WOMEN AND GLOBAL POLITICS: ANALYSING CHALLENGES FACED BY
WOMEN POLITICAL LEADERS IN KENYA

BY

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637690

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DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, declare that this is my original work and has not been submitted to any other college, institution or University other than United States International University – Africa in Nairobi, Kenya for academic credit. All material obtained herein from other sources is duly acknowledged.

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This thesis has been presented for examination with my approval as the appointed supervisor.

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Deputy Vice Chancellor, Academic Affairs
DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my father for his unending support and his encouragement for a brighter future as well as to my late mum for teaching me that the best inheritance a child would get from his/her parents is a good education. I salute you both.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I take this opportunity to thank everyone who contributed towards the completion of this MA thesis. I am grateful for their stewardship, constructive criticism and advice during the course of writing this thesis. Firstly, I would like to thank my supervisor Dr. Fatuma Ahmed Ali for her patience and guidance in the writing of this thesis. I am grateful to my family especially my father, mother, sisters and brother who have been a great support system. You all have made me who I am today.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION .................................................................................................................. ii

DEDICATION .................................................................................................................. iii

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT .................................................................................................... iv

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS ............................................................. viii

ABSTRACT ......................................................................................................................... x

CHAPTER I: GENERAL INTRODUCTION ..................................................................... 1

1.0 Introduction .............................................................................................................. 1

1.1 Statement of the Problem .......................................................................................... 5

1.2 Research Questions .................................................................................................. 6

1.3 Objectives of the Study ............................................................................................. 6

1.4 Significance of the Study .......................................................................................... 6

1.5 Justification of the Study .......................................................................................... 7

1.6 Hypothesis ................................................................................................................. 7

1.7 Scope of the Study ..................................................................................................... 8

1.8 Research Methodology ............................................................................................. 9

1.9 Organisation of the Thesis ........................................................................................ 10

CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK ............ 12

2.0 Introduction .............................................................................................................. 12

2.1 The Benefits of Having Women in Political Leadership Positions ......................... 16

2.2 Key Challenges to Women’s Advancement in Politics ........................................... 20

2.3 Theoretical Framework ............................................................................................ 23

2.3.1 Feminism Theory ................................................................................................. 24

2.3.2 Radical Feminist Theory ...................................................................................... 27
CHAPTER III: ANALYSISING THE NEXUS BETWEEN WOMEN AND GLOBAL POLITICS ................................................................. 31

3.0 Introduction .............................................................................................................. 31

3.1 Gender and Global Politics.......................................................................................... 33

3.2 Examples of Women in Political Leadership Positions .............................................. 38

3.3 The role of women in shaping Global Politics ......................................................... 44

3.3.1 Women as a Tool For Communication And Decision Making on Devolving Levels of Democracy and Gender Issues. .............................................................................. 44

3.3.2 Women as Ambassadors For Peace, Mediators and Negotiators in War Torn Countries. ....................................................................................................................... 45

3.3.3 Women as Advocates for Equality in Positions of Power such as Parliaments. ..........45

3.3.4 Women Leaders as Contributors to Shaping the Laws and policies of their Nations in Countries like Mali, Nigeria, Botswana, Brazil And South Korea ..............................................46

3.4 Conclusion .................................................................................................................. 46

CHAPTER IV: THE CHALLENGES WOMEN IN POLITICAL LEADERSHIP POSITIONS FACE .................................................................................................................. 48

4.0 Introduction .................................................................................................................. 48

4.1 Factors that hinders Women’s Political Participation in Kenya .................................. 50

4.1.1 Socio-Economic Factors .................................................................................... 50

4.1.2 Socio-Cultural Factors .................................................................................... 52

4.1.3 Religious Factors ............................................................................................ 55

4.1.4 Economic Factors ............................................................................................ 56

4.1.5 Patriarchy rule and Gender Roles ................................................................. 57

4.1.6 Family Duties .................................................................................................. 61

4.1.7 Legal Structure ............................................................................................... 63

4.2 Conclusion ................................................................................................................ 64

CHAPTER V: GENERAL CONCLUSION ......................................................................... 66

5.0 Conclusion ................................................................................................................ 66

5.1 Recommendations .................................................................................................... 70
# LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CEDAW</td>
<td>The Convention of the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women</td>
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<tr>
<td>EAC</td>
<td>East African Community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU</td>
<td>European Union</td>
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<tr>
<td>FGM</td>
<td>Female Genital Mutilation</td>
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<td>GOK</td>
<td>Government of Kenya</td>
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<td>IOs</td>
<td>International Organizations</td>
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<tr>
<td>IPU</td>
<td>Inter-Parliamentary Union</td>
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<td>IR</td>
<td>International Relations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LGBT</td>
<td>Lesbian Gay Bi-Sexual and Transgender</td>
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<td>MDGs</td>
<td>Millennium Development Goals</td>
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<tr>
<td>MPs</td>
<td>Members of Parliament</td>
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<tr>
<td>MYWO</td>
<td>Maendeleo Ya Wanawake Organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>NAP</td>
<td>National Action Plan</td>
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<td>NGOs</td>
<td>Non-Governmental Organizations</td>
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<tr>
<td>NGP</td>
<td>National Gender Policy</td>
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<td>OSCE</td>
<td>Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe</td>
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<td>Abbreviation</td>
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<tr>
<td>SDGs</td>
<td>Sustainable Development Goals</td>
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<td>UDHR</td>
<td>Universal Declaration of Human Rights</td>
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<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
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<td>UNDP</td>
<td>United Nations Development Programme</td>
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<td>UNSCR</td>
<td>United Nations Security Council Resolution</td>
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<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>United States of America</td>
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<tr>
<td>USIU-A</td>
<td>United States International University-Africa</td>
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<td>WBG</td>
<td>World Bank Group</td>
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ABSTRACT

This study examined the challenges that women face accessing political leadership positions with particular reference to Kenyan women. The objective of this research was to investigate the relationship between women and global politics analyzing the various challenges faced by women in political leadership positions in Kenya. The research notes that the various challenges can be linked to the social construction of gender roles in Kenya and around the world. Therefore, the study was based on the hypothesis that the relationship between women and global politics is complex and is demonstrated by the challenges they experience on the road to politics. The research established that despite women constituting half the population worldwide, women are still under-represented in politics. In Kenya for instance, women constitute over 52% of the population yet the 2/3 gender rule stating that not more than two thirds of people in parliament shall be of the same gender is yet to be realised.

Nonetheless, the research attributes that the degree of attention given to women politicians in Kenya has considerably increased in recent years. This is due to the enacting of the 2010 Kenyan constitution that is hailed as the most progressive constitution for women and minority. The research employed a qualitative approach with information being drawn from past and current materials. Data was gathered from secondary sources that included books, research journals, interviews, reports among others.

The research findings concluded that women are still underrepresented in political leadership positions. It further argued that some societies are less cooperative in ensuring that women take senior leadership positions both in the public and the private sphere. The research further acknowledges that cultural practices and gender stereotyping may have influenced men’s perceptions on women political leadership in the past, but closely observes that good leadership is not based on gender but qualities a person possesses, regardless of their gender.

The study recommends that women empowerment and gender equality both in the public and private sphere should be emphasized. It also suggest that women should stop creating their own barriers and give support to women in politics and those aspiring to get into politics. The research further recommends that the Kenyan legislature and the government should create more opportunities for women to get into politics. For future research, I seek to look at how Rwanda has managed to have more women representation in parliament than any other African country looking at how the political good will, the affirmative action, structural adjustments and policies have purposefully supported the inclusion of Rwandan women into parliament after the 1994 genocide in Rwanda.
CHAPTER I: GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Global Politics is generally political interactions, relationships and transactions around the world (Bellamy, 2015). Gender gap on the other hand, is defined as the idea that men and women vote differently on different issues (Chanter, 2007). In transitional regimes, women around the world have played significant roles in politics. Some of the contributions made by women in the political systems include policies that influence gender sensitivity at all government levels, drafting of new constitutions that ensure the women and youth are not marginalized, finding solutions to issues like food insecurity, health crisis, and environmental issues among others (Powley, 2003).

Gender and politics are ideas that arise from feminist work in International Relations. The two link well with radical feminism as crucially important approaches in providing knowledge about global politics in international relations. Work posed by feminist scholars help us to intellectually, empirically and politically pay attention to women in the international political system focusing on what women are doing in matters of politics. Women have always played an important role in shaping international politics. Some of these women include Angela Dorothea Merkel of Germany, Dilma Rousseff of Brazil, Hillary Clinton of USA and Park Geun-hye of South Korea among others. However, less focus has been placed on the roles such women have played in global politics (Weston, 2002).

Brown (2013) suggests that women’s role in international politics should be placed at center stage in re-thinking how relevant and significant they are in global politics. He
states that by doing so, complex images of how international politics is carried out and the importance of women in global politics will be highlighted. Brown further argues that a weak understanding of gender and global politics will be highlighted if the contribution of women in politics is left out (Brown, 2013).

Furthermore, Bailey (2010) notes that global politics appears to be highly populated by men with power being concentrated more on masculinity. This therefore exposes global politics to be highly gendered with the focus being more on men than Women (Bailey, 2010). He argues that this is due to the socially constructed gender roles that place the woman in the private sphere and the man in the public sphere.

It is assumed that gender roles are natural. However, studies show that gender roles are socially constructed and classified (Chege and Namusonge, 2013). Women are still disadvantaged when it comes to leadership participation both in the public and private sector despite them being qualified. This can be traced back to the colonial periods when women were discriminated against and were not allowed to access leadership positions, education and to hold occupations that were believed to be “a man’s field” (Afshar, 2012). Today, women are still segregated in various positions through the so called ‘glass ceiling’ and those who achieve and push for the assumed male dominated positions face serious challenges that jeopardize their performance in these fields. In this case, there is a serious concern raised about existing and reinforcing stereotypes that are greatly affecting women’s performance in top level positions (Chege & Namusonge, 2013).
Feminists differ in an attempt to explain gender equality. Held (2015) argues that women cannot be equal to men. He states that a man is defined by his aggressive and competitive characteristics whereas the women are assumed to be calm and less aggressive hence their goals differ. However, gendered habits and behavior are brought about by socialization and should not be used to define characteristics of women and men since they misguide the essence of liberating the goals of gender equality.

In African countries like Kenya, women’s participation in public positions has greatly improved over the years. However, women still haven’t managed to break through the glass ceiling and gender based challenges, hence, this remains a top issue. Kenya has greatly been challenged in regards to women’s participation in political leadership positions as it fails to achieve gender equality in parliament representation. This is even after two and a half decades of gender sensitization and activism, lobbying and mobilization of Kenyan women to take up political leadership positions and capacity building (ELDIS, 2017). According to statistics done by Inter-Parliamentary Union, countries like Rwanda have already achieved mass threshold of 38.1 percent women representation in decision making with 70.9 percent women representation in parliament (Inter-Parliamentary Union, 2017).

One aim of the Kenyan devolution process was to shape and enhance women representation in parliament. However, this process has not succeeded in achieving its objective of equal representation of women in parliament under the nation's constitution. On April 27th and May 5th 2016, a bill was tabled looking to alter the Constitution to take into consideration more women representation in the Parliament (Government of Kenya, 2016). The proposition was likewise intended to guarantee that the nation conforms to
Article 27 of the Constitution, which calls for correspondence and flexibility from segregation. On both events, the bill was tossed out because of an absence of majority in the Parliament. The bill expresses that if passed, women should meet the 66% representation and if not, these positions must be filled through nominations (Government of Kenya, 2016). A portion of the MPs boycotted or voted against the bill with some claiming that the circumstance of assigning extra women MPs may debilitate sound aggressiveness among women in the parliament (Government of Kenya, 2016). Advocates of the bill, nonetheless, counter that this would have been a great chance for Kenya to begin satisfying the duties sketched out in the Constitution. In all the East African countries, Rwanda takes lead with 64% of parliamentary seats being held by women. The circumstance in Kenya contrasts inadequately with its neighboring Rwanda, Uganda and Tanzania, where only 33% of women parliamentary representation has been achieved as of May 2016 (Sebastian, 2016).

Globally, women have started to challenge the notion assuming that gender roles are “natural.” According to Cuadrado and Molero (2015) gender roles are socially constructed and classified by community through the influence of patriarchy rule within the society, families and communities. These classifications make people believe that man is superior and strong whereas woman is inferior and weak hence the man has the power over the woman (Cuadrado & Molero, 2015). Due to this, sexist patriarchal values have been engraved deeply in the society. If ignored and not deconstructed, they pose challenges in encouraging women to engage in political leadership positions. It is clear that patriarchal values were designed by males, to support and benefit them. For this reason, most top positions in an organization are led by men with women being
subordinates in order to keep men’s leadership in power. This in turn creates serious consequences for women leadership creating barriers for women to be great leaders (Eddy, 2009). The goal of this study was to investigate the challenges women in political leadership positions face all around the globe. It highlighted various contributions made by women political leaders in Kenya and around the world in regards to International Relations.

1.1 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Vast literature acknowledges that women political leaders face challenges as they attempt to engage in politics. However, scholars focus less on the challenges women politicians face on the road to politics and the complex relationship between women and global politics. The main concern here is that political leadership experiences may not be the same for both men and women all around the world. These may differ due to diverse cultures, gender stereotypes, and power relations among other factors adversely affecting the relationship between women and global politics. Emphasis is placed more on different perceptions, experiences, visions, achievements and the lived experiences that shape women in political leadership positions. Therefore, there is a great need to scholarly examine the relationship between women and global politics as well as to understand the challenges women experience in political leadership positions especially in Kenya. This study challenges us to think beyond the predominant role played by women in the politics.
1.2 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study was guided by the following research questions:

1. What is the relationship between women and global politics?
2. What challenges do women in political leadership positions experience in Kenya?

1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The general objective of this research was to analyze the relationship between women and global politics by looking at the challenges women in political leadership positions encounter in Kenya.

The following are the specific objectives of this study:

1. To establish the relationship between women and global politics.
2. To explore the various challenges that women political leaders experience in Kenya.

1.4 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study contributes to the existing body of knowledge on the impact of global politics on women. In addition, the research findings are of great use for Kenyan institutions and authorities in understanding the obstacles that women encounter in achieving their dreams of being great political leaders. This is often because of challenges like gender stereotypes, culture, lack of funds, patriarchy rule and the social constructs imposed on women in Kenya and around the globe.
1.5 JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY

This research is based on the justification that most scholars acknowledge that women face challenges while trying to access political leadership positions. It also acknowledges that women political leaders face various challenges. However, most scholars neglect the role played by women in politics and the various contributions they have made in shaping the world of politics. Scholars like Oduor (2011), Nzomo (2015), (Campell (2013), Kabira (2016) and Laboso (2017) analysed on the challenges that women in politics and those aspiring to be in politics face. The research also examined the nexus between women and global politics. Scholars like Andersen (2006), Akao (2008), Town (2012) Bayer (2012), Gitumu (2017) and Rutherford (2001) have played a key role in advocating for women empowerment and gender equality globally and in Kenya. Therefore, the research examines deeply the roles and contributions of women in politics adding new information to existing literature. The research findings also examined whether or not women in global politics experience the same challenges.

1.6 HYPOTHESIS

The hypothesis of this research is that the relationship between women and global politics is complex, as demonstrated by the challenges women experience in political leadership.
1.7 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The study covers the post-colonial period after Kenya gained independence to date (1963-2017). This is because at the start of the twentieth century, African states were just gaining independence from their colonial masters that comprised mostly of the European countries. The pioneer state oriented various relations in Africa until the country in question was able to become independent. In the early 60s, colonial masters lead sexual orientation relations in Africa as a requirement by the pilgrim state. They also required a work force that was dependent on male transient work. This kind of gendered structure created gender segregation in society since the men were more in the public and were compensated for their work where as the women took care of domestic work (Nzomo, 1989).

In the 1980s, the state's capacity to control women started to decay. Women started to question the status quo due to their minimized positions, with the intentions of seeking what is it they could do to see to it that their position had been improved. During the independence period in Africa, European countries left a legacy of gender separation between male creation and female reproduction in post-colonial Africa (Nzomo, 1989). Cultural practices were brought about by the missionaries who taught about the bible and the male’s superiority over the woman, and insisted that women were to be submissive to their husbands who were supposed to take on the various positions of leadership. However, most examples will be derived from the independent Kenya; the 20th century.

The reason for choosing this period is because Kenya has not been able to acknowledge the woman as a leader within its society due to various reasons discussed in the literature review. This research also highlights the twentieth century events that have
seen most women fight for equal treatment in leadership. In Rwanda, and other developed
countries like the western countries, equal gender representation in parliament has been
well implemented as Kenya still struggles with the matter. This can be blamed on poor
governance and cultural attitudes and practices that fail to acknowledge women as good
leaders as well as the various unfair stereotypes that continue to hold back women as far
as their capability as leaders is concerned.

1.8 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this research was to analyze the nexus between women and global
politics. The research mainly employed a qualitative approach drawing its information for
past and current materials. Case studies from Kenyan politics were used as well as both
inductive approaches of already developed theories to explain how gender equality in
parliament will positively impact global politics.

Data was gathered from secondary sources from the different libraries like the
USIU, Oxford University online Library, Thompson Rivers University online library
among others. Data used was from books, journals, annual reports, periodicals,
newspapers, websites, online interviews, conference papers and unpublished annual
reports, among other sources.

Content analysis approach was used as a tool of analysis for data collected to
determine its legitimacy and accuracy. A critical examination of the data was also
conceptualized with the information being used to assess the challenges faced by women
in politics globally using Kenya as its case study.
1.9 ORGANISATION OF THE THESIS

**Chapter I**: is the introductory chapter. It contains the statement of the problem, research questions, objectives of the study, significance of the study, and the hypothesis. The chapter also outlines the research methodology used in this thesis.

**Chapter II**: presents the literature review that covers the nexus between women and global politics. It discusses the various arguments made by different scholars on matters to do with women in politics. In this chapter, various theories like the feminist theory and the radical feminist theory are examined.

**Chapter III**: provides an analysis of women and global politics. It looks at the general overview of women and global politics by exploring a series of women in political leadership positions and the roles they have played in shaping global politics. It highlights the key roles played by women political leaders in Kenya and globally providing a good understanding of important laws and policies that these women have influenced in shaping global politics.

**Chapter IV** examines the challenges that women in politics and those that aspire to be in politics face. This chapter discusses factors that hinder participation of women in politics drawing particular attention to Kenya. It also discusses challenges to do with culture, economic factors, religion, patriarchy rule and legal structures as some of the key areas in shaping gender equality in politics. The chapter also compares challenges faced by women politicians from developed and developing countries and analyses the key steps taken to achieve gender equality.
Chapter V: offers the general findings of the research and gives recommendations of ways that can ensure women’s opportunities in politics are expanded and favorable to both genders.
CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.0 INTRODUCTION

Gender equality in politics is still elusive even in the twenty first century. According to Towns (2012) women being the majority of the population cast the most ballots during election times worldwide yet they still lag behind as political leaders, elected members and decision makers in parliament. This situation persists even in times when women have equal constitutional rights in the modern democracies. Fundamental questions like why few women are elected to be political leaders yet they make up the majority in population still remain a puzzle.

However, women’s representation in global political leadership positions is slowly advancing. In Europe for example, women constitute 24.8 per cent in the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) national parliament today unlike 13.8% in 1996 and 16.5 % in 2000 (Inter-Parliamentary Union, 2014). This is a clear indication that there is real potential in ensuring that the number of women in political positions is increased.

Moreover, the last two decades have seen women become heads of states and government in states like Canada, Germany, Finland, Denmark, Slovakia, United Kingdom, Liberia, Central African Republic, Sri Lanka among others. Yet despite such progress, very few states have managed to achieve 30 per cent women representation in the parliament and decision making positions passed by the 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (The United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women. Beijing, China 1995). This therefore means that gender equality especially in politics is an issue
that needs to be addresses so as to ensure social and political development all over the world.

Anzia Berry (2011) asserts that women are not fully to be blamed for not participating in political activities. This is because in most cases, women’s representation in politics is dictated by men, a fact that has clearly made it very difficult for women for accessing political advancement. Political parties in most cases act as “gatekeepers” and hinder women to access public seats in politics through lack of policies that should be aimed at ensuring that women have been represented in a proper manner right from the beginning of their various political party nominations.

Nonetheless, political party regulators and party members are coming to the realization that effective democracy can only be achieved through effective representation of genders. Therefore, political parties are now working towards gender equality and equal representation of both women and men among party members. In other cases, political parties discriminate against women on the basis of finances where high candidate deposit costs and candidate registration fees are stipulated requirements that most women are unable to afford. Other underlying limits are advanced education requirements and public work experience which hinder potential women leaders from participating in politics due to political and social economic power vis-à-vis men (Nzomo, 2015).

Norris and Krook (2011) further suggest that to secure equal rights and opportunities for women and men in decision making positions public life, laws and policies that promote full participation of women in active policies have to be advanced. This will ensure that both of these genders are accorded equal opportunities when it comes to being
able to access various political positions. In addition, states and political parties should also comply with the International Human Rights framework as a way of strengthening democracy (Norris & Krook, 2011). The assurance of equal gender representation in leadership positions is one way through which compliance with the International Human Rights framework is met. The government on the other hand should work as an influence in shaping public policies and institutions as a way of facilitating active support for women in politics and those aspiring to venture into politics in a manner that makes gender parity a reality. Accordingly, party leaders should support women’s political dreams as a way of promoting gender equality in the society.

According to Campbell (2013) equality for all genders is recognized universally. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) of 1948 preserves the right of equal participation of men and women in the private and public sphere including equal participation in government. The UDHR declaration further paved way for other women’s rights interventions like the United Nations (UN) Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 1979. These intervention mandates that all member states ensure equal access of women’s participation in decision making processes with the goal of making sure that their interests are not only fought for, but are sustained as well.

In 2000, states adopted the United Nations Millennium Declaration that contains the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) now known as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which promotes gender equality targeting women’s empowerment as an effective way to do away with poverty, diseases and hunger and stimulate sustainable human development as women are considered the members of the society that are most

Scholars such as Town and Schwindt-Bayer (2012) challenge democracy by claiming that citizens should be left to choose their leaders freely. They further say that it is unfair for electoral policies to dictate or intervene equal opportunities that favor a particular group in this case women (Towns & Schwindt-Bayer, 2012). According to them, alternative measures should be taken to address poor representation of women in politics and let the voters enjoy the freedom of choice. They also argue that democracy should not be based on the percentage of women representation in parliament (Towns & Schwindt-Bayer, 2012).

Consequently, democracy is achieved when human rights are respected in all spheres of life and not just in politics. Based on this, women’s political participation is mostly of interest to political parties when the presence of women can bring in more support from the electorate. Therefore, most men will support a woman if she is likely to help draw more attention to the party and its policies. This is because it is believed that the more women a political party has the more electable and justifiable it is to the voters (Towns, 2012). One can argue the reason why this is the case is based on the fact that, the electorate considers such a political party more relatable due to the fact that women are considered to be more thorough in the sense that, they are more empathetic when it comes to addressing various social issues amongst any society.

According to a survey done by United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in 2015, over 85% of respondents concurred that women are more efficient in addressing
societal issues by bringing in different viewpoints and a unique capacity to politics and government policies that are always dominated by men. The participants acknowledged the role of women in peace and reconciliation, peace building and conflict prevention in general, arguing that women always bring in explicit areas of knowledge and skills to politics and especially in addressing social issues (UNDP, 2015). Studies also indicate that more women in the government and decision making positions helps parties compete more efficiently since they draw awareness to issues that have been ignored before and work towards having effective solutions. According to Afshar (2012), women are more in touch with social and economic problems facing the society.

As such, the women are positioned in a unique way as skillful negotiators in marginalized groups where they help to come up with solid solutions to conflict. For example, in Kenya, the first lady Her Excellency Margaret Kenyatta has played a key role in curbing child mortality rates through her Beyond Zero campaign which aims to bring down both the maternal and child mortality rates by ensuring mothers are able to access mobile maternal health care around the country. Through the help of other women political leaders and supporting organizations as well as well-organized public participation through her annual First Lady’s Marathon, Her Excellency the first lady has been able to offer a different style of leadership in solving an issue that was ignored for such a long time (UN Women, 2017).

2.1 THE BENEFITS OF HAVING WOMEN IN POLITICAL LEADERSHIP POSITIONS

There are important roles played by women that are in politics. One of the most common role is that of advocating for gender equality in political offices. As argued by Kavuma (2016), women in politics have worked towards eliminating gender
discrimination in the public. Having more women in politics is also an encouragement to other women who would like to pursue politics but are afraid of the various hurdles that are clearly faced by any woman who decides to run for a public office. Therefore, women are able to achieve different agendas and present concerns in parliament that influences policies and laws in a manner that caters for their own interests as well as the public at large (Norris & Krook, 2011).

Studies indicate that women act as role models and as an inspiration to fellow females. Women politicians have been influential in various decision making processes that entails pushing for national reforms and acting as political activists where their voices are not heard. Consequently, women are encouraged to elect their fellow women into political positions by the argument that, the wider the range of women holding political offices, the confident they will be in their quest in expanding democracy and as well as in their engagements in various broad political participations (UNDP, 2015).

According to Towns (2012), having many women in elected political seats contribute to reinforcing policies and laws that have direct positive change to social and cultural insights towards women in the society and can help fight gender stereotypes. Therefore, the main conclusive point in this argument is the fact that, there are no better representatives for any course than the people that particular course is about and hence, having more women in various political positions will go a long way in ensuring that their positions have been clearly marked.

Ambasador Melanne Verveer believes that increased women representation in politics is an advantage to the society because women ensure women’s issues are channeled in parliament for debate raising awareness on gender-based policies that discriminate
women. In addition, she fathoms that women are able to trust fellow women in politics to fight for legitimacy and democracy hence, building confidence in the political system (Verveer, 2015). However, as much as women advocate for gender equality especially in the social structures, some women lack the education to do away with oppressive socio-cultural behaviors. Instead, they uphold and identify themselves with various cultural practices like female genital mutilation (FGM) passing them down to other generations in a manner that continues to hold back women through unprogressive cultural beliefs and practices such as this (USAID, 2015). Therefore, women in politics should not only work to change oppressive systems but also work towards identifying workable alternatives that can enhance positive social, economic and cultural development as far as their traditional beliefs and cultural practices are concerned in a manner that makes sure that every women, more so those in the grassroots are liberated (ELDIS, 2017).

In addition, scholars like Michelle Swers, Sue Thomas, Alison Stennin and Lise Johnson (2012) argue that political stability is achieved when equal representation of electorate positions is ensured. They further say that women in politics have achieved great milestones in overcoming gender equality in the fields of education, military services, the labor market, social policies among others. Women political leaders are able to prioritize parliamentary debates that pose major challenges like sexual harassment, domestic violence, human trafficking and economic restructuring since these are major issues that directly affect women (Swers, 2012). Such representation makes sure that the real issues that affect women are addressed in a manner that is both realistic and effective as the people addressing them are people likely to relate to these issues.
The World Bank and the World Economic Forums are among international actors in agreement with gender equality in politics as an advantage to economic growth. Giving evidence, they suggest that gender equality in public fields like politics promotes ‘smart economics’ increasing work output from 3 to 25% (World, 2013). The reasoning behind these facts is that, the economic growth experienced through women’s participation is as a direct result of their capability as political leaders when accorded the opportunities to take such positions.

Similarly, the gender gap report suggests that improving women and girls conditions raises productivity and advances development for all. These international actors indicate that educating women and allowing them to engage into active politics is a fundamental thrive for the economic pillar since women are able to build unbiased and sustainable growth (WEP, 2014). For example, a survey done by the World Bank reports that women are more likely to invest in their homes than the men. The study found out that for every dollar given to a woman, 90% of it was spent on her family and for community development. On the other hand, if a dollar is given to a man, 20 to 30% was spent on his family and community development whereas the rest was spent on himself. This study therefore indicated that women in politics are the best to bring in community development through public allocated funds (World Bank, 2016) as their focus is clearly on the advancement of their family. The fact that the family is the basic unit of any society means that any financial development of a family is a direct development of the society at large.
Figure 1: Difference in how a dollar of development money is spent between a man and a woman (World Bank, 2016).

2.2 KEY CHALLENGES TO WOMEN’S ADVANCEMENT IN POLITICS.

Research done on women’s political representation bring into play claims that women do not represent fellow women once they hold political office (Gatabaki, 2014). Nyamburi (2016), a political and gender analysts however argues that this happens because women are few than men in the elected assemblies hence they are outnumbered. He also states that women should not be the only ones highlighting their issues in parliament but a committee that comprises of both men and women should be set up to highlight challenges affecting women and come up with solutions that should be implemented to that effect. However, scholars like Oduor, (2011) argue that as long as women are few in promoting legislative outcomes, they will be of no major influence as setting up of most policies especially those that are aimed at improving the position of
women in leadership depends on numbers so as to drive them in parliament, and in most cases the number of women or those that empathize with their issues do not hold. He therefore advocates for people to vote for people who have leadership qualities rather than focus on gender and identities. Although both scholars act in response to dynamics of women marginalization in political situations, they also have their own speculations on whether having more women in political offices and decision making fields will make any difference.

Yoder (2016) conversely analyzes various social, economic and political works and concludes that experiences will shift where numerical support changes. He argues that the higher the number of people in a particular group the more dominant and controlling they are. Therefore, he supports that gender balancing in the public and private arena should be emphasized because if men dominate women are left with no choice but to oblige with what the dominant majority reinforce which in most cases does not put women issues or policies that are aimed at driving the position of women leadership forward.

Reflecting on this, Ghati and Wanga (2017), as much as more women are interested in taking up political leadership roles in Kenya, the ground is still uneven and discouraging. They challenge women to surface out of cultural cocoons that hinder them from participating in politics in a way that promotes the female agenda as far as political representation is concerned. They highlight the many challenges that women face in trying to achieve their political dreams as

- Lack of education for both women and girls.
- Lack of finances and financial support for their political campaigns.
- Intimidating cultures and stereotypes.
- Party regulations that are Gender biased.
- Social orientation and cultural beliefs that are manipulative.

Together, these two are supported by many other scholars who suggest that if women cannot support fellow women by electing them into politics, the culture, performance and previous scenarios of politics will not change easily. The reason why they have reached this conclusion is based on the fact that, it is those that are affected by a certain problem who should work in solidarity towards its eradication and therefore, only women can be able to ensure that they have done away with the problem of poor political representation.

Duran (2014) suggests that Kenya can be used to understand the challenges faced by women in accessing political leadership positions. By tracking down structures of male dominance, one is able to understand how gender differences are formed and contextualized in the society (Duran, 2014). Mutua (2017) extends Duran’s analysis of women in politics in response to the growing tendency of Kenyan politicians where politics is considered as a man’s field. He challenges the pressure that women politicians have of proving that they are just as able as their male counterparts in politics. Ngunyi (2017) adopts an unambiguous gendered perception that emphasises on how women’s minority in political positions has a direct link to their minority status in the society. He believes that patriarchal societies that emphasise on group status over-accommodate gender stereotypes, sexual harassment and lack of legitimate influence all discourage women to participate in exercises that are aimed at advancing their political agenda.

Professor Wangari Mathai (2003) suggests that a few women in Kenya and other African states have been able to battle against the decision class that is male dominated.
Be that as it may, a few women in politics access power compared to men. However, Kenya has women political leaders who are distinctive, goal oriented and have the capacity to be perceptive in the harsh political world and have been able to rise against all odds to occupy powerful political offices. It is clear that women interests are not a priority in most patriarchal states in Africa, a real reason why women should not sit back but rather, they should put in the work that is required to see to it that their interests have become a need within political representations. In this manner, an arrangement of women associations will keep on being a route in which women's issues and concerns can be voiced. Such associations in Kenya include Maendeleo ya Wanawake Organisation (MYWO) (Maathai, 2003). She encourages women to decline sexist treatment and harassment and feminize political agendas in order to be of influence in the social and economic empowerment. Wangari (2003) focuses solely on opportunities for women and supportive alliances that ensure the number of women in parliament increases.

2.3 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study utilized the feminism and Radical feminism theory. The feminism theory was used explain the roles and contributions of women in global politics. It was also important in explaining the challenges women in politics face and how they discourage women to access political leadership positions. The radical feminist theory was used to argue how social constructs contributed to the existence of gender inequality and demonstrated the variety of social structures that constrain women empowerment in both the public and private sphere suggesting that deconstruction of outdated social constructs will reduce gender inequality.
2.3.1 FEMINISM THEORY

Feminism as a theory looks into empowering the women and advocating for women’s rights and equality in the social, political and economic spheres of life. Feminism entails a lot of politics as far as picking out of fundamental relationships in politics that deals with gender and power relations for women to be given equal privileges as men is concerned (Benhabib, 1987). Feminism and feminists came into existence in the nineteenth century through social movements that had emerged as women movements that aimed to ensure that women were able to access equal treatment to their male counterparts in all spheres of life. Majorly, this movement was directed towards fighting for basic civil rights like the right to vote as an important equality for women. Feminists felt that there was need for equal representation of women in the society as it was mainly dominated by men (Cott, 1987). The movement was born in New York, bringing in hundreds of people who focused on the civil, social, religious and economic status of women (Evans, 1995).

It is important to note that the history of feminism has three waves. The first and earliest feminist movement was known as the ‘first-wave’ of feminism that began in the nineteenth-century in Europe and North America. This wave of feminism was characterized by advocacy for equal rights between men and women. Such rights involved the right to vote, rights to employment, inheritance of property in marriage and equal opportunities in political power. The first wave of feminism was successful as it saw rights of women being introduced in European countries such as women being allowed to vote. Other countries like china and Japan later followed and achieved equality in social and political agendas due to modernization (Yuan, 2005).
However, due to socio-religious reforms in India, feminism was challenged by the thought that patriarchal customs were a religious context that emerged from the creation period of Adam and Eve. This led to the ‘second wave’ of feminism which was after changing the social and political behavior in an attempt to liberate women (Tong, 1989). Simone de Beauvoir looked at how women were socially constructed as the ‘other’ being taking further the quest to liberate the women. The ‘second wave’ of feminism tackled issues to do with sex discrimination, unequal chances of employment and unequal pay for women (Seth, 2011). It could be argued that is still a wave of feminism that has continued to be implemented in many regions of the world even to date. Feminists continue to fight sexual discrimination against women, lack of equal opportunities when it comes to employment in comparison to their male counterparts as well as when it comes to equal salaries for both genders for equal services rendered.

For instance, in countries like the USA, the black movement fought for women’s liberation by linking their rights to civil rights. This spread to Britain and other European countries allowing women to participate in politics. In Britain, the results are clear since women have run the monarchy as well as having female Prime Ministers in the country. Other countries have favorably followed suit for example countries like Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka having being led by female Prime Ministers, not to mention Germany whose Vice Chancellor Angela Markel, continues to put global-women leadership on the map. The ‘second-wave’ feminism fought for equal rights and equal opportunities for all regardless of class or sex (Thornham, 2006).

According to Thornham (2006), it therefore makes sense to observe that, if there is the willingness by women globally women to stand up and be part of the efforts that
are aimed towards achieving equal political representation, then there is indeed a huge possibility of their efforts being achieved just as the civil rights movements were able to liberate black people. Although there is still a long way to go, the fact that these efforts culminated in the election of the first Black-American president in 2008 is a clear indication that not enough efforts have been put in to support of women in politics.

Thirdly, there is the third-wave feminism that was mainly associated with politics and movements in the 1980s to-date. This wave was as a result of critics of the second wave where the main concern was that women of color, lesbians, gay, bi-sexual and transgender (LGBT) people, as well as the poor who were suppressed (Tong, 2013). Therefore, the third-wave of feminism was essential in discussing issues of women focusing on racism, homophobia and Eurocentric behavior as their agenda (Mackinnon, 1982).

In this context of feminism theory one can say that this is a theory that concentrates on women having equality through responsible actions and choices (Brookes, 2008). One can confidently observe that the journey towards the achievement of the various rights of these groups is still far from being realized. The fact that women continue to be judged not on their capability but sometimes based on the prejudice of the men in their lives is one way through which this could be seen. A perfect example would be based the just concluded American elections where the leading Democratic Party candidate Hillary Robin Clinton lost the election to a documented misogynist despite being clearly the more qualified candidate, a former first lady with political experience spanning decades (Scaramucci, 2017).
Theoretically, the fourth wave of feminism is still also taking shape. It claims to generate more awareness on equal rights for women in terms of career, education, business and politics (Rampton, 2015). The fourth wave of feminism advocates for women’s rights that include right to abort, right to access contraception, expression and acceptance of female sexuality as well as general awareness of women’s rights (Rampton, 2015). Its goals is to offer great support to women empowerment especially protect women from Gender Based Violence (GBV) creating access to support groups and organisations that offer protection to oppressed women (Rampton, 2015). In Addition, the fourth wave has contributed to worldwide attention of women’s issues that were previously hampered by ignorance. In recent years, the press and the politicians have keenly discussed issues that affect women like sexual abuse, rape, gender based violence, unequal pay, transgender, lesbians among others. Moreover, the emerging feminists in the fourth wave feminism are in agreement that feminism is not just a representation of women’s issues but a call for gender equality regardless of one’s sex (Rampton, 2015).

2.3.2 RADICAL FEMINIST THEORY

Radical feminism was as a result of women’s discussions about their daily lives which involved pregnancies, child bearing, menstruation, housework, service to men and menopause. Radical feminism also was as a result of Liberal feminism and socialist feminism that discussed gender equality beyond the daily lives of women (Daly, 1978). This theory was committed to unveiling the discrimination women faced in social fields like politics, family life and marriage institutions. Radical feminism also exposed the dynamics of power operations in the private and public sphere simply expressing sexism as a social construct and not natural (Daly, 1978).
According to Gandhi (1988) radical feminism argued that the whole traditional social system was outdated and was embedded in society as a means of giving men power over women. Furthermore, Mackinnon (1982) claims that due to the deeply-rooted beliefs that men are superior to women, patriarchy was very hard to eradicate. Hence, according to Brookes (2008), issues such as women’s sexual health and family planning should be issues that women should be able to make sound choices about without being interfered with by policy makers who unfortunately, are mostly men.

In explaining radical feminism, Tong (2013) suggests that women’s oppression is as a result of sexual frameworks in the society. She notes that male control and domination of the public sphere and the private domain leads coherently to different frameworks of human control. Therefore, the male dominate various fields setting laws that hinder women from accessing the public sphere due to the dominating male power (Tong, 2013). Radical feminism explains that patriarchy rule is an underlying foundation of inequality between men and women or rather social predominance of men over women. This in turn gives the men privilege over the women socially, politically and economically. Radical feminism is therefore used to identify sex war as a basic political struggle of male power and patriarchy giving the researcher an interest in drawing attention to physical and sexual dominance of men as well as offer solutions in a way that is aimed at making this sort of male dominance a thing of the past (Daly, 1978).

The philosophy of radical feminism is also said to be a major contribution to the liberation of women around the world. Women activists were at the forefront fighting for women rights between 1967-1975 with radical feminism being focused on questioning why women and men adopt various roles based on their gender and sexual orientation.
This theory attempts to explain that gender roles are socially constructed based on various factors like one’s biology or cultural background (Daly, 1968). This could be interpreted to mean that, gender roles play no part in dictating a person’s capability when it comes to their occupation such as their ability to hold a political office. Therefore, any person regardless of their gender can be able to hold a political office based on other factors such as their qualifications and experience and their quest to ascend to political power should be entirely be based on these factors as opposed to its being pegged on whether they are male or female (Daly, 1968).

Radical feminists are said to be more aggressive in their approach in trying to deconstruct social constructs in liberating women. According to Connell (2005), he argues that traditional social systems created a phenomenon of hierarchy through masculinity hence particular groups claimed leadership positions leading to the legitimacy of patriarchy. Radical feminists therefore felt the need to unravel complexities that were as a result of masculinity which included violence, war, rape, sexism and homophobia largely linked with masculinity, which were all euphemisms through which the female gender is perceived as being weak, and lacks neither the vigor nor the capability which is required to be in a position of power. Additionally, masculinity was also linked to leadership as well as an ideology that was connected to power and embedded in all levels of politics (Connell, 2005).

Based on these theories, women’s participation in politics varies from country to country based on social attributes, culture, religion and past history of a country. For example, according to Kabira (2016), since most African countries are patriarchal, they are likely to elect men into politics. Laboso (2017) also argues that, in Kenya, most
women in the parliament are not elected but appointed or nominated hence indicating that women lack support from both the men and the women when it comes to voting them into political power. On the other hand, countries that produce policies which advocate for gender equality like the USA have increased numbers of women’s participation in politics.
CHAPTER III: ANALYZING THE NEXUS BETWEEN WOMEN AND GLOBAL POLITICS

3.0 INTRODUCTION

Ever since the 1960’s, various actions by women towards the contribution to political development has been recognized. However, very few literature of their participation in politics has been documented. Due to this, feminists and women activists have taken charge in contributing to literature that seeks to address these imbalances.

Women political leaders have for long been side-lined both in the west and in the third world countries (Holton, 2015). The contributors of political activism place blame on orthodox academicians who undervalued the contribution of women leaders in political fields. They analyzed women in the fields of domesticity, motherhood and marriage ignoring activities of states that encompassed democracy and women’s activities in the context of devotion to development especially in the public arena (Conway, 2007).

Therefore, this chapter seeks to acknowledge that women in political leadership positions are of great contribution to development just as the men in politics. It also addresses the nexus between global politics and women. This section also discusses the role of women in politics focusing on the debate and events of women and global politics are the same worldwide. In other words, this chapter explains that politics is the same everywhere as far the manner through which women participation is covered.

According to Scholte (2005), global politics can be associated with the emergence of globalization in which domestic and international politics everywhere are related. Therefore, this creates the orthodox of International Relations to shape world politics and
how they are approached. Politically, the world is divided into territories named sovereign states. Hence, global politics which can also be called world politics are concepts of the world in pursuit of political power and state interests (Scholte, 2005). It is until recently that scholars felt the need to talk about the nature of changing politics and its significance over time. Kennedy (2015) argues that patterns of power and inequality in the political field are neither natural nor inevitable but are deep-rooted political processes that change over time if the right efforts are undertaken in the attempt to dispel these injustices. He also asserts that political processes in regards to global politics direct attention to interests that seek to influence how global affairs are governed. These processes affect both the private and public sectors that have an impact on human affairs, particularly when it comes to leadership and governance (Kennedy, 2015).

However, scholars such as Holton (2015), put forward that globally, politicians are facing new major challenges of resolving issues to do with boundaries, security, trade and economics, the environment as well as chemical weapons. These issues are transforming global politics now in that there is always a need to involve non-governmental organizations as a bargaining tool to supreme power and social forces (Holton, 2015). He acknowledges that global politics has altered fundamentally and it seeks to achieve national and international unity by taking actions that affect the welfare of the globe through various entities like NGOs, IOs, and Unions among others (Holton, 2015). As much as inequality, globalization and exclusion are part of global politics in the contemporary world, national politics are no longer a closed system since decisions made have to be global and cover interests to do with the political, economic and social
exclusion. Hence, global decisions are a major control of agendas in global politics (Scholte, 2005).

### 3.1 GENDER AND GLOBAL POLITICS

International politics has been ‘gender-blind’ where less priority is given to gender relations and sexual politics due to emphasis being placed more on state and inter-state relations (Bellamy, 2015). However, International Relations feminists scholars have helped shape global politics with people accepting the events that are shaping world affairs. Global politics has had a great implication today with women being more visible in the challenging male dominated discipline of politics (Bellamy, 2015). Through analyzing global politics in a ‘gendered lens’, different actors of the world have been understood and hence are of significance to global politics in manner that ensures inclusivity (Holton, 2015).

In the 1980’s, feminists’ theories gained popularity in the study of international relations and global issues therefore becoming a major influence in social sciences and mainstreaming gender issues (Scholte, 2005). Firstly, feminist theories have always prevailed in accurately putting a meaning to gender and global politics both analytically and empirically where liberal feminism has challenged the addition of women in influential decision making addressing the issues of misrepresentation of women in male dominated fields (Paupp, 2009). Its approach in global politics is in encapsulating the question of where women are in international politics. Due to this, women’s contribution to the political world whether visible or invisible has gained recognition. Hence, gender mainstreaming is achieved and is adopted by the United Nations and other major organizations like the World Bank (Paupp, 2009).
Nonetheless, the inclusion of women in national and international political activities has always had its limitations as we shall be able to observe throughout this analysis. Awareness of the global process was recognized and then created but less attention was put on how to solve issues to do with gender imbalances in global political activities. The global processes taking place in order to include more women in public leadership was not well understood hence the behavior of global actors was affected and still remained to be gender biased (Pierre & Peters, 2013).

Secondly, Kennedy (2015) argues that highlighting women’s under-representation in the public sphere contrast with issues to do with gender biases and not to mainstream gender issues in global politics. Therefore, male dominance is assumed to be okay whether socially within the family or politically within the public sphere and especially in politics. This then shows that power gives privilege to masculinity and excludes women’s issues and contributions (Pierre & Peters, 2013).

In her book ‘Women in Resistance’ Leon, (2005) argues that media content, sexual orientation and ethnic teachings should make it a priority to fight discrimination against women and address diversity and recognition of women’s issues. She emphasizes on a system that proposes gender equality as a key subject in as a communication platform for gender equality in decision-making bodies. This will not only mobilize a model for democracy but will also contribute to diversity in gender participation socially and politically (Leon, 2005).

Thirdly, despite evidence that demonstrate practical policy changes in addressing structures of global systems, male power still dominates in most societies (Afshar, 2012).
Patriarchal systems dictate most states aggressively scaring away women who wish to take part in politics given these positions have already been preconceived to belong to men (Afshar, 2012). For instance, the aspect of a gendered nationalism still motivates the male to be self-reliant, independent and autonomous in operating public agendas. The women on the other hand are entangled with motherhood and taking care of the family in the domestic space and taking on other responsibilities especially in a male dominated sector such as politics is naturally frowned upon (Connell, 2005). Such images are seen to reflect world masculinity and they accustom the male to see themselves as more powerful and ultimately making women appear to come in second place. As such, gendered tendencies are seen to be common in depicting national differences with nationalism being heavily sexualized and gendered (Conway, 2007).

The fourth point is observed by Walker (2014), where the struggles faced by women under the domination of men are explored. She states that traditionally, women were made to think that their place was in the domestic sphere. In her book ‘The Colour Purple’, Walker criticizes the relation between men and women where men are seen as rulers and women are seen to be helpless and weak hence they are dominated by the male until they realize their potential and work towards becoming powerful in society. She criticizes feminism as a concept that seeks to marginalize women by placing them in secondary positions. Therefore, she challenges women to explore their potential in other realms besides being good wives and mothers and confidently fight for power so as to advocate for their own issues as they are the only ones who can perfectly understand their current position as well as where it is that they want to end up as far as empowerment is concerned (Walker, 2015).
Additionally, according to Tickner (1992), despite feminists advocating for policy reforms in gender marginalization, global politics has always been gendered with policies being conducted by men. Political leadership has always been masculine hence to introduce topics of gender discrimination and gender biasness, gendered analysis has to start with discussing masculinity. She states that masculinity and politics have a co-relation explaining why there are more men than women in the political and social order.

In addition, Tickner indicates that global politics have and are still associated with masculinity where women are forced to comply with males’ superiority in terms of power. Therefore, it befalls women to ensure that they have fully participated in the deconstruction of this ideologies that associates politics to masculinity in a manner that ensures that they are part of various policy reforms especially those that touch on women interests.

Scott (2012) on the other hand challenges the field of international Relations whereby, she argues that gender differences are social constructs based on cultural believes and behaviors therefore, they can be deconstructed. She argues that power relations are unjustified and result to perceive believes that shape societies creating inequality between sexes. Scott (2012) also argues that women should not be perceived as ‘the other’ but should be central in assuming leadership positions. She states that there is not much of a difference between men and women and therefore women make great political leaders just like men. She also suggests that gender differences are not natural but are fixed by societies to construct and sustain selfish interests in the public and private realm henceforth characterizing international politics as gender biased (Scott, 2012). The obvious point that is brought about by this scholar is the fact that, when it
comes to being able to get into political leadership position, an individual’s gender should not in any way be a dictating factor. A woman can and should be accorded the same consideration as their male counterparts when it comes to political leadership.

Furthermore, judging by the various events that have political marginalization based on gender, class and ethnicity still exists. Even the most democratic states like the western countries still fail to observe gender equality in their parliaments. As argued by Rai, (2016) political change especially in third world countries must take place to address political marginalization in order to enhance democracy and address the existence of gender inequality and challenges that women in politics face. I agree with Hensman’s (2017) argument where she says that women’s activities are the very important components in shaping global politics especially in authoritarian regimes (Hensman, 2017). She also illustrates that women must work towards promoting equality amongst them and proves that they are capable of doing a great job regardless of their gender like in the case of South Asia and Latin America where government structures fight authoritarian regimes.

Owing to such events, it is possible that women political leaders can overcome the challenges of segregation and marginalization achieving their goals particularly in opposing male dominance in political leadership positions and women’s rights of equality (Vargas, 2014). In addition, as argued by Joyce Laboso the Deputy Speaker in the Eleventh Kenyan parliament, women should not shy away from venturing into political leadership. Laboso states that challenges faced by women in trying to achieve political leadership positions should be a better platform in fighting for political seats so as to maneuver through elected positions and not just wait to be nominated candidates.
(Laboso, 2017). She also encourages women as well as men to support each other so as to ensure that the field of politics is level based on good competence and merit (Laboso, 2017). Being one of the few female political leaders in Kenya, Laboso attests that in 2013, all governor seats were taken by men. She therefore encourages women to challenge such male dominance stating that even the former women politicians faced challenges just like the present women politicians. Therefore, challenges will always be there and it is unfortunate that Kenyan women allow this to put them down (Laboso, 2017). Elachi (2017), a nominated senator adds on to say that cultural beliefs act as setbacks for women who want to venture into politics. She also claims that outdated assumptions are concepts that should be wiped off in society to allow women the chance to engage into active politics just like they are encouraged to be pilots or doctors.

3.2 EXAMPLES OF WOMEN IN POLITICAL LEADERSHIP POSITIONS

Given the dynamics of global politics, women political leaders have faced a number of challenges especially for those in presidential or Prime Minister Positions. Tension and contradiction in those working in such positions has often been highlighted. Institutional sexism within the public domain has seen many women lose their political seats as they struggle with accusations that seem to crucify the women in politics today especially in authoritarian and patriarchal systems (Afshar, 2012). As women politicians fight to defend the welfare of the society, repressive totalitarian regimes fight back to maintain the maternal role of women. However, women politicians have fought back with great courage and affirmation. For example, women have chosen to come out powerfully in advocating for social changes that are oppressive to them (Paupp, 2009). Women are
seen to advocate for practical and progressive measures that ensure they are not discriminated in parliament with the aim of ensuring that they have defended the gains that they have been able to achieve within the 21st century, as far as leadership and governance by women is concerned.

In countries like Nicaragua, China, Palestine and Iran, women sought to endorse a radical ardor that sought to do away with policies that were oppressive to them. They proposed policies that would ensure that they were able to fetch for themselves economically making them as resourceful as their male counterparts. It is such women’s political participation that illustrate that women are as capable as men in whatever they do (Afshar, 2012). The processes of global politics and political reforms have seen women negotiating formal processes that promote equality and reflect on solving the challenges that they face. For instance, women are now able to attend school, hold public and managerial positions as well as take part in the military unlike before. These reforms are made possible by women activists and feminists who see the need to promote gender equality not just for their own sake but for the sake of future generations (Monbiot, 2004).

All too often, women have become victims of political processes like impeachment in the political domain. Despite their contribution in the public sphere, women in political leadership positions face challenges that oppress them forcing them to step down against their will. Globally, gender imbalance persistence in key decision making plays a major when it comes to denying women equal participation in political representation. The reason why this is the case is based on the lack of women representatives who could be playing the vital role of ensuring that the sort of impactful
decisions that are being made are the kind of decisions that caters for women’s interests. Therefore, challenges are still faced in advocating for women political participation. However, despite global commitments to address women issues in politics, direct measures need to be implemented in achieving gender equality in politics. Social, economic and cultural issues are barriers that significantly affect women’s participation in politics and other public domains like parliament, the judiciary and other private sectors (Bellamy, 2015).

The Beijing Platform of Action (BPA) has been of great importance in advocating for increased participation of women in public fields. The United Nations Charter prohibits discrimination on gender basis and promotes gender equality. In addition, the International Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) and International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) dictate that both women and men should be provided with equal rights actively promoting women’s participation in political and public life without fear or discrimination. The assurance by these global human rights players when it comes to women being accorded equal opportunities as far as political leadership positions go to equal those of their male counterparts in a manner that is non-discriminative is one of the ways that gender equity in both the local and international political arena could be achieved.

There is an analysis establishing that laws and various national constitutions should articulate gender equality and women’s political empowerment. In addition, women should enjoy equal opportunities as their male counterparts without being discriminated regardless of their social, political, economic and cultural status (Lundborg, 2013). Through such conscious decisions by various nations to ensure that they have
indeed put mechanisms such as these in place in relation to advancing the course for women’s leadership ensures that women are able to achieve equal representations in an easier manner (Lundborg, 2013). Ensuring that women have been accorded opportunities that are aimed at ensuring that they have been able to “catch up” with their male counterpart who have been always been favored by the various social perception through affirmative action is another clear way through which gender imbalance in the field of politics could be dealt with.

There is an emerging political trend in the world of politics vis-a-vis women impeachment. While women struggle to take up political leadership positions all over the world, political analysts like Grey, (2016) indicate that female head of states barely rule for more than four years. Grey, (2016) suggests that 17% of women state leaders have led for less than one year losing their seats to claims of corruption. Surprisingly, people find it easy to endure corruption when men are in power unlike when women are in power (Grey, 2016).

Ghitis (2017) further explains that legislators are poisoning democracy. She remarks that women are struggling to access power or stay in power. Taking in account the recent events in Brazil and South Korea ties between impeachment of women leaders and political democracy is something to question. Two countries have in the past launched petitions to impeach male presidents but in both countries, only female presidents have been removed from power. These two presidents are President Park Geun-hye of South Korea and Dilma Rousseff of Brazil who face the same accusations of being corrupt (Ghitis, 2017).
In addition, she also questions how Donald Trump was able to beat his rival Hillary Clinton in the recent 2016 U.S elections despite having cases of ethical issues. It is evident that Clinton was scrutinized for allegedly being corrupt whereas accusations made against Trump over multiple scandals like the ‘Trump University’, and allegations of sexual harassment of a considerable number of women did not seem to be taken seriously (Grey, 2016). Therefore, according to Grey (2016), it can be observed that societies, even in countries that are considered to be more advanced, still hold retrogressive perspectives as far as women leadership is concerned, not mention the blatant misogynistic views by huge parts of these population as evidenced by the recently concluded elections in the United States (Hensman, 2017).

Just like South Korea and Brazil, Kenya has also had its fair share of gender discrimination in the political world. The devolution process is meant to create equal representation of women in political leadership positions improving the role of women in parliament. However, historical injustices against women in politics still thrive. Entrenched patriarchal views have directly or indirectly frustrated women’s political careers in Kenya with a number of women having lost their political seats or fought for their positions in parliament. For example, Kenya’s first woman Deputy Chief Justice Nancy Baraza was forced to step down in January 2012 as a member of Kenya’s Supreme Court due to her disagreement with security personnel in Village Market (Gitumu, 2017). In other incidents, Raychelle Omamo (The Cabinet Secretary of Defence, Monica Juma (Foreign Affairs Principal Secretary) and Sara Serem (The Chairperson of Salaries and Remuneration Commission) have all fought to stay in their respective positions under threats of impeachments due to alleged accusations of corruption.
None the less, former Devolution Cabinet Secretary Ann Waiguru and Gladys Shollei have had to leave office on allegations of corruption (Gitumu, 2017). This begs the question why such events are more common to women leaders than male leaders. Also, such attacks on women in leadership positions continue to raise eyebrows blaming these events on patriarchy rule and gender stereotypes. Therefore, the media is being challenged to campaign on promoting gender equality and protection changing the status quo (Laboso, 2017). This way, women that have been able to beat all odds and hold political positions will be able to have a fair chance at defending their positions without being victimized for just being women leaders.

According to Meeks (2012), as seen in history, no matter how qualified a female candidate is when it comes to vying for political office, the question of how fit in terms of both her physical and personality traits has always been an issue, an element of politics that is never an issue when it comes to the male candidates vying for political offices. There is enough proof that female candidates do in fact receive a lot of media coverage on the areas that are more concentrated to their novelty, their temperament and their look as opposed to the sort of manifestos that cover the issue that they would intend to deal with if they are able to clinch the desired political positions (Meeks, 2012).

Additionally, there is an ever evolving gender dynamic that provides an obvious insight into the various gender dynamics as far as women run for political office that entails the question on whether they are “men enough” when it comes to getting the job done (Meeks, 2012). The concern here then becomes, why should it take a woman who “is man enough” to be able to run and win a political contest. According to Meeks (2012), there should be concerted efforts that are aimed at ensuring that this perspective
within the electorate have been dealt with in a way that shows that women can be able to run for political office, emerge successful and execute their duties in a manner that is both professional and result oriented without being considered to bear masculine traits.

3.3 THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN SHAPING GLOBAL POLITICS

Over time, though limited, women is participation in both local and global politics have clearly led to some of the most distinguished contributions when it comes to the setting of political agendas, policy alignment as well as other political milestones as far as leadership is concerned. The following are generally highlighted contributions of women in political leadership positions in Kenya and the world at large:

3.3.1 WOMEN AS A TOOL FOR COMMUNICATION AND DECISION MAKING ON DEVOLVING LEVELS OF DEMOCRACY AND GENDER ISSUES

The fact that women have been the ones subjected to gender inequality over the years means that they are the people who can perfectly understand exactly how these injustices could be addressed (Kabira, 2016). It therefore befalls them to fully participate in the conversations that are aimed at communicating their issues, as well as suggest the way forward as far as dealing with gender issues are concerned. Through various workshops as well as programs that are aimed to advance their course not only on the global platform, but on the grassroots level as well.
### 3.3.2 WOMEN AS AMBASSADORS FOR PEACE, MEDIATORS AND NEGOTIATORS IN WAR TORN COUNTRIES

In many countries that have found themselves in civil wars, whether based on bad policies or even as a result of bad governance when it comes to the distribution of resources in these particular societies, as it has been in most warring Middle East nations, there have been very clear instances of women being seen to act as mediators as well as peace ambassadors (Sanauddin & Khan, 2015). A perfect example is of the young woman Malala Yousafzai who is a global advocate for the girl’s-child education having been a victim herself, and whose efforts have been recognized all over the world, to an extent that she is now a peace nobel laureate (Khoja-Moolji & Shenila, 2017).

### 3.3.3 WOMEN AS ADVOCATES FOR EQUALITY IN POSITIONS OF POWER SUCH AS PARLIAMENTS

Clear efforts by those women who had been to beat all odds to and clinch powerful positions in political spaces can be observed through their efforts in trying to advance their course in having increased women representation in politics. Some of these women leaders have tabled bills in the Kenyan parliament that are aimed to fight gender inequality, gender based violence, sexual harassment among other bills that prioritize the fight for women’s rights. In addition, women have worked as human rights watch and fought for gender based violence victims in seeking justice to end such impunities (Thongo, 2016). According to Thongo (2016), a perfect example would be the championing of the Sexual Offences Bill in 2006 that was tabled in the Kenyan Parliament by the former nominated Member of Parliament and the only female senior judge who sits at the bench in the Supreme Court of Kenya Njoki Ndung’u.
3.3.4 WOMEN LEADERS AS CONTRIBUTORS TO SHAPING THE LAWS AND POLICIES OF THEIR NATIONS IN COUNTRIES LIKE NIGERIA, MALI, BOTSWANA, BRAZIL AND SOUTH KOREA

The argument brought forward by the World Bank (2016) report that indicates the focus of women is normally directed towards advancement of their people in comparison to their male counterparts and therefore, having a woman in a position of power is most likely to lead to development. Based on the above nations, there are various instances of development that could be deduced based on the fact that they have a woman as their head of state. For example, the recently impeached South Korean president who was the countries first president Park Geun-hye is considered an icon within the conservative establishment through her creative economic initiatives (Sang-Hun, 2017). Another outstanding female leader is the former Brazilian president, Dilma Rousseff who was able to create more than 5.4 million jobs within her first term in office between January, 2011 and May, 2014, which surpassed the 5 million jobs that had been created by her predecessor President Cardoso in the eight years he was in office (Rousseff, 2014).

3.4 CONCLUSION

Across the world, there is vast indication that politics is the same worldwide. However, there is evidence that women in political leadership positions have been faced with various challenges, with their contribution remaining invisible or unknown. Women in politics, unlike their male counterparts struggle to make their effort known as well as be seen in the fight for democracy and gender equality. Therefore, women in politics and those that aspire to be in politics have challenged the media, fellow women and the men to combine forces in supporting gender equality especially for those women who occupy
political leadership positions in a manner that work towards increasing the number of women in political positions.

In some cases, women have been targeted based on their affiliations. In other cases, they have experienced certain types of violence and bulling simply because they are women taking part in politics a space that is believed to be for men. In Kenya for example, women in politics have suffered financial and economic strains, sexual harassment both in parliament and in the public space, moral questioning, divorce as well as other social and family sanctions. They also face threats of rape as a way of intimidating them to quit or step down for male candidates during electoral campaigns. Despite these challenges, those that make it to parliament and other leadership positions make a difference through advocating for policies that favour gender equality, gender empowerment and women inclusion in decision making processes. However, it is not a surprise that some women shy away from politics due to faced threats and violence despite their potential and credentials.

In the case of Kenya, women’s status and role in politics is a field that should be looked into in a more diverse manner so as to show the various positive contributions that have been made as a result of women being in positions of political leadership. This will not only encourage women to participate fully in politics, but it will also change gender stereotypes that hinder women to participate in the public sphere, leading to the ultimate achievement of gender equity that is very much needed in political leadership.
CHAPTER IV: THE CHALLENGES WOMEN IN POLITICAL LEADERSHIP POSITIONS FACE

4.0 INTRODUCTION

Globally, Women’s involvement in politics is being acknowledged as an imperative measure. As a result, significant attention has been given to women in politics and decision making. Nonetheless, women still linger behind in politics and decision making positions all around the world particularly in Africa. The main objective of this chapter was to explore opportunities and challenges faced by women in political participation in Kenya. The findings of this study show that, the various challenges that women in politics face can be associated with social, cultural, economic and religious factors. The study further acknowledged that women who participate in politics are key in addressing basic issues in the community as well as ensure political leadership, responsiveness, and commitment takes place (Kivoi, 2014).

According to World Bank (2017), women make up more than fifty five percent of the population worldwide (World Bank, 2017). Despite this fact, women are still underrepresented when it comes to both politics as well as decision making that influence various policies even those that touch on issues that might solely concern them. It is therefore important for women to fight for democracy and justice in their quest for gender equality and gender mainstreaming (Kivoi, 2014).

In 1954, the United Nations Charter declared gender equality a global concern. In 1948, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) addressed gender equality as a development agenda for human rights and Millennium Development Goals (MDG’S) in 2000. In Article 2 and 21 of UDHR, one has the right to equal employment and political
participation regardless of their sex or any other ground. Kenya being a signatory to various international treaties for women empowerment and gender equality realized the need for gender mainstreaming in solving issues of gender marginalization and underrepresentation of women in key decision-making bodies. In Article 27(3) of the Kenyan constitution, a framework to tackle women marginalization is presented. However, Kenya has not achieved her constitutional goals due to poor mechanisms of identifying and implementing practical policies so as to accomplish gender equality (Wanjala and Odongo, 2012). This is a perfect example of the various challenges that women continue to face as far as their efforts towards gender equal gender representation is in political offices are concerned.

Like in many other countries, Kenyan women strain in achieving their social, economic and political rights without facing discrimination (Chowdhury, 2014). Politically speaking, women are still underrepresented in the Kenyan parliament due to various factors encroached in the Kenyan society. According to Chowdhury (2014), one such factor would be the ill-informed chauvinistic view by most Kenyans just like in most of the other African nations, especially those from the older rural generations, women cannot be able to hold positions of power as they are generally considered the weaker sex.
4.1 FACTORS THAT HINDERS WOMEN’S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION IN KENYA

There are many factors that hinder women from accessing political leadership positions. These challenges are almost similar globally. Some of these challenges are but are not limited to cultural, religious, economic, socio-cultural factors, violence against women among others. Women face harassment during campaigns and also in parliament where some are ladled as ‘parliament prostitutes’ in cases where a woman in politics is unmarried and has children (Bellamy, 2015). He also argues that women in Kenya continue to be marginalized especially in the field of politics and leadership. Despite global advocacy for gender equality in politics, social, economic and political equality has to be achieved first (Bellamy, 2015). The research affirms that more effort is needed to do away with cultural perspectives, gender stereotypes and male-dominated attitudes to encourage more women to participate in political leadership.

4.1.1 SOCIO-ECONOMIC FACTORS

Kenyan women actively participate in every aspect of their society but division of labor varies from different places and cultures. With Kenya being a highly patriarchal society like most African countries, men have more power over the women and especially in decision making and political fields. Patriarchy upholds men being superior to women and women submitting to their male counterparts bringing about disparities between the two genders. Over being expected to be subordinates to men, women are also less privileged in political development since they are made to believe right from very early ages that they do not belong to the public sphere but rather to the private sphere that entail producing and reproducing (Kassa, 2015).
Both the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the Kenyan Constitution calls for equal representation of both women and men in political, social, public sphere as measures that ensure equal participation for all (Kivoi, 2014). Likewise, the Kenyan government has been working towards reconstructing and implementing frameworks that eradicating all forms of discrimination and oppression of women creating radical changes that empower women in order to close gender gaps in the nation (Wanjala & Odongo, 2012).

In reference to Marx Weber, Vandhana (2014) connects exploiting of women for production gain in capitalist societies as well as class exploitation where the man was in a higher position than the woman. Such cases are evident in Kenya and most African states (Vandhana, 2014). Further analysis of the above data suggests that women live longer and represent a large proportion of the population. However, they are disadvantaged when it comes to education and career opportunities. The representation of women in formal employment and political leadership positions is as low as 30 percent (World Bank, 2017). Most women are concentrated in what is defined as ‘pink collar’ jobs. This is consistent with the literature that African women have less opportunities and access to education and career advancement which in turn contributes to their underrepresentation of women in political leadership positions due to lack of finances (Zuo, 2014).

Zuo (2014) further argues that women are disadvantaged right from birth as they, in most cases, lack the importance that is attached with being a male child; where efforts are made to ensure that they have been able to access education, hence achieve career advancement in a manner that definitely gives them a head start over women.
The fact that politics is a very gender oriented discipline a woman is automatically disadvantaged as far as her participation in political leadership is concerned (Byron, 2016). As seen above, the fact that many societies globally attribute certain roles and responsibilities to women and others to men is the main issue that ails the idea of women being political leaders. The reality that politics as a discipline has over time been a responsibility that has been associated with men means that there have been substantial communicative expectation for men and not women to be the ones that are strong enough to lead. According to Byron (2016), this is clearly a stereotypical symbol of power that is manifested in the manner women are treated as weak and are expected to occupy the lower positions within the social hierarchies and therefore, should not be actively involved in leading their societies. The only solution to this reality would be the willingness of the society as a whole to work together towards dispelling these stereotypes in a manner that creates gender parity.

4.1.2 SOCIO-CULTURAL FACTORS

According to Komath (2015), traditional roles still emphasize on primary gender roles of women being mothers and house wives and men being breadwinners. Patriarchal rule favor gender roles that sexually segregate women from participating in political processes with societies globally dominated by the ‘woman’s place’ ideology. This ideology dictates that women should play their domestic duties of mothers and wives; roles that are apolitical and majorly are supposed to concentrate on being the supporting shadow of the man.

Other cultures have men tell women how to vote and who to vote for, denying women their rights of freedom. It is in such men dominated environments that women
continue to take up traditional roles that are apolitical leaving the male to dominate the ‘world of politics’ in a manner that denies women chances to represent themselves in positions of leadership (Komath, 2015). Politics in most African societies is assumed to be a masculine arena, and most of the women who consistently fight to have their seat at the political table are labeled as rebels. Due to such ideas, women shy away from political process in fear of prejudice affecting the level of women’s representation in the Kenyan parliament (Kassa, 2015).

In some cases, traditional beliefs and cultures act as a great hindrance to women’s participation in politics. Some cultural beliefs dictate that women are to be led and not to lead. Societal perceptions exist that women are less aggressive, competitive and assertive and therefore lack the ability to be leaders. Such notions especially in egalitarian societies socialize people to believe that men are meant for the public arena due to its demanding nature whereas women are meant for the private arena. Efforts to empower the woman and the girl child are sometimes challenged by lack of education for the girl child in some communities due to cultural practices that do not favor having the girl child receive formal education. This in turn has unclear information being passed down generations and hence shaping women’s perceptions and beliefs about political leadership that result in a vicious circle of ignorance that leads to absolute female representation on political leadership levels (World Bank, 2013).

Therefore, women who emphasize on participating in the politics may not attract enough supporters as their male counterparts would be able to (Kimmel, 2014). Scholars like Reardon (2015) suggest that traditional gender roles are taught and acquired at an
early age with sex roles being taught at home, by family members and the local community. Oduor & Kuria (2001) add on to say that gender roles are also taught in schools and practiced in work places where school going children and workers are assigned duties based on their sex. Odour says:

“We are arguing here that fighting oppression does not begin with our generation. Let it be clear that this has been going on for a long time and we are following on our mother's footsteps. We are standing on their shoulders so we can articulate issues a little better” (p.14).

When such perspectives are left unchanged, children, particularly girls grow up believing that their ability is confined within the gender roles that were assigned to them, and therefore, venturing in roles that are considered to be more masculine would be wrong (Kabira, 2016). As a result, most women chose to confine themselves in roles that are feminine, and politics is not an occupation that is considered as such, hence the mere representation of women in political spaces over the years.

The anthology of African feminists like Professor Busia (2016) argues that women are considered to be subordinates especially in the rural area where education of women and girls is limited. The lack of exposure that comes with being uneducated is the major contributing factor that leaves rural woman literally at the mercy of their educated male counterparts as they lack the knowhow as far as improving their own lives is concerned. Therefore, a mechanisms put in place ensuring that all women are able to receive a substantial levels of education would not only make them informed about political leadership decisions, but make them aspire to want to hold these leading positions themselves.
4.1.3 RELIGIOUS FACTORS

Similarly, it is with the same consideration that we should understand religion as a source of cultural values and beliefs. Most dominating religions argue that men are superior to women, excluding the latter from political, social, and religious aspects of life. Most conservative religions globally are patriarchal in that, the woman belongs in the second position whether in the church hierarchy or even in the society. For example, the Roman Catholic Church, Orthodox Church and Islamic law constrain women from being religious leaders compared to protestant churches which promote non-hierarchical religious practices (Negash, 2012). In agreement with Negash exclusion of women from religious leadership position creates a negative attitude on women’s status in the society which in turn limits their participation in politics and other public spheres of life. This clearly is an example of how power and authority are believed to be reserved for men, while women are left to feel subjugated. Women are also to be blamed for holding on to anachronistic assumptions that politics are dirty games meant for their male counterparts (Endale, 2012).

Additionally, as much as religion plays a vital role within society in maintaining belief orders, certain ascriptions such as the one that women are supposed to sit back and always let men take on all the leadership roles are outdated notions that should be done away with as it is clear fact being male does not automatically make a person a good leader. The same should also apply to the fact that, being a woman does not automatically mean that one cannot hold a political leadership position.
4.1.4 ECONOMIC FACTORS

Historically, the woman’s domestic role was not considered as work that deserves pay. This meant that when their men worked for money, they worked for no pay. This kind of discrimination put women at a disadvantage since they were financially unstable. Therefore, it can be argued that lack of economic resources directly affects women’s participation in politics since they lack funds to enlarge their participation and representation in politics directly affecting them. A study done by Kunovich, Paxton, Hughes (2013) reveals that most women depend on their husbands or relatives for financial support. Therefore, it becomes a challenge for them to campaign for political seats. Additionally, According to Muiruri (2013), the fact that men are empowered right from the beginning by not only being taken to school consistently unlike women who is not a must that they go to school means that they are exposed to more opportunities.

According to Naomi Shaban, a member of Parliament in Kenya, the lack of economic resources to support oneself financially is a great obstacle to women’s participation in politics. She argues that women move from their parents house to their husband’s and lack an opportunity to interact with people or gain experience in issues around them. To top it all off, material and financial independence through employment is not common for women therefore participation in politics is largely inaccessible for them. Shaban alludes that one tends to be selfconfident when he or she is socially and economically stable and can support him/herself (Muiruri, 2017).

The government of Kenya has created awareness about the impact of economic reforms that favour women. Women are now allowed to own and inherit property which
has greatly improved the status of women in Kenya. Kenyan women are encouraged to depend less on men economically and get better strategies to participate in political leadership positions (Muiruri, 2017). It is important to note that accessing a means of production and finances is directly linked to participation of women in politics. Economic development and stability improves one’s living standards especially the women who are part of the vulnerable people in society (Chowdhury, 2014).

4.1.5 PATRIARCHY RULE AND GENDER ROLES

Globally, the man has been seen to dominate over the woman. According to Walby (1990, 20) the concept of Patriarchy is defined as a “A system of social structures and practices in which the male dominate, oppress and exploit Woman making the woman subordinate to the man”

In most African countries, patriarchy rule begins in the home/family setting and is an important concept in explaining gender disparities. The manner through which this takes place is dictated by the fact that, boys in a family are considered to be the ones that stands the best chance to make in the world and therefore, there is a significant concentration in their well being especially in education in comparison to the girl child. In the attempt to understand Patriarchy, there are six structures in place. The six structures of patriarchy include: patriarchy in relation to paid work, patriarchal mode of production, male violence, patriarchal relations in sexuality, patriarchal relations in the state as well as patriarchal relations in cultural institutions. To further understand the six levels of patriarchy, Walby (1990) explains that these forms of patriarchy in the following manner:
4.1.5.1 PATRIARCHY IN RELATION TO PAID WORK

This form of patriarchy refers to the fact that women have been granted worse jobs than men in the past, their qualification not withstanding (Walby 1990). The sole reason that an individual is a female makes them not to be considered for an opportunity for promotion or even not be offered an opportunity to work. Additionally, the fact that women within many industries and sectors continue to earn only a fraction of what their male colleagues earn is another aspect through which patriarchy in relation to paid work is seen at play (Walby 1990).

4.1.5.2 PATRIARCHY AS A MODE OF PRODUCTION

Patriarchy as a mode of production refers to the undervalued work that is performed by woman. A perfect example would be the fact that women, particularly housewives work the entire day and night in the house taking care of their families but unfortunately, household work is not regarded as work (Kabira, 2016). Based on this misinformed ideology, these women are not able to access any form of compensation for their esteemed services despite the high level of productivity that is clearly required to be able to run a homestead in a successful manner.

4.1.5.3 MALE VIOLENCE AS A FORM OF PATRIARCHY

Male violence as a form of patriarchy is explained through the observation of the fact that men’s violence against women especially in a marriage in most African societies is tolerated and endured over time with the state refusing to intervene against it (Chege & Namusonge, 2015). The fact that the society seemed to be okay with the fact that a woman can be constantly abused in a marriage clearly shows how the society continues to veer off further away from issues that should promote women interests.
4.1.5.4 PATRIARCHY IN RELATION TO SEXUALITY

Patriarchy in relation to sexuality is where heterosexuality is decided as the norm in the society where as patriarchy in relations to culture explain the importance of a male in the cultural institution with the females being exhibited as the mass (Chege & Namusonge, 2015). The fact that women who are single, either by choice or through circumstances are looked down upon by society as lesser beings is a clear indication of patriarchy at play. According to Kabira (2016), there are in fact cultures within African societies whereby being a woman of a certain age without being marriage leads to excommunication.

4.1.5.4 PATRIARCHY AS DRIVER TO POLITICS

Pateman (2015) states that, when it comes to politics, political theorists have failed to see that modern patriarchal governments are not necessarily paternal, but rather the traditional rule has always been fraternal whereby, it is characterized by men being preferred over women. She further states that political theorists failed to pursue the various implications that claim that women by nature do not have the characteristics as well as the various capacities that are attached to free equal individuality and therefore, would never make good political leaders (Pateman, 2015).

4.1.5.6 PATRIARCHY IN THE FAMILY STRUCTURE

Additionally, according to Cuadrado and Molero (2015), some cultures dictate that, a woman should be subjective to the man at all times. Therefore, since birth, a girl is socialized to be inferior to the man, and it is taken as a norm within the social structure she grows up in. This means that a woman cannot challenge what a man does or say and in this case, she cannot question what culture dictates. In most cases, it is believed that
the woman’s place is the home. Therefore, she cannot take up other positions beyond the home setting. Hence, the work of the woman is to take care of children at home, cook, clean and take care of her husband. The man, on the other hand, is supposed to take care of his family by being the provider. He is allowed to participate in the both the public sphere unlike the woman who is limited to the private sphere. This is argued that women therefore have less power even in representing themselves (Cuadrado and Molero, 2015).

On a larger scale, it is these sort of socialization that has led to women being in most African societies not be willing to rise up to the occasion and actively participate in various political engagements.

A report done by World Bank (2012) suggests that gender equality is a great hindrance to development, due to the socially constructed gender roles that depict women as incapable. Behaviors as well as the expectations that are associated with being female make it hard to have women become willing participants in various development agendas. The report further indicates that policy dialogue and decision makers have failed to address the issues regarding gender equality hence affecting national and international arenas. The report further shows that gender disparities are mainly in resource and economic opportunities, human rights advocacy and in the political arenas and not just in the developing countries but also in the developed countries that are said to be more democratic (World Bank, 2012). For example, society is shaped in such a way that women’s duties are primarily to do with domestic work like taking care of children whereas the male participate in military services and nation building. These expectations cut across all societies with the argument that women and men are biologically different hence the gender asymmetries (World Bank, 2012). Furthermore, the report however
asserts that it should be understood that these are views and perspectives that have over time been debunked through real life experiences where women who have been able to fight their way into these “male” defined roles have gone on to perform at times even way better than their male counterparts.

Therefore, women and girls are essentially disadvantaged since their participation in various arenas is limited and controlled. On other grounds, the report suggest that gender inequalities have taken a toll on girls and women’s participation in promoting policy reforms since they are overpowered by the large numbers of male policy makers in the public arena. Hence, there is need to promote gender equality since development can only be enhanced by both women and men with gender issues being an integral part of any policy analysis and implementation (World Bank, 2012). Ensuring that both men and women are accorded equal opportunities when it comes to laying policy that affects each gender means that the kind of policies that would be laid where there is equal representation entails having the development interests of both men and women been catered for equally.

4.1.6 FAMILY DUTIES

Since most women’s activities are confined to the informal sector like the homes, most of their time is spent doing domestic chores and taking care of their families and children. Family duties are not evenly distributed; women are not invited to take part in public forums unlike the men. Women are deeply involved with child care and upbringing, maternal responsibilities like pregnancies, child birth and breastfeeding that they are unable to navigate between domestic responsibilities and political leadership positions that are a constrain to them (Endale, 2012). Chege & Namusonge,(2013)
elaborate further and say that, like it is the case with most cultures in Kenya, women are traditionally in charge of domestic work whereas the men take care of public businesses like politics with most of their time being used on social activities outside the homes. Gino & Brooks, (2015) research indicates that gender gaps are a contribution to men holding higher leadership and political positions than the women. They found out that men were driven by power whereas women were driven by affiliation meaning they preferred having warm relationships with each other.

Negative attitudes embedded in society towards aggressive women who take up political positions act as a great hindrance to the women who have the potential to be political leaders. As much as women’s participation in Kenya has increased over the years, women still rely on men especially their husbands and community elders for endorsement otherwise they will lack support from both the men and fellow women (Busia, 2016). The burden of taking care of the family has also seen women lack opportunities to go to school and get education or even enjoy equal work opportunities like men have been able to. This is clearly an aspect that leads to a negative attribute when it comes to equal footing in politics (Busia, 2016). Hanninen & Valkonen (2012) argue that men are responsible for setting political rules and hence they evaluate and define the standard of political games which women find dirty and would cause negative reputations. Therefore, women will either reject politics or reject the ‘male-style’ kind of politics since they fear to be discriminated as people with no character or morals. Such occurrences mean that women are disadvantaged as far as being able to compete in a manner that is fair in politics.
Murunga (2012) argues that in Africa, women are placed outside the political realm and are perceived to be unable to make good leaders. This therefore brings about the debate of whether leaders are born or made. Researchers over the years have therefore debated over these sentiments with some claiming that one can be born a leader while others claim that a leader can be nurtured (Kaka & Abidin, 2013). With such arguments especially mostly within African societies that are yet to fully grasp the essence of inclusivity, women are unable to withstand the immense pressure that comes with seeking political leadership positions. The lack of solidarity that is experienced with female political candidates in such patriarchal societies leads to women’s lack of inspiration to want to participate in political contests, but it as well instill fears in them as they are well aware of the potential victimization that entails being a female candidate in a political race that is mainly dominated by male chauvinism.

4.1.7 LEGAL STRUCTURE

Locally and globally, women have been restricted in political and leadership participation (Kibet, 2017). Discriminatory laws limit women to take part in both the public and private sector; obstacles that create gaps in representation of women in politics. According to a report done by the UN Women at the 2016 General Assembly, Zebib Kavuma, the UN Women Country Director notes that women globally are discriminated by law, gender stereotypes, lack of education, finances and cultural believes (Kavuma, 2016). She advocated for constitutional and Legislative reforms that ensure women are able to access political seats with ease just like their male counterparts (Kavuma, 2016). In Kenya, women’s participation in politics remains low due to the Gender-Based violence witnessed by female candidates, legislate affirmative action and
policies as well as patriarchal cultures that are deep rooted and intimidate women from participating in politics and public affairs (Kariuki, 2017).

During the political part nominations held in May 2017, it was noted that few women sought to run for gubernatorial positions. Dr. Joyce Laboso attributes this to male chauvinism and the various barriers that women face especially violence and lack of support by men. Laboso also challenges women to rise above these fears and support each other as a path to national development (Laboso, Women and Leadership, 2017). When women are subjected to these sort of social vices, they resolve to veer off running for public office as it might at times be the easier thing to do. However, Laboso asserts that it should therefore befall those that are tasked with policy registration to come up with laws that are specifically aimed at ensuring that women vying for political offices are well protected, by ensuring that those that are found victimizing them are prosecuted in accordance to the law.

4.2 CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings, it can be concluded that women’s participation in politics is influenced by women’s personal issues or the various barriers that have been created by society. However, it can be said that many of them are traditional stereotypes that act as barriers for women to get through the glass ceiling that holds them back and access public positions. Women have to deal with these challenges and support each other as tactics to overcome gender stereotypes and discrimination. He also states that women need to feel secure in fighting for equality as well as opportunities presented to them through women empowerment programs.
In addition, women should resist creating their own barrier where they build personal walls and eliminate chances of gender equality. Amina Abdallah a nominated Member of Parliament in the Jubilee coalition and a founder of Mzalendo Kenya an organization that constantly offers support and training for women to become great politicians has helped in increasing the number of Kenyan women participation in politics. She explains that Kenya is headed towards the right direction in ensuring that women are fully represented in parliament through constitutional requirements. Kenya still has a long way to go in terms of women participation in politics. However, as long as the constitutional promises are conducted swiftly and fairly, then Kenya will meet its development goals of Equality and Empowerment of women.
CHAPTER V: GENERAL CONCLUSION

5.0 CONCLUSION

The trends of Global politics in the contemporary world are quite similar in the sense that, politics are same everywhere. However, women’s issues especially in accessing political leadership positions tend to be complex. Globally, legitimacy and democracy will always be questioned if women are still marginalized and segregated in participating in politics whereas they make over 55% of the entire global population. The importance of women’s participation in the government, public arena and decision making positions should be highly encouraged as a clear way through which both democracy and equity are achieved. As a result, women focus on addressing basic issues and needs in the society ensuring that accountability, transparency, Integrity and political commitment is observed in the government. Occupation of various political spaces of leadership should be based entirely on the meritocracy of the potential candidates as opposed to whether they are male or female.

In the search for new methods of promoting gender equality in Kenya, the government and political institutions must promote democratic development by observing the constitutional two thirds gender rule. Such measures not only ensure transparency and accountability in the government but also ensure that economic, cultural, social and political goals are met. Since women are the majority, it is equally important to ensure that their needs have been met through equal political representation. As a result, it could be argued that equal representation of women in the wider society is an ideal platform for gender equality. Additionally, it can be said that since women are more familiar with
agendas and challenges that they face, it is then best that they are actively engaged in
decision making processes especially when it comes to dealing with these kind of
problems, all that is required is ensuring that they have been accorded the opportunities
that they need. Globally, women should show more interest in supporting fellow women
in order to achieve goals of equality, social, political and economic development as well
as peace. The reason why this should be the case is based on the argument that, if indeed
women make up the bigger part of the population, then why should it be that getting
women in power has been such a huge challenge. What this simply means is that women
have not been actively working towards meeting gender equity in political representation
as they should be.

The creation of the Kenyan National Action Plan (NAP) in the 2015
United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) created opportunities for women
to engage in sustainable peace, security issues and effective measures of security and
development. However, women still feel that they continue to occupy subordinate
positions which are ultimately associated with lower status in the society despite the
implementation of the National Action Plan that should ensure gender equality in
political participation. This has also been characterized by less involvement and
participation in policy formulating processes and decision making processes.
Additionally, it challenges the elusiveness of democracy worldwide since social, political
and economic marginalization of women remains an issue that puts democracy into
jeopardy in achieving sustainable development.
Democracy is manifested when equal participation of both men and women in politics is achieved. Therefore, without equal participation of both genders in politics, democracy remains elusive. Having one particular gender legislature issues that are supposed to cater for the other gender would particularly not lead to real reforms as this will definitely not be a real representation of what the unrepresented gender would be able. Therefore, women should be the ones at the forefront when it comes to legislating issues that directly affect women. Additionally, when both women and men are given equal democratic rights and encouraged to exercise their rights, equality, development, peace and democracy is well achieved.

On a global scale, women should be empowered in a manner that makes them certain of their potential in the society. Gender stereotypes like women are weaker than men and hence are not fit to vie for political seats should not only be ignored, but should be done away with completely by ensuring that people have been sensitized right from the grassroots. Most importantly, when women are familiar with their constitutional rights just as well as the men are, they will be at the fore-front to promoting gender equality as well as eliminating discrimination. While conducting the study, I was struck by the harsh conditions and situations women in politics have to face. In particular, the Kenyan media is quite harsh on women parliamentarians where they are often accused of promiscuity and incompetent work. Negative traditions and cultural beliefs have to an extent affected even their most open-minded peers in believing that women have the potential of being great political leaders. The credibility of good female leaders is questioned by sensational journalism leading to the electorate questioning the morality of
the said leader. As a result, most women do not vote or support their fellow women leaving them to hold nomination seats rather than elected seats.

However, despite all the hurdles women who aspire to be political leaders go through, there is hope that, those women who have already been able to clinch political leadership act as a great encouragement. They work toward being of influence to the society and achieving effective goals that ensure development. This can be attributed to women being less corrupt, as well as the fact they women are not afraid to apply creative mechanisms when it comes to empower their electorate. Despite the obstacles faced by women in political leadership positions in Kenya, there are tangible results in terms of development that have been achieved by these women.

Finally, it becomes clear based on the entire research that, when it comes to women being able to access political power, this is not an issue that should be taken up and followed though by women alone. In any given society, whether local or on an international scale, both male and female must work consciously together with the aim of ensuring that women are accorded both the opportunities as well as the empowerment that they require in order to see to it that they have able to match the male gender when it comes to political representation as well as leadership ensuring that the doctrine that perceives women as incapable should be done away with.

As observed throughout this study, there have been various female political leaders around the world who have done impeccable jobs when it comes to taking on various political offices and leading them to success. Additionally, ensuring that the girl child has been socialized from birth in a manner that makes her understand that she can
indeed be able to compete with her male counterpart when it comes to politics is another way through which women leadership particularly in politics could be made a reality across the board.

### 5.1 RECOMMENDATIONS

Women’s participation in politics and decision making processes is a gap that needs to be addressed. To promote sustainable development, gender equality has to be achieved. Policies and guidelines should be implemented bringing to attention the following recommendations:

1. Kenya should learn from its neighbors such as Rwanda by giving priority to gender equality. As indicated in this study, democracy fails to be democracy if gender equality especially in political participation is not emphasized. Therefore, it is upon the government and those that have been tasked with policy making to ensure that gender responsive measures are a priority in encouraging women’s participation in politics. Ensuring that the few women who are willing to vie for various political offices are well protected especially when it comes to their campaign efforts is one way through which this could be achieved.

2. There is a need to push for the economic empowerment of women. This is because when politics is dominated by those with the money, women tend to be the ones on the losing end since they have persistently had lower income than their male counterparts. The government should also advocate for better working conditions for women or even be able to fund women’s campaigns. Consistently ensuring that women are given opportunities that level the playing field is one
way through which female economic empowerment could be achieved. For example a follow through to the constitutional demands for the various women funds to be distributed to the women in need of financial support.

3. Family work and responsibilities should be shared equally. Childcare should not be entirely a responsibility that must be carried out by women. Women face tough constrains especially when it comes to child bearing and maternal care. As a result, their time is mostly limited to domestic duties whereas the men take time to participate in public duties like political campaigns. The local and international community should facilitate the involvement of women in more public duties emphasizing gender equality mechanisms and equal distribution of work between family responsibilities and political participation (Shirin, 2015). Child rearing should be a duty that befalls both the man as well as the woman ensuring that women are able to spare some time to participate actively in political leadership. This is a mindset that should be instilled in both boys and girls as they grow up so as to understand that a woman’s place in the society is not limited to housekeeping.

4. The government and policy makers in Kenya need to ensure that there are strict laws that have been put in place to promote gender equality. For instance, some cultures in Africa do not believe in educating the girl child. Many girls in Kenya go through difficult cultural practices such as Female Genital Mutilation as well as mistreatments and are silenced to believe that they are not to be heard but seen. When such social ills are made the obvious way of life for such girls, there is no way they could be able to see their potential and therefore, they are forever
condemned to being second fiddle. Similarly, the government and policy makers should work towards empowering women as well as educating them of their rights as well as finding alternatives to some of the destructive cultural beliefs and practices that are clearly a real problem to gender equality.

5. Political parties should be held accountable for enforcing women’s participation in politics. Respective parties should be structured in a way that they meet up a targeted number of women politicians. Both the women and party leaders should take initiative to make gender equality a priority. Ensuring that all the available posts have a specific number that have been reserved to be taken up by female candidates will work perfectly as a means through which these parties are able to take part in the affirmative action that is aimed at ensuring that women are able to achieve equal gender representation in political offices.

6. Women in politics should create time to mentor fellow women. They should be able to facilitate collaboration between them and those aspiring to become politicians. Ensuring that they have combined their efforts towards a common purpose, which is making sure that they have increased the number of female political leaders to match the number of men, will go a long way in increasing the rate at which this happens. The government on the other hand should promote such initiatives by allocating funding to gender sensitive programs as well as ensuring that there are mechanisms that ensure that this funding has indeed gone to these efforts and not to corrupt leaders.

7. Educational institutions promote gender equality by emphasizing on women’s education. Positive attitudes and cultures should be discussed in schools and
reinforced in society so as to challenge the notion that gender roles are natural. The young generation should be at the fore front in advocating for gender reforms and creating awareness about gender inequality. The reason why this should be the case is based on the observation that, most people have grown up knowing that some roles like home duties are women’s duties and certain roles like family support are men’s roles. Education is the only way through which these preconceived notions that are as a result of socialization could be deconstructed.

8. Coherence of the UN action and National Action on gender equality and democracy should be strengthened by ensuring that best practices and processes for gender equality and democracy are taking place globally. Having a precedence set up in a manner that focuses on ensuring that all the participating nations are compliant with the demands for them to promote gender equity as well as encourage female political leadership participation in their countries will go a long way in seeing to it that the female political leadership has indeed been achieved.

9. The other way through which the position of women in political leadership both locally and on and an international level could be improved is by ensuring that, women particularly those in the grassroots are well aware of the power that they possess when it comes to the establishment as well as the realization of the needed change. The fact that the population of women all over is larger than that of men means that they do indeed possess the ability to get the political leaders of their choice to power. The only thing that hinders this from happening is their lack of enlightenment as far as this fact is concerned. Therefore, if they are offered the
means in terms of acquisition of knowledge on how their collective efforts would lead them to having better political representation, they most definitely would be able to effect the very much needed political change.

10. Voters should be educated through civic education programs around the issue of according women equal opportunities as those that have over time been accorded to men. The electorate should also understand the various disadvantages that women vying for political leadership positions have to contend.

11. The other recommendation when it comes to getting more women in political leadership would be through partnership with global entities that are interested in ensuring that women are well represented across the board. An example of this sort of organization would be the (USAID, 2016). This program focuses not only in seeing to it that women are represented in the political arena, but they are also well represented in other areas as well. They also empower women to seek executive cabinet positions, high judicial positions such as judicial judges, high security commanders, and most importantly legislative political position.

5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH.

For further research, I would like to research on why Rwanda has more women than men in parliament. I will look at the impact of the affirmative action, structural adjustments and policies that have deliberately supported the inclusion of Rwandan women into parliament after the 1994 genocide in Rwanda.
REFERENCES


