

Education Makes the Difference: Analyzing the Emancipation, Gender Roles of Kenyan Women, and their Rise to positions of Power in the Wake of Educational Advantage and Constitutional and Government Devolvment in Kenya

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This study analyzed education makes the difference in light of the emancipation of the African women, constitutional development of Kenya, traditional stereotype position of Kenyan women and gender roles, the practicality of the reversal of gender roles, the current trend of gender roles and relationships. The study concluded that emancipation of African Women through education and inclusion of women to political power, economic say, and social change is mandatory, but also pointed that the government and society as a whole, should make sure that the rights of women are executed to the fullest in all areas of life.

INTRODUCTION

Before and after the independence of Kenya in 1963, Kenyan women played a key role in the cultural and social change of the society. However, with the introduction of education by the British government, women were left behind while their male counterpart propelled high up in education, men got all jobs which were first occupied by the colonial government, and consequently, this changed the landscape of rural and urban lifestyle. Over the years, efforts to educate women has changed the way we think about women position in the society and in the job market. Women have risen into the positions of power, they have received an education which gives them a competitive advantage as they face their counterparts in the job market, and they have migrated to the big cities and towns in search of jobs and leadership positions.

The introduction of this study included the purpose, problem statement, research paradigms and assumptions. The study delved into a detailed analysis of the constitutional devolvment with the formation of 47 counties in Kenya, population, and literacy. Moreover, the study analyzed emancipation, traditional stereotype position of women, gender roles, USAID, education as a transformational agent for cultural, political, and social change, conclusions and recommendations.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to analyze the rise of women of Kenya into positions of power in the wake of constitutional devolution. To accomplish this purpose, the study will examine these areas:

(1) Constitutional development in Kenya, formation of 47 counties in Kenya, the population of Kenya, and literacy; (2) emancipation, traditional stereotype position of Kenyan women, gender roles, and USAID; (3) the practicality of the reversal of gender roles; (4) current trend of gender roles and relationship; (5) education as a transformational agent for cultural, political, and social change; (6) conclusions and recommendations.

THE PROBLEM STATEMENT OF THE STUDY

Before and after the invasion of European colonialism of African countries in the 17th century, the African – Kenyan women have been treated as the primary workers in the traditional homes; yet without power, authority, control over resources, and ability to allocate resources. Kenyan women were able to work in the farms, hard cattle if they had no male children to look after the cattle; and yet they had no say at home because men were the sole owners of property such as land, cattle, and all things in and outside the home. As early as 1964, when Kenya obtained its self-governance from the British Empire, has the treatment of women in Kenya changed? Absolutely not, because male dominance over women continued with a big smile. In those early years until recently women got literary “*elimu ya nusu mkate* (half bread education)” - limited primary education, got married, and continued to bear and raise children most of the times alone. While marriage and raising of children is a good thing, still African Kenyan women continued to lag in their pursuit of education and a better life which could only come through good education. On the contrary, men continued to enjoy the power and kept the same power and authority over everything and they do not find it easy to share power and control of resources with women. It is from this context that this study hypothesis that education and constitutional devolvement are the key emancipators of Kenyan women. Yes, Kenyan, African, and the women of the world should finally be free to think, lead, own, and do things in accordance with their talents.

RESEARCH PARADIGMS AND ASSUMPTIONS

This study is based on the interpretive/constructivist paradigms (Hays & Singh, 2011; Sparkes, & Smith; Lauckner, Paterson, & Krupa, 2012; Mills, Bonner, & Francis, 2006) and embraces the assumption that “knowledge is socially constructed by people active in the research process” (Mertens, 1998 p.11; Sarantakos, 2012; Kanuka & Anderson, 2007). The predominant methodology of this research paradigm is qualitative in nature and it includes interviews of Kenyan women, observations, and document reviews concerning the emancipation of Kenyan women (Sarstedt, Ringle, Hensele, & Hair, 2014; Bowen, 2008). The study incorporates the emancipatory paradigm because it looks into the critical theory of Freire, participatory and transformative research (Shakespeare, 2013; Seale, 2013; Mbuva, 2009; Barton, 2005; Dabisch, 2005; Barnes, 2003; Mertens 1998; Leonard & McLaren, 1992). The emancipatory research paradigm “directly addresses the politics in research by confronting social oppression at whatever levels it occurs” (Mertens, 1998 p.150; Mertens, 2014; Marshall & Rossman, 2014).

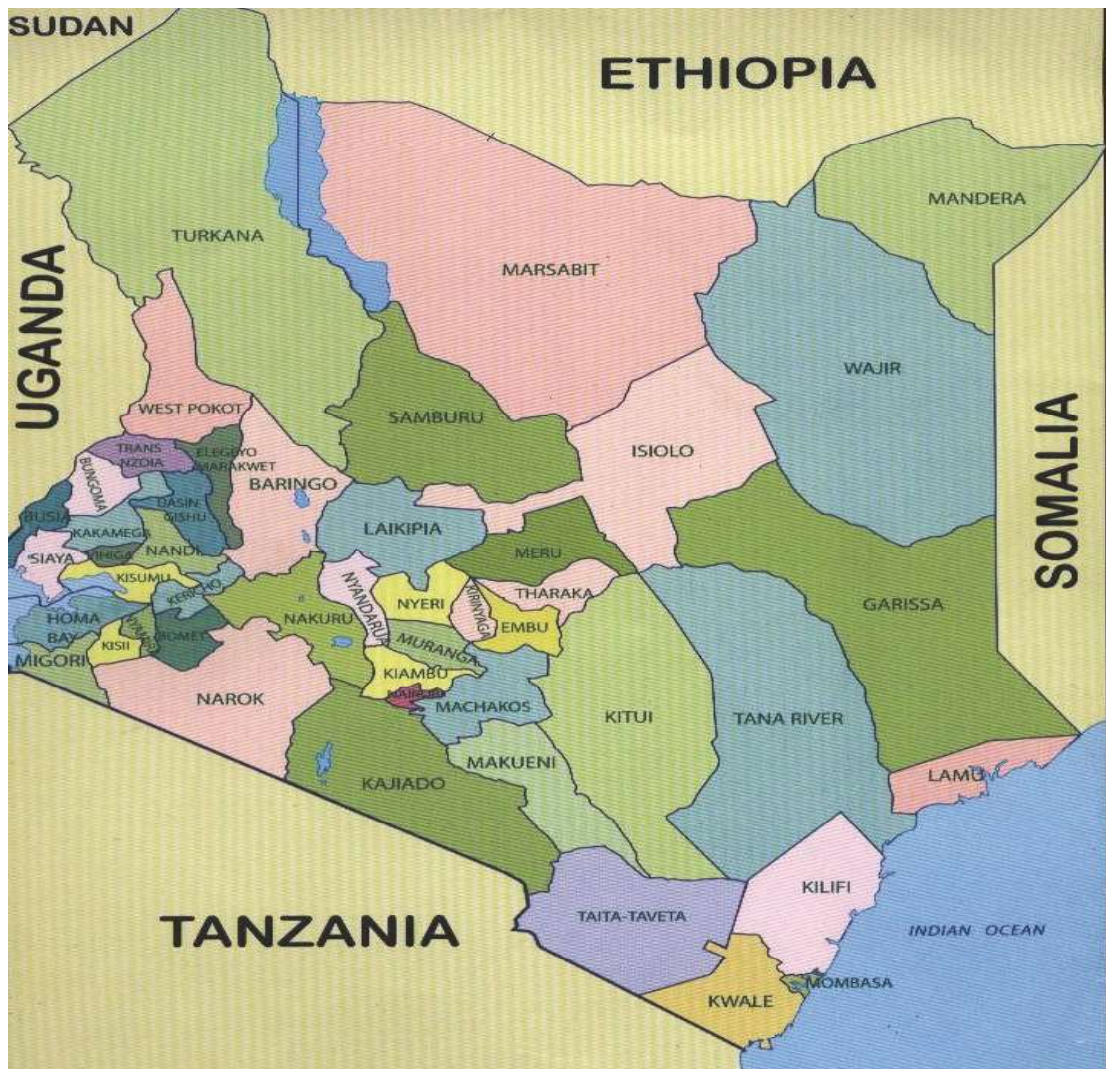
This study marked the beginning of the long battle of freeing women in Kenya and the rest of Africa and the world. In my letter to the editor, January 4, 2003, when addressing the 3rd President of Kenya, the honorable Mr. Mwai Kibaki, I suggested that women should be given equal rights in the political arena as the men. I added that women should be represented and that they should be allowed to lead in cabinet positions; for they must be emancipated, they are politically marginalized, they are economically deprived, and they are less educated and ill-equipped to compete with their men counterpart in the job market, (Mbuva, 2003).

CONSTITUTIONAL DEVOLVEMENT IN KENYA, FORMATION OF THE 47 COUNTIES, THE POPULATION OF KENYA, AND LITERACY THE MAP OF ALL COUNTIES

Kenya Map

The Map of Kenya will show the division and the list of counties where Kenyan women presence and grip is highly evidenced. Kenya is officially known as the Republic of Kenya. Evidently, Kenya is an African country found on the Eastern Coast of Africa. Kenya borders Indian Ocean to the South East (SE), Tanzania to the South and South West (SSW), Uganda to the West (W), South Sudan to the North West (NW), Ethiopia to the North (N), and Somalia to the North East (NE). As a country, Kenya has an area of 224, 445 square Miles (581,309 km²).

**FIGURE 1
MAP OF KENYA**



Source: <https://softkenya.com/kenya/counties-in-kenya/>

Constitutional Devolvement in Kenya

For Kenya to serve her peoples effectively, the devolved government known as county government was formed as per the 2010 constitutional dispensation change, which paved a way for the

decentralization of the governance of Kenyan people. This meant that, instead of Kenyan people being ruled from the central government under the president, Kenyan people were to experience democratic governance through the county government, which was to be led by the governors and the parliamentarians. Because of these constitutional changes, 47 counties were formed throughout Kenya.

In a nutshell, the purpose of devolved government in the counties was to “bring government closer to people with the county governments at the center of dispensing political power, and economic resources to Kenyans at the grassroots” (Soft Kenya.com, 2010). This was to ensure that the daily social, cultural, education, financial, and agricultural life and wellbeing of the people of Kenya are met right where people are. Further, each county was to receive its funding through the central government after the approval of the parliament of Kenya. Below, you will find the list of the counties of Kenya.

List of the 47 Counties in Kenya

1. Baringo County
2. Bomet County
3. Bungoma County
4. Busia County
5. Elgeyo Marakwet County
6. Embu County
7. Garissa County
8. Homa Bay County
9. Isiolo County
10. Kajiado County
11. Kakamega County
12. Kericho County
13. Kiambu County
14. Kilifi County
15. Kirinyaga County
16. Kisii County
17. Kisumu County
18. Kitui County
19. Kwale County
20. Laikipia County
21. Lamu County
22. Machakos County
23. Makueni County
24. Mandera County
25. Meru County
26. Migori County
27. Marsabit County
28. Mombasa County
29. Muranga County
30. Nairobi County
31. Nakuru County
32. Nandi County
33. Narok County
34. Nyamira County
35. Nyandarua County
36. Nyeri County
37. Samburu County
38. Siaya County
39. Taita Taveta County
40. Tana River County
41. Tharaka Nithi County
42. Trans Nzoia County
43. Turkana County
44. Uasin Gishu County
45. Vihiga County
46. Wajir County
47. West Pokot County

Source: <https://softkenya.com/kenya/counties-in-kenya/>

Population of Kenya

Kenya's population has grown considerably from 1955 with a population of almost 7 million to a population of 23,401,507 million by 1990; by 2000 it had a population growth of 31,450,152, but by 2018 Kenya gained the largest population of 50,950,879. Below, you will find the detailed population growth of Kenya since 1955 through 2018.

**TABLE 1
KENYA POPULATION HISTORY 2018**

Year	Population	% Male	% Female	Density (km²)	Population Rank	Growth Rate
2018	50,950,879	49.70%	50.30%	87.79	28	2.56%
2015	47,236,259	49.70%	50.30%	81.39	29	2.70%
2010	41,350,152	49.71%	50.29%	71.25	31	2.78%
2005	36,048,288	49.68%	50.32%	62.11	33	2.77%
2000	31,450,483	49.66%	50.34%	54.19	33	2.84%
1995	27,346,456	49.71%	50.29%	47.12	35	3.16%
1990	23,402,507	49.78%	50.22%	40.32	37	3.56%
1985	19,651,225	49.80%	50.20%	33.86	37	3.85%
1980	16,268,990	49.80%	50.20%	28.03	40	3.82%
1975	13,486,629	49.81%	50.19%	23.24	45	3.69%
1970	11,252,492	49.88%	50.12%	19.39	47	3.43%
1965	9,504,703	49.99%	50.01%	16.38	51	3.24%
1960	8,105,440	50.15%	49.85%	13.97	55	3.04%
1955	6,979,931	50.27%	49.73%	12.03	57	2.81%

Source: <http://worldpopulationreview.com/countries/kenya-population/>

Literacy

Since independence in 1963, Kenya's education has grown especially on the side of women of which for a long time it was very low. Countless efforts by varied agencies, parents and the government of Kenya has seen the growth of 74.9 % of women literacy amid 81.1% of men's literacy (CIA – US) as shown in the figure below. There was a considerable literacy drop of 4.2% from 2000 through 2015 (knoema Data). Noticeably, women who are more than 50% of Kenya's population of 50.9 million are lagging in literacy compared to men.

**TABLE 2
KENYA LITERACY 2015 ESTIMATES**

2000 Total Population	82.2
2015 Total Population	78% (4.4% drop)
Men	81.1%
Women	74.9%
Age 15 and above	Can Read and Write

Source: <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/fields/2103.html>

EMANCIPATION, TRADITIONAL STEREOTYPE POSITION OF KENYAN WOMEN, AND GENDER ROLES

To understand the direction this study is leading, it is essential to define emancipation, traditional stereotype position of Kenyan women, and Gender Roles. It is from this context that the reader will connect with the liberation of the women of Kenya and for that matter the emancipating African women, women of the whole world in the 3rd World, the 1st and the 2nd Worlds.

Emancipation

According to The Merriam-Webster Dictionary (1997), emancipation means to set free, to liberate, to release, to deliver, and to discharge. The black slaves' emancipation of 1880 in the USA meant "the Negro

was made free, made a citizen, made eligible to hold office, to be a juryman, a legislator, and a magistrate" (Douglass, 1880). When Douglass (1880) compared the results of emancipation between the black slaves and the Russian Serfs he concluded, "When the serfs of Russia were emancipated, they were given three acres of ground upon which they could live and make a living; but no so when our slaves were emancipated. They were sent away empty-handed, without money, without friends and without a foot of land upon which to stand...." Hence, according to Douglass, emancipation could be practically realized or could be caged in "paper and parchment" (1880). Although Goldman's (2000) essay *Anarchism and Other Essays* have advocated that emancipation of women would be the woman's responsibility exclusive of her counterpart, I hold her interpretation of emancipation which recognizes that: "Emancipation should make it possible for a woman to be human in the truest sense. Everything within her that craves assertion and activity should reach its fullest expression; all artificial barriers should be broken, and the road towards greater freedom cleared of every trace of centuries of submission and slavery "(Goldman's, 2000).

Hence, women must be freed, liberated, delivered, released, and discharged to become the individuals they have always wanted to be and to govern men's world equally. It true that "achieving men's' and women's equality in the political realm" has faced difficulties, but Kenya is getting there (Nzomo, 1997, p. 232); because if Kenyan women are emancipated, this means that they can take political positions in leadership just like what their men counterpart can do without hindrances such as the general stereotypes that women cannot do this or that. The good news is that we are breaking the traditional stereotyping of women dynamically.

Traditional Stereotype Position of Kenyan Women

Like many other women in various cultures of the world, and especially African cultures, the traditional role of Kenyan women in the society has been viewed as that of a bearing of children-nursing-providing care, house work such as cooking for the family, cutting wood from the fields, cleaning, cultivating the farms, planting, harvesting, and doing all sorts of manual labor in and around the home; whereas men being free from all of the above roles migrated to the city in search of a more comfortable paying job and women work was considered to be of lesser value (Boulding, 1976; Bryson (1981); Nash & Fernandez-Kelly, 1983; Griffith, 1985; Tilly, 1987; Padavic & Reskin (2002); Mahari, Othman, & Mhd Khalili (2011). You would find in the villages that women were supposed to thatch houses with grass, apply the mud, and draw water from the rivers for the construction of any new house in the community.

You may go into some homes and see people including the women saying "Men do not stay in the kitchen. Kitchen belongs to the women and their girls, men are supposed to be working hard in the fields...." The stereotype that women are imprisoned in the kitchen as cooks are pervasive in the African-Kenyan culture. These stereotypes of the roles of women in the society have inspired me to research more on this subject.

Gender Roles

To understand gender roles, we must have in mind that for the society to exist, propagate, and meet its daily needs gender roles are to be established. Hence, it is spot-on to think that before the "Industrial Revolution," women played instrumental roles in the Western societies (Losh-Hesselbart, 1987). Culturally, Losh-Hesselbart (1987) examining from Aronoff and Crano (1975) examined that women in half of the world were involved in traditional roles which included "their participation in agriculture, fishing, and animal husbandry" (Aronoff & Crano, 1975; Losh-Hesselbart, 1987, p.536). By the way of association, the involvement of industrialized nations of Europe with the developing nations produced gender roles when men were involved in strength demanding jobs in the industry while women worked at home. This was more enhanced when the Western civilization invaded and colonized Africa. The colonizers brought with them industries to the new territory when men found jobs in the city, leaving women to raise children and work in the subsistence farms/gardens to meet their daily needs.

Traditionally, men started involving themselves with jobs outside the family such as military and missions, while women's role involved "expressive" or "emotional" jobs such as bearing children, nurturing them, and providing security for their young ones (Losh-Hesselbart, p. 536, 1987). With the

decline of mortality, women bore fewer children to increase survivability, children are no longer perceived as assets in helping parents with labor, and the increase of the cost of raising children, gender roles in the western societies and the developing countries changed drastically. Thus, the phenomenon of the influx of women into the paid jobs has affected the job market and has changed the stereotype positions of women not only in the western civilization, but also in Africa, and more specifically in Kenya. Other countries of the world such as the USA have helped in bridging the equality gap between women and men by providing education, care, safety, support, and financial aid to support women causes.

USAID – From the American People’s Role

Foreign agencies such as USAID – From the American people with the help, Kenya's devolved constitution of 2010 has enhanced *Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment in Kenya* (USAID From the American People, 2017). This agency raises the issues which impede women equality and development such as traditional ideas, underrepresentation of women in decision making, and untapped potential of women and girls. When women and girls are given freedom and equal opportunity in Kenya’s economy, education, employment, and land access, Kenya will be a better country. To accomplish gender equality and women’s empowerment in Kenya, USAID has included the following in their programs:

- ❖ Creating safe societies where women and girls can live free from violence;
- ❖ Providing care and treatment services for victims of gender-based violence;
- ❖ Strengthening women’s access to resources and opportunities that will allow them to share more broadly in the benefits of economic growth;
- ❖ Increasing the participation of women in decision and policy-making at all levels;
- ❖ Ensuring women, a seat at the table in peace-building, conflict prevention and mitigation; and
- ❖ Narrowing gender gaps in education and learning (USAID from the American People, Para. 6, 2017).

THE PRACTICALITY OF THE REVERSAL OF GENDER ROLES

The rest of the study will focus on finding answers to the following questions: Is it practical that women can play male roles in the society? Is there a way of a dual sharing of responsibilities? Are women able to become providers, control resources, make decisions, and control the way resources are used in the society? Answers to these questions would provide ways of enhancing the emancipation of women in African societies and the global community. Women migration to the cities and the new leadership role of women in the rural because of migration of males are the new variables, which affect women emancipation in Kenya.

Women Migration to the City

Unlike the rural life experience, urban centers such as Nairobi and Mombasa attract women migrants with “expectations of higher wages, more opportunities for personal advancement, freedom, and independence from social constraints of village life, and a better way of life overall as compared to the hardships of rural living;” thus, affecting the job market which must be shared with men (Smith, 1998; Macharia, 2003).

While women migration to the city may lead to the so long-awaited independence, Smith seeing the apparent danger affirmed, "However, with decreasing urban wages and the effects of overpopulation in urban areas, they [women] may arrive only to be met with unemployment, hard labor, or poor communal living in the suburban shantytowns." Smith adds that "It may take weeks of *tamaking* or looking for work before any promise of employment is found and if one has no relatives or friends in town, living alone or even sleeping on the street may be the only initial options.

The expansion of urban areas resulting from this migration has also led to a decrease in the quality of available healthcare, restricted entrepreneurial opportunities, and limited availability of quality education" (Smith, 1998; Macharia, 2003). Smith’s study showed that although women are making strides in

venturing into the men's city life, it is coupled with difficulties; hence, women might be in a more vulnerable situation than in the rural. This does not mean that women should stop trying.

The New Leadership Role of Women in the Rural

Research has demonstrated that women life experience at the rural may be seen as that of dependency upon men since women don't own land and that they don't control the production of land, hence rendered marginalized in the village community, and expelled from the public limelight. Nevertheless, with the migration of men to the cities the Kenya women have resumed new leadership role because they are "becoming de-facto household heads and the predominant decision-makers within the household" (Smith, 1998). Smith's study shows an increase of 27% to 33% of female household in Kenya, and that Nairobi and Mombasa show the most increase.

In accordance with Smith's (1998) *Rural To Urban Migration And Its Effects On Kenyan Women* ethnographic research, the new leadership role of women in the rural is influenced by variety of factors, which include: (1) Men's increased absence in the rural areas, here, women have to take over the responsibilities of decision-making and resource allocation; (2) The land (*Swahili – shamba*) has become the Kenya woman's office, in that women are now using their land and their productive roles to create their own public sphere within and as a manifestation of the private; (3) Women are not seeking for independence by migrating to the cities, but by creating their own social systems of production and provision, which provide the freedom of the urban "office" in a predominantly domestic and private realm; and, (4) Through avenues of women's cooperative groups women have been able to gain access to the public roles vacated by men, particularly those of resource allocation and community development. Through these groups, women discuss their problems and have been able to contribute money to one another, which is used to meet their own needs. These same groups exist among women in Nairobi, and unlike the rural women's success depending on land or cattle, their success depends entirely on business (Smith, 1998). Increasingly, women have become agents for economic, social, and cultural change in the rural environment. Observation by UN Women (2014) has seen women "play a catalytic role toward achievement of transformational economic, environmental and social changes required for sustainable development" (UN Women, 2014, para. 2. Certainly, if it were not for the lack of economic capital, tools, health care, and education, women would have adequately provided for their families and the rural communities; for in the midst of all these challenges and others, women have added phenomenally to the agricultural productivity globally. Hence, efforts to empower women should continue not only by USAID, WHO, UNICEF, but Kenyan devolved government and national government. It is conceivable that the model of supporting and empowering Bangladesh and Indian women through rural credit could be the way of assisting Kenyan women in their efforts of rural economic development (Hashemi, Schuler, & Riley 1996; Malhotra & Schuler, 2005; Duflo, 2012).

Men's departure from the rural lifestyle has opened a gateway for women to exert independence, power, and control over resources in the rural social environment (UN Women, 2014). It is clear that the new social system of production is based on women's collective effort (UN Women, 2014). They think together, they pull together, and they succeed together. In the rural setting, the land is a means of production; whereas, businesses in the city are the new means of production to women migrants. The tables 4 and 5 given below provide and demonstrate an analytic comparative presentation of women and males in the rural and city settings. When men and women live together in the rural, their job descriptions are very distinct based on cultural traditions of the African people. Almost entirely women perform jobs around the home, which include childbearing and nursing, cooking, and cleaning, etc.; whereas men lead, own cattle, allocate resources, and perform selective manual labor.

TABLE 3
COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF WOMEN AND MEN ROLES IN THE RURAL

Women	Men
Child bearer and nurse	Lead
Cultivate land	Own cattle
Cook	Own land and produce
Cut wood	Provider
Draw water from the river	Plow the farm
Clean	Take cattle to the fields
Not a provider	Allocate resources
Don't make decisions	Make decisions
Don't control resources	Control resources
Don't allocate resources	Allocate resources
Perform manual labor of all sorts	Perform selective manual labor

On the contrary, when women get into the city life as new immigrants, they tend to do the jobs men can do. Although women are less educated, they tend to have more opportunities open to them. They begin to make decisions concerning their salary, allocate resources and provide for members of the family in the city and in the rural. Those women who represent their constituencies as members of parliament, they attend political meetings in the city, deliberate with their male counterparts, and make decisions concerning their electorates. It looks like women have intruded men's world in the city, but it doesn't hurt to share the bounties, the power, and the authority new job opportunities require.

TABLE 4
COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF WOMEN AND MEN ROLES IN THE CITY

Women	Men
New migrants	Older migrant
Variety of business opportunities	Best jobs
Providers	Providers More educated
Make decisions	Make decisions
Independent	Independent
Control their lives	No more control over women
Control Resources	Control resources
Allocate Resources	Allocate resources
Members of parliament	Members of parliament
Less educated	More educated

THE CURRENT TREND OF GENDER ROLES AND RELATIONSHIPS

Given the women's independence, power, and control over resources, one would ask the following questions: (1) is there a chance of building a family where men and women were equal stakeholders? (2) Would men appreciate and accept the postmodern emerging leadership role of women in the society? (3) Would men share power, authority, and control over resources? Would both women and men have equal land ownership and title deeds? These questions are so important, and this study would suggest a future investigation of women/male relationships in details. However, for this study, few ideas will suffice.

Building a Family Where Women and Men Have Equal Power

The love between women and men, which would bind them together for a long time, would only provide a healthy social, mental, emotional, and spiritual environment for the continuance of raising healthy citizens, leaders, fathers, mothers, and teachers of our beloved children. Although Goldman has advocated for the emancipation of women and has worked hard to demonstrate that women have to stand for their development without being independent of men, it is not plausible that woman's "love for a man," would imply fear and this love will "rope her of her freedom and independence," and that this love brings "horror" and that the "the joy of motherhood will only hinder her in the full exercise of her" emancipation (Goldman, 2000). Evidently, true love between men and women should strike the balance of true equality, respect, fairness, shared leadership, authority, and power. It is only by striking the balance that there is hope that both women and men can build a family on equality, fairness, and love, which would be a base for healthy families and nations. However, men should never abandon or forget their families (wives and children) by taking other wives in the city; as is exemplified by Kenyan women testimony that there is the possibility of their husbands leaving them for other women living in the city (Smith, 1998). The looming propaganda that Kenya would once again practice polygamy as the foremothers and fathers had is disturbing because it cannot work based on different times factor and the cultural and literal changes Kenyan society has undergone. You cannot say you want to accept and liberate women and at the same tie them in polygamous marriages. This is a misnomer and an impediment to the development Kenyan women!

Acceptance of Women's Role in Leadership

On the same basis of equality, men should appreciate women as leaders, and accept the fact that they can become providers and that they have the right to allocate resources by working hard both in the city and in the rural. Although 2002 Kenya's general election results demonstrated a forward stride that Kenyans have changed their attitude towards women in government leadership, women on their rights have gained strength in pursuing higher positions of power; and that a few educational elite women became members of parliament, such as Charity Ngilu who was nominated in 2003 as the Minister for Health and Martha Karua, who was nominated in 2003, 2005, 2007 as the Minister for Water and Irrigation, and Minister for Justice and Constitutional Affairs respectively (Kenya Votes, 2007). We have a long way to go before we involve women equally in all areas of societal participation and power sharing (Mulama, 2009).

The 2013 elections were unfavorable for women because Kenya had in parliament only 16 women out of 197 women aspirants, while the automatic 47 constitutional women representatives from the 47 counties joined the parliament; and at the county level, 85 out of 623 women were elected in the county government (Nzomo, 2013). Hence, it is in order to assert that 2013 was a very lean year for women leadership. On the positive, in the 2013 elections, the Akamba people of Machakos County selected as their Women Representative in the parliament, the Honorable Dr. Susan Musyoka who served the county with grace and wisdom but besides her removal in the battled 2017 elections she continues to be a voice for the women and all of the people of the Machakos County.

During August 8, 2017, Kenya election, six women made history when they became the first women to be elected as governors and senators in their respective counties based on the constitutional change of 2010. Winning seats as governors included, "Joyce Laboso for Bomet, Anne Waiguru for Kirinyaga and

Charity Ngilu for Kitui;” whereas, the women winning seats as senators included, “Margaret Kamar for Uasin Gishu, Susan Kihika for Nakuru and Fatuma Dullo for Isiolo” (Akwei, para.1-7, 2017). In the same election of 2017, 23 women were elected to Kenya's National Assembly, 47 women elected as women representatives, and 12 nominated by their parties; thus, bringing the number of women representatives in the 12th Parliament to 82 which is not even 1/3 of the total representatives of 349. Within the East African nations such as Uganda and Rwanda women representation in parliament is greater than that of Kenya. For instance, “Rwanda is ranked first globally, with **56.3 percent** of its parliament composed of women, while Uganda is ranked as twenty-first globally with female representation in the national parliament estimated at **31.5 percent**” (Ouma, 2018). Taping from Europe, in June 2017, France elected a record number of 223 women representatives to parliament out of the total of 577 elected lawmakers (Kelly, 2017). Hence, although Kenya has increased women into the national leadership positions it is like a drop in the sea considering that Kenyan women make **50.3%** of its population of 50,950,879 (World Population Review, 2018).

The tickling question in my ear is that if women have been able to make reasonable decisions on how to run homes before and after the Industrial Revolution when men worked for paid jobs in the cities and fought in the battlefields, why is it hard for the world to accept the fact that women can share power, authority, and control in leadership positions and resources? The findings of this study call for the radicle change of traditional law and the Kenya constitution to grant women full leadership roles in the devolved government in the counties and in the national government, ownership of land, title deeds and the legal ability to dispose of them whenever suitable.

EDUCATION AS A TRANSFORMATIONAL AGENT FOR CULTURAL, POLITICAL, AND SOCIAL CHANGE EDUCATION IS THE KEY

Lack of Education

The unbalanced participation of women in societal affairs such as political circles and the leadership of Kenya and other African countries is due to the lack education. Joy Mukanyange, “who grew up as a refugee in Uganda and has since served as Rwanda’s ambassador to several nations says it was education that helped her and her female colleagues to achieve nearly equal representation in the government” (UNICEF, 2008).

Empowering Women through Education

The general consensus according to PANA (1996) was that, if women are empowered through the means of qualitative education the African women would adequately participate in social cohesion, political stability, economic development, and would enhance unity among members of the society effectively. As a matter of fact, women as mothers, preservers of culture, and teachers, they can lead as the presidents of the African nations and for once Africa would be peaceful and strong. However, education as the only effective agent of cultural, political, and social change must permeate women life from the smallest girl to the adult women.

Power Hungry Leaders are a Barrier to Women Progress

Women have always wanted to do well for the sake of all members of the society; whereas, the hunger and thirst for leadership from men since big man theory leadership phenomenon of Mobutu of Congo, Mzee Jomo Kenyatta of Kenya, Moi of Kenya, Mugabe of Zimbabwe, and Museveni of Uganda, has risen up. These men and others have remained in power until their parties, military, or something supernatural took them out of power. For instance, in 2008, Mugabe told the whole world that it is God who can take him out of power. Earlier, in 2007, the same Mugabe had Morgan Tsvangirai “so severely beaten by the police after his arrest on Sunday morning he lost consciousness three times” (Peta, 2007). Further, Zimbabwe wanted a new change through Morgan Tsvangirai of the opposition party, “Mr. Mugabe announced that he wants to stay in power until 2014, despite a ruined economy and spiraling inflation” (Peta, 2007). However, in November 2017, Mugabe was unceremoniously taken out of power

by his own party and military (Wild, 2017). Early 2018 and at the same time, Ethiopia's Prime Minister *Hailemariam Desalegn*, and Jacob Zuma, the President of South Africa were forced out of power due to corruption and cruel rule. The big man theory leadership phenomenon, which pivots around big money, big name, big dynasty, big tribe, big background, big party, etc. will only be decimated if social, and cultural change of gender roles and equal rights of women is realized, and if girls and women, in general, are highly educated and become members of the leadership club.

Africa's greedy leaders should learn from Mugabe's prophecy prophesy of doom that the person who would remove him from power is only God which happened in 2017 when his party and the military forced him out of the presidency. The army took control of the political situation and worked peacefully to remove President Mugabe from power. The army called on the exiled deputy president Mr. Emmerson Mnangagwa, who consequently took the horns of power as the president of Zimbabwe. Soon after he took power, he invited back the white farmers of whom Mr. Mugabe ruthlessly chased out of their farms. In the absence of these white farmers, the economy of Zimbabwe collapsed, and the cultural, social, and economic life of the Zimbabweans deteriorated considerably. Now, it will be the responsibility of Mr. Morgan Tsvangirai Zimbabwe's President to establish policies which would invite foreign investment and the free market, and above all policies which would promote and empower women through education, economic, and political capital.

Currently (2018), Kenya is undergoing a constitutional and leadership crisis as the nation has a constitutional president, Mr. Uhuru Kenyatta, who is believed by many Kenyans to have rigged and stolen the 2017 election to become the president. On the other hand, you have Raila Amolo Odinga, leader of the opposition, NASA, who by January 30, 2018, was sworn by people as People's president, for he believed that he won the election according to the results of the unopened server and the following of the crowds who followed him. This confusion in Kenya of having two presidents springs up from the big man theory because these two presidents are sons of the first president of Kenya, Mzee Jomo Kenyatta, and the first deputy president of Kenya, Mr. Jaramogi Oginga Odinga respectively. These sons have a big name, big money, and the political capital to attract people to themselves (<http://www.kenyarep-jp.com>). So, one would hope that the devolved constitution and county government and the national government of Kenya would not constrict the empowerment of women through education and their efforts to rise to county and national positions of leadership and power.

Golden Handshake of Hope

Providentially, by March 9, 2018, President Uhuru Kenyatta had a historical golden handshake with the opposition NASA leader Mr. Laila Amolo Odinga. This metaphorical handshake was aimed at calming down the political climate by uniting Kenya peoples to boost the economy and to bring peace among Kenyans. While some of the members of the political divide are skeptical of the meaning and the promises of this handshake, it appeared as if things might change in Kenya and that there might be a change in how things should be done in the country in terms of embracing credible, inclusive, and fair elections. Certainly, various political parties want to be included in the deliberations of how this new dialogue and change should look like, but I should add, women should be included also in the process of decision making.

Democratization of Education

For education to be realized among all African women, education must be democratized to include women in poor rural villages, inner cities, and slums (PANA, 1996). Uche campaigning for female education and empowerment in Africa through media suggested that media should support the education of girls and women for Africa to be developed (PANA, 1996). This is true because according to UNDP Human Development Report of 1996 shows that "Africa has the lowest female school enrolment among all developing regions" (PANA, 1996). Hence, qualitative education should not be limited to the children of the elite section of the society.

Efforts of Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE)

Women educationalists through FAWE have engaged themselves in efforts of “the education of girls and women across Africa (Barro & Lee, 2013; UNICEF, 2007; FAWE News, 2000; Barro & Lee, 2001; PANA, 1996). But this is not enough. The effort of bringing education to the girls and the women of Africa should be a universal issue because it affects the political, social, economic, and the emancipation of a gender, which has for many years been dominated by African man (Barro & Lee, 2013; UNICEF, 2007; Barro & Lee, 2001; PANA, 1996). Women must be free, and it can’t happen if they are in the endangered species list by being imprisoned in the jail of illiteracy and despair (Barro & Lee, 2013; UNICEF, 2007; Barro & Lee, 2001; PANA, 1996). The African women must be emancipated through education not only to free themselves from male dominance but from illiteracy and cultural "patriarchal traditions", hence literacy programs aimed at bridging the gender gap must be promoted throughout African countries (Kwayera, 2000).

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings of this study have demonstrated that emancipation of African Women from the darkness of lack of education, political power, economic say, and social change is mandatory. It is through educating the African girls and women that the arch-aching traditional stereotyping of women role as that of only cooking, cleaning, and childbearing should cease completely.

With the migration of both men and women, women have taken leadership roles at home and they must take over the responsibilities of decision-making and resource allocation. With the migration of women into the city in search of better pay, they have gained control over their money and are able to make decisions and allocate resources. Certainly, women are intelligent and can do well if the society accepts women role of leadership. This is possible if the African society accepts the paradigm shift of shared power, authority, equal land ownership, control over resources, and building a family where men and women have equal power.

The study recommends that for the African women to be totally emancipated education wise, socially, and culturally in the postmodern society, the government and society as a whole, the fathers, the husbands, and the sons should promote women liberation because charity begins at home. They should make that women rights are executed to the fullest in all areas of life such as participation in decision-making, having women as leaders in the local, county, and national leadership arenas and resource allocation. More girls should be enrolled in schools to equitably bridge the educational gap, empower women, and educate all girls irrespective of their socioeconomic background. Organizations such as PANA and FAWE have strongly supported women rights and empowering them, but they cannot do it all alone (Barro & Lee, 2013; Barro & Lee, 2007; PANA, 1996. Kenya government, the ministry of education, primary and secondary/high schools and universities need to educate girls and women conscientiously and conspicuously.

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