot of challenges, making it difficult for them to harness available opportunities for development. Thus, the opportunity therein for women's participation in politics and women empowerment is yet to be exploited by the women groups in Uasin Gishu County, Kenya. The present study assesses the role of women groups in politics,

The establishment of the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) on gender equality and the development of the "good governance" agenda has increased the interest of the international development community in the role of women within governance and the need to strengthen women's political participation. It is now widely recognized that women's exclusion from decision making results in state institutions and policies that do not address gender inequalities and are not accountable or responsive to women citizens, thereby perpetuating women's political marginalization. Women's participation in politics is therefore recognized to be both a right and a requirement for effective development, and it is generally agreed that a critical mass of women in politics are needed in order to have policy impact (usually estimated at 30 percent of parliamentarians being women). This increased focus on women's political participation has led to specific programming by donors to support women's participation in political processes, as well as broader efforts to integrate gender into the good governance agenda. This has included developing gender indicators in governance analysis and integrating gender into governance models and programming(SADC, 2019).

Various organizations have helped educate voters, raise awareness about women's rights issues, lobby legislative bodies, and support women running for office. Even though some groups dissolved after their particular causes were no longer relevant, while other groups have been no longer lasting, political groups for women nevertheless continue to play a role in politics today. Women's organizations as observed by Gouws (2015), are spreading and networking across Africa on an unprecedented scale and creating gender friendly laws and constitutions. Thus, in recent time, Women's movements which were hitherto dominated by organizations engaged in developmental activities including income generation, welfare concerns, and home making skills, have evolved to become organizations lobbying for women in decision making position in politics: pressing for legislative and constitutional changes and civic education. In fact, women on their own went further to form political parties.

Women's full and effective political participation is a matter of human rights, inclusive growth and sustainable development (OECD, 2018). The active participation of women, on equal terms with men, at all levels of decision-making and political involvement is essential to the achievement of equality, sustainable development, peace and democracy and the inclusion of their perspectives and experiences into the decision-making

processes. Despite this, Kumar (2018) states that in the twenty-first century, women are facing obstacles in their political participation worldwide. Women around the world at every socio-political level find themselves under-represented in parliament and far removed from decision-making levels. As noted in the Millennium Development Goals (United Nations, 2019), women's equal participation with men in power and decision-making is part of their fundamental right to participate in political life, and at the core of gender equality and women's empowerment. Strategies to increase women's participation in politics have been advanced through conventions, protocols and international agreements for gender mainstreaming, but they are yet to prove effective in achieving gender parity in the highest government rankings (Morobane, 2014). Half of the world's population are women, but today women only hold 23% of all seats in parliaments and senates globally (Chalaby, 2017; Radu, 2018).

Given the fact that many states have ratified international conventions and protocols on gender equality and women political participation, the low level of women's representation in government and political may be considered a violation of women's fundamental democratic rights. The African government's public commitments have not materialized into better protection for women and support for victims and this has made women to play outside the political ground. According to Rop (2013) many African state sign and commit themselves to promoting gender parity in political participation, but end up shelving the agreement. Abuse of office and desire to acquire power through self-centered means has resulted in the state ignoring women concerns. Thus, women continue to be underrepresented in governments across the nation and face barriers that often make it difficult for them to exercise political power and assume leadership positions in the public sphere. The UN (2011) concurs and states that, "women in every part of the world continue to be largely marginalized from the political sphere, often as a result of discriminatory laws, practices, attitudes and gender stereotypes, low levels of education, lack of access to health care and the disproportionate effect of poverty on women".

Literature has shown that the factors that hamper or facilitate women's political participation vary with level of socio-economic development, geography, culture, and the type of political system (Shvedova, 2005; Alzuabi, 2016). In Africa, for instance, women are striving to assert an influential role in determining the course of their states but, they have been faced with many challenges that have actually strengthened their resolve. Moreover, the political environment and conditions are often unfriendly or even hostile to women (Shvedova, 2005). Often the after effects of the consequences of abuses that women and girls face during conflicts are ignored and under-reported, especially when it comes to political participation and women involvement in politics and governance. Lack of political will comes from the political parties in Africa who only think of how they can expand power and win elections. Anything that does not give these is seen as impractical. This has jarred the confidence of women in their ability to participate in political processes. In fact, this reflects the reality around the globe. And the Southern African Development Community (SADC) is no different in this global trend. Figures for most of the countries still fall short of the target set by SADC to have 50% women in decision-making positions (SADC, 2019). In light of this, this study seeks to examine the factors that influence woman political environment and participation in development activities in UasinGishu County, Kenya.

The 10th Parliament did not formulate the political guarantees established by the government for minority groups in society, due exclusively to a lack of political will (Nyanjom, 2011). It should also be noted that the current government comprised of the National Assembly, Senate, and county government does not meet the 33% requirement for basic constitutional gender representation. The situation was not any better in Uasin Gishu County where out of 30 elected members of Uasin Gishu County Assembly, only three were women.

Women Participation in Development Activities

Since the first Women's conference was held by the UN in 1975, which was held in Mexico, women's participation in development has been a major topic of discussion on a worldwide scale and on most world agendas. According to reports, women are typically unable to completely engage in development processes compared to their men counterparts. The Beijing Platform for Action Report stated that governments should

adopt visible commitment to matters gender in all their policies and programs. Overtime various interventions have been made to recognize and appreciate the participation of women through various platforms and organizations such as Community Based Organizations.

Women's voice and agency can now be exercised in many different contexts thanks to membership in community-based organizations (CBOs). This includes improved decision-making power in the home and community, control over and availability to community resources, as well as the degradation of social and cultural norms that restrict women's agency. In CBOs like irrigation user groups, farmer groups, loans and savings groups, sanitation committees, and water user groups, women are actively involved members of the group. However, they continue to be underrepresented in leadership posts, and their public activities are still limited by deeply ingrained cultural norms and conventional beliefs (ADB, 2012).

The involvement of women in development concerns is a global phenomenon that has sparked extensive debate and research in many different nations. The examination of women's accomplishments in community development to date is a global source of great concern (Mullins, 2009). It appears that there are still significant differences between women and men in many areas of life, including the workplace, in the modern world.

Grasso and Smith (2021) as well as Lavizzari and Portos (2021) states that young women are not politically indifferent at all. They do participate, and they do so more and more until they get to the same levels as their male counterparts. Numerous researches have revealed that young women and men participate in distinct ways. As per Stolle et al. (2005), there is a greater likelihood of young women than men engaging in unconventional forms of political participation and processes. These forms of involvement tend to be informal, grassroots, and involve private actions such as volunteering, taking part in social movements, buying political goods and services, and even performing arts. These disparities demonstrate the continued existence of numerous obstacles to young women's political participation while reflecting gendered preconceptions and gendered socialization processes regarding the ostensibly distinct roles that men and women should have as citizens in the public domain.

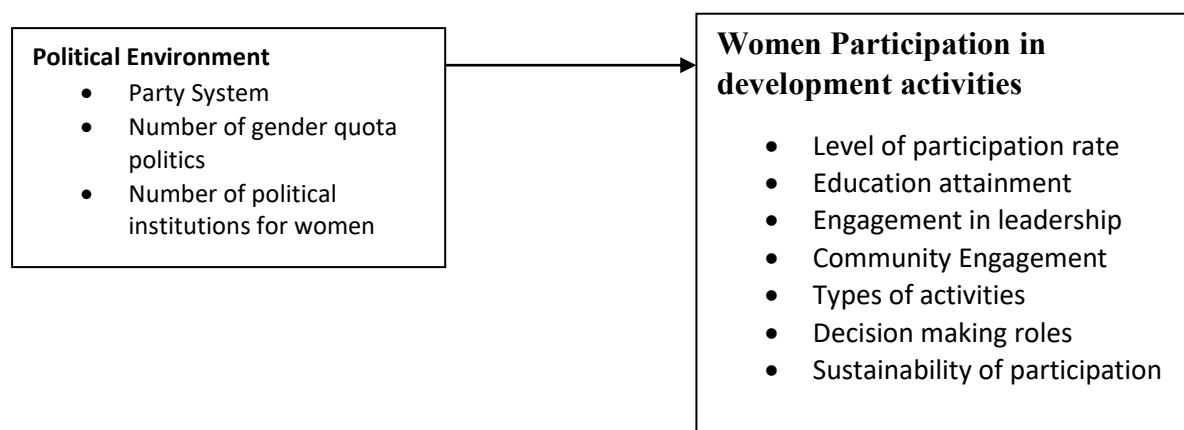
Women, especially in the developing nations such as Nigeria, have played significant rites in the sustainable agricultural and rural development of their countries (Akpabio 2005; Obasi, 2005; Ani, A.O., 2004; Ekong, 2010). Over the years, the women in Igbo land have taken an engaged role in the growth of rural communities, especially for women living in the study region. But even with their enormous contributions to the socioeconomic advancement of their nations, these ladies still face several socio-cultural and economic challenges that limit their visibility in the society generally as well as involvement in the process of making decisions in particular. Kobane (2013) claims that the main obstacles of cultural barriers restrict women from taking part in rural development and traditional conventions, which makes them invisible in this context. In light of this, the study evaluated the extent to which women participated in rural community development in the Imo State, Nigeria, Isu Local Government Area.

Kenya has sufficient resources, according to ARC (2017), to bridge the gaps between cultural, economic, and directional fulfillment, all of which can eventually result in several forms of sustainable economic development. According to Bayeh (2016), In pastoralist communities in Africa, like parts of Ethiopia, where women are allowed to own property, development happens quite quickly pursue an education, and make important decisions on the execution of development initiatives. According to other studies, empowered women are capable of raising and organizing finances for the carrying out community development initiatives. To boost the assets available and projected empowered women have the ability to encourage communities to contribute their property for vital initiatives including water projects, mental health projects, and many more. They can also invest in and multiply the various assets in their possession.

Conceptual Framework

Among the political obstacles faced by women, accompanying factors are undoubtedly: Kenyan politics has always been tied to masculinity in this "male-only" way; most ideological groups are submerged by men, making it difficult for women. There are political organizations to activate; most open associations, like labor associations, are also overwhelmed by men; Kenyan women have never been organized to deal with political party issues, and their preparations are not adapted to political management; the question of our composition and legislation is absolutely critical. In most cases, they tend to treat most women cruelly; Election-related malice is also another obstacle preventing female competitors from participating. Since women are considered to be the "weaker gender" in most African groups, they are often potential targets of political hooligans and hired thugs against them this affects the women's community engagement and leadership. In this way, the contribution of women in political decision-making is an important step towards reducing low sustainability of participation and education attainment.

Conceptual Framework



II. METHOD

Research Design

In the current study, a mixed method approach was used. Since parallel convergent research design is the most well-known and least time-consuming of the basic and advanced mixed methods processes, was used. With this design, the validity of the results was increased by utilizing both qualitative and quantitative methodologies. The present investigation aimed to gather and assess quantitative and qualitative data in isolation, thereafter comparing the results to ascertain if they corroborate or contradict each other (Creswell, 2014). The objective of the study was to obtain several types of information from both qualitative and quantitative data, including detailed qualitative participant perspectives and quantitative instrument scores, which when combined, yielded consistent results.

Location of the Study

The study focused on the relationship between economic and social factors and women's involvement in development activities in Kenya. However, the main focus was on the factors influencing the percentage of women employed in the growth of Uasin Gishu County. The study concentrated on women because they are less disadvantaged in the society compared to men. The target group was interviewed and questionnaires were distributed as part of the study. The Uasin Gishu County, was the subject of this study. Kenya has 47 counties, including Uasin Gishu County. With almost a million residents, it is situated in the Rift Valley. The county is well-known for its farming endeavors, with maize serving as the primary crop production and cattle rearing.

Thus, Uasin Gishu County has been known to be good in farming and animal rearing. This county borders Nandi and Elgeyo Marakwet Counties respectively (2018–2022 County Integrated Development Plan (CIDP)).

Target Population

Population is defined by Fox and Bayat (2007) as the entire set of individuals or objects from which the study aims to draw conclusions in a broad sense. Women who were registered with 14 community-based organizations (CBOs) in Uasin Gishu County made up the study's population. Eight hundred and four women are registered in 14 CBOs, consisting of 84 official members and 720 non-official members, as per the Uasin Gishu County Integrated Development Plan, 2018–2022.

Table 1: Population Matrix

Category	Population Frequency (women) Women	%of total population
Officials	84	11
Members	720	89
Total	804	100

Sample Size and Sampling Procedures

The process of selecting a small number of people (a sample) from a larger population (the sampling population) in order to assess or predict the prevalence of an unidentified fact, event, or result in connection to the larger population is known as sampling, according to Kumar (2011). Kumar continues by defining a sample as the subset of the population that piques the researcher's curiosity. The researcher used random sampling to ensure that every member of the population has an equal chance of being selected for this study. Simple random and purposeful sampling was employed in this study. The researcher utilised Yamane Taro's (1967) technique to determine a sample size of 804 registered women from CBOs in throughout UasinGishu County.

$$n=N/1+N(e)^2$$

n= Signifies the sample size

N= Study Population

e= Margin of error

$$n=720/1+804(0.05)^2$$

$$n=720/(1+804(0.0025))$$

$$n=720/1+1.8$$

$$n=720/2.8$$

$$n=257$$

The sample size for quantitative data was 257 respondents. For qualitative data purposive sampling was used. Purposive sampling is required to assure generalizability of the study and that the data collected is consistent, reliable, and useful (Alexiades & Bernard 1996). This is a technique of selecting the number of sets of components in such a way that the object depending make approximately the same estimation or percent as the population for those personal characteristics that are currently the subject of data gathering" (S.R. Myneni, 2015). In addition, the 14 CBO's leaders were interviewed by the researcher. The Uasin Gishu County Integrated Development Plan, 2018–2022, lists 14 CBOs that are registered, including 84 female officials.

Thus, using purposive sampling 30 leaders were chosen from 84 leaders who were respondents for qualitative. Therefore, the Sample size for the study was 287 registered women in CBO'S across Uasin Gishu County.

Table 2: Sample Size

Category	Frequency	Proportion (%)	Sample Size
Officials	84	10	30
Members (Non-officials)	720	90	257
Total	804	100	287

SUBCOUNTY	NO. OF GROUPS	NO. OF MEMBERS	PROPORTION %
TURBO	10	100	40
KAPSERET	10	140	56
AINABKOI	10	120	48
KESSES	10	120	48
SOY	10	120	48
MOIBEN	10	120	48
TOTAL	60	720	288

Table 3: Sub-county Groups

KESSES SUBCOUNTY

WARD	NAME OF GROUP	NO. OF MEMBERS	%PROPORTION
TARAKWA	KIMOI GROUP	12	25
RACECOURSE	POWERHOUSE	12	25
TULWET	SISIBO	12	25
CHEPTIRET/KIPCHAMO	KALYET	12	25
TOTAL		48	100

(Source: Uasingishu County Integrated Development Plan)

Research Instruments

The following data instruments were used to obtain information from respondents. The researcher employed two equipment or tools to collect data.

Semi-Structured Interviews

Interviewing was the first tool that was used. The semi-structured interviews were used by the researcher. According to Easwaramoorthy and Zarinpoush (2006), in a semi-structured interview, the interviewer utilizes a list of prepared questions, while the respondents react in their own terms. This guarantees that all responders supplied data regarding the same topic the researcher created a topic guide that served as a checklist. In addition to seeking clarity with follow-up questions, the researcher delved deeper into some subjects based on the respondent's responses. The study conducted interviews with 30 female CBO leaders. Consequently, semi-structured interviews assisted the researcher in pinpointing the domains in which a systematic collection of comprehensive data from a diverse range of participants is required.

Questionnaires

Data was collected using a questionnaire. Kumar (2011) defines a questionnaire as a set of questions that participants must record their answers to. Survey respondents read the questions, estimated the expected responses, and then submitted their responses. 424 questionnaires were administered collectively to the registered women members in CBOs in Uasin Gishu County. They were standardized, simple to administer and score. Confidentiality gave respondents time to deliberate about their answers. Questionnaires are also widely used (MacMillan & Schumacher, 2001). One drawback is that you can't ask follow-up questions or get clarification if you send one. Personal delivery of questionnaires and explanations of the study's significance helped overcome these obstacles.

There was a mixture of both closed-ended and open-ended inquiries. The researcher employed closed-ended questions when concrete data was needed and open-ended questions when learning more generally about our respondents was needed. Some of the closed-ended questions had boxes to click off next to predetermined answers, while others used Likert scales ranging from "Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Neutral (N), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD) are the four possible responses.

The following were criteria used to measure women participation in development: Age, marital status and level of education.

The respondents were asked to indicate their age. Their responses were presented in Table 4.1

Table 4: Age of the Respondents

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	35-40	100	36.9	36.9	36.9
	40-45	140	51.7	51.7	88.6
	45-50	22	8.1	8.1	96.7
	50-55	8	3.0	3.0	99.6
	55-60	1	.4	.4	100.0
Total		271	100.0	100.0	

Source(Researcher, 2024)

Table 4.2 shows the age of the respondents. The results indicates that the majority of the respondents were ranging between 40-45years with a percentage of 51.9%, followed by 35-40 with a percentage of 36.9%, followed by 45-50 with a percentage of 8.1% and finally 55-60 with a percentage of 0.4%. From the results, we

learn that the majority of the women in CBOs in Uasin Gishu County are under 45 years of age. The respondents in this study were women. It may also indicate that the individuals who were available to respond to the questionnaire were open to discussing their views on the challenges of women participation in development activities.

The respondents were asked to indicate their marital status. Their responses were presented in Table 4.3.

Table 5: Marital status of the Respondents

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Married	156	57.6	57.6	57.6
	Single	115	42.4	42.4	100.0
	Total	271	100.0	100.0	

Source(Researcher, 2024)

From table 4.4, the results show that 57.6% of the respondents were married while 42.4% of the respondents were single. This indicates that majority of the respondents were married. The fact that majority of the respondents were under 45years of age this indicates that marriage occurred below 45 years of age.

The respondents were asked to indicate their level of education. Their responses were presented in Table 4.4.

Table 6: Level of education of the Respondents

Level of education	Frequency	Percentage
Certificate	15	5.2
Diploma	151	55.8
Degree	105	39.2
Others	0	0
Total	271	100

Source(Researcher, 2024)

From table 4.4, the results show that majority of the respondents had attained diploma level of education as shown with 55.8%, followed by degree level with 39.2% and finally 5.2% had attained certificate level. This indicates that majority of the women in CBOs in UasinGishu County are learned.

The findings shows that the majority of women registered in CBOs in UasinGishu County are married, educated and middle aged. These findings concurs with those of Boateng et al., (2012) who did a research in Ghana and revealed that employed and educated women were more likely than unemployed and uneducated women to have a voice in all areas of household decision-making, and wealthier women were more likely than poorer women to participate in making decisions about their own health care.

Correlation Analysis between Political Environment and Women Participation

Correlation analysis was conducted to establish the relationship between political environment and women participation in development activities in Uasin Gishu County Kenya. Table 4.8 shows the correlation:

Table 7: Pearson Correlation on political environment and women participation

Correlations	
Women Participation	Political environment

Women Participation	Pearson Correlation	1	.282
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	270	270
Political environment	Pearson Correlation	.282	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	270	271

Source (Researcher, 2024)

From the table 4.8; the results indicates that the relationship between level of political environment and women participation scores: ($r=0.00$). This indicates that there is a weak correlation between women's involvement and the political environment because it falls within the range of $|0| < r < |0.300|$. This suggests that the combined effect of the two is tolerable. This studies agree with that of Omoruyi et al.,(2008) who argues that; Women are homemakers and centre of the family, they are also custodian of social, cultural and fundamental values of society and permanent change are often best achieved through them, in fact full community development is not possible without their outstanding cooperation and effective participation. No doubt, the participation and contributions of women to the political and socio-economic development of any democratic state is immeasurable, women have not taken their rightful place in the political and national life of Kenya. Though, Nigerian women have shown to be homemakers, custodians of family values, they have also exhibited and demonstrated competence in managing public affairs and leadership positions.

Respondents to the interview question regarding the type of support that increased their resilience offered these responses. A participant made the following statement:

The government is really working hard to support women in providing political positions through the gender rule. This is really helping us to improve our development activities as women (Respondent 2, June, 2024).

This findings agrees with (World Bank 2023)who said that; Indeed, research undertaken by the Women, Business and the Law team reveals that more equal laws are associated with more women working, higher wages, more women-owned businesses, and more women in managerial positions. As the body of research demonstrating these benefits grows, gender equality must be given international attention. Given the urgent issues the world economy is still facing, this development is extremely pertinent. Qualitative data have also been used to support these conclusions.

“As a woman from my experience most of the who were raised politically; majority of them they become very proud and sometimes excluded themselves from us until such time needed us to vote for them” (Respondent 8and 10, June , 2024)..

Moreover, the above findings have been contrasted by (IPU, 2009) ; Due to their previous experiences with bias, women experience economic disadvantages. Political campaigns are expensive, and their success depends on having a solid financial base. Because of the sexual division of labor and sex-based work opportunities that have given men productive gender roles over time, men currently have more purchasing power than women. According to this, men account for about 75% of Nigeria's labor force. This economic disparity benefits men at the expense of women. Few affluent women can afford to contribute to political campaigns according to the Inter-Parliamentary Union.

III. Discussions

According to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs, 2019); the political machinery on promoting and enforcing gender equality in most African countries is weak, often due to lack of funding, low human resource capacity, and the absence of a legal framework with strong oversight. Furthermore, the culture of political parties and a shortage of political will from (often) male-dominated leadership in promoting women's political

engagement work together to deter women from politics. Also gender stereotypes, religious factors and socio-cultural norms that hinder women's empowerment remain prevalent. When it comes to the political arena, politics is still considered a male domain. Very few women dare run for office because they feel they will not have the support of their family or community. Vocal women or female community leaders are often labeled as "trouble makers" in a society where men and elders have the right to speak or act, not women or youngsters.

Women's full and effective political participation is a matter of human rights, inclusive growth and sustainable development (OECD, 2018). The active participation of women, on equal terms with men, at all levels of decision-making and political involvement is essential to the achievement of equality, sustainable development, peace and democracy and the inclusion of their perspectives and experiences into the decision-making processes. Despite this, Kumar (2018) states that in the twenty-first century, women are facing obstacles in their political participation worldwide. Women around the world at every socio-political level find themselves under-represented in parliament and far removed from decision-making levels. As noted in the Millennium Development Goals (United Nations, 2019), women's equal participation with men in power and decision-making is part of their fundamental right to participate in political life, and at the core of gender equality and women's empowerment. Strategies to increase women's participation in politics have been advanced through conventions, protocols and international agreements for gender mainstreaming, but they are yet to prove effective in achieving gender parity in the highest government rankings (Morobane, 2014). Half of the world's population are women, but today women only hold 23% of all seats in parliaments and senates globally (Chalaby, 2017; Radu, 2018).

In Europe the study carried out in 2018 found that there was a high prevalence of political violence directed on women. The IPU-PACE study on violence against women, harassment of women, and sexism in European parliaments demonstrated this. Women's participation in politics is being hampered by hate speech and online harassment directed at them because they are in public life or politics. This is particularly valid for women who belong to marginalized communities who may choose not to participate out of fear of being singled out despite experiencing disproportionately higher rates of violence. The Assembly reiterates its commitment to "Promoting parliaments free of sexism and sexual harassment," which was initiated by Liliane Maury-Pasquier, the Assembly's former president its commitment to fighting violence against women in politics. Improving political engagement is directly related to preventing and opposing violence, hence every effort should be made in this direction.

In countries where women have made gains in employment or education, they face cultural barriers to participation in politics. Furthermore, it has been seen that even when their economic status is improving, women may spend devote less time to other activities (including politics) and spend far more time on household chores and family care responsibilities. Moreover, the nature of household set-ups in SADC and African countries, the results may make sense. Many women are dependant on their husbands and male bread winners and even if they can get more income from them, they may not voluntarily participate in politics because of the control their male counterparts have on them; also most women are financially dependent on their husbands or relatives. So they may not be able to enter political campaigns. African women are mainly dependent on men economically which is the main cause for their low participation to politics (Kasa, 2015).

Women's subordinate status in the public seems to legitimize their prohibition of cooperation in the political and decision-making process. Many descriptions tell of women as unfaithful, annoying, dishonest, stupid, and surprisingly naive (Kabira&Nzioki, 2005). In fact, even today, when it comes to real records, women are still avoided. When people remember, they are often people who need government help rather than actors in the historical process. The importance of women in Kenya's political life and most decision-making processes should be actively investigated. The exam will investigate why Kenyan women are politically listless, but understand the immense political energy that is underutilized.

The male candidates are more likely than women to display political brutality and defamation in their main targets. Heavy attacks on candidates and their families often weaken them, causing many promising female candidates to ignore government problems together. Mittulah and Owiti (2011) noted that male legislators lacked political altruism to recall the political management of the individual, who would be credited with limited support from ideological groups. When the needs of women are ignored, there will be high infant and child mortality, untouchable population development, little financial development and low rural production, which will directly affect the personal satisfaction of the most affected citizens (Abidi 1992). In this way, the contribution of women in decision-making is an important step towards reducing poverty and the enormous income inequality between men and women.

Aspirants for youth and women's positions in Kenya have been seen to highlight a variety of difficulties that arise during their political careers. These difficulties have been highlighted in interviews with male community members and elected officials as well as during consultation sessions. Cultural barriers, gender-based violence, a lack of political party support, and insufficient financial resources are some of the obstacles that prevent people from participating (The Carter Center, 2020).

IV. CONCLUSION

The following efforts are needed to boost political environment for women in order to improve and enhance good participation in development activities. Firstly, there is need for governments to engage political parties to ensure that they include more women on their candidates list. Political parties should become the institutional vehicle through which women's participation in politics is enhanced especially in facilitating their participation within party structures and over election periods. Secondly, there is more need to engage women through awareness campaigns. Women need to be educated and be informed that political participation is not limited to election campaigns and mobilization. They also need to know that for political participation to be inclusive there should be equal participation by both women and men. Thirdly, governments should provide more funds to independent female political politicians and also to political parties that have a considerable and accepted number of female political candidates. This will make political parties to involve more women for political office. Fourthly, governments should promote the economic emancipation of women. When women are economically emancipated, they will be able to make their decisions independently and this may pave way for them to enter politics without being restricted by their male counterparts (who may be breadwinners or husbands at home).

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