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The socio-political implication of participation and representation of Aembu women in political leadership in Embu County, Kenya, between 1952 and 2017

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Abstract

This study examined the sociopolitical ramifications of Aembu women's participation and representation in Kenya's political leadership up to 2017. Written history has documented male dominance in politics but not the involvement of women. The underrepresentation of women in political institutions, particularly among the Aembu of Kenya, has also received little from academics. The study was based on the assumption that Embu women participated in political leadership representation up until 1963, were represented in political leadership up until 1991, and were still represented in political leadership after Section 2A of the Kenyan Constitution was repealed. The technique for the study was a descriptive research design. The study was conducted at Mbeere in Embu. The snowballing technique was used to choose a deliberate sample of the respondents. A random sample of 50 Mbeere residents were interviewed. To guarantee the neutrality and trustworthiness of the study, oral sources, archival sources, and secondary sources were all utilised as data sources. Primary data was gathered utilising an interview schedule and from the national archives, whilst secondary data was acquired through thorough literature searches for trustworthy papers. According to the study's findings, increasing the presence of women among the Aembu calls for both regulatory changes and making sure the two-thirds gender rule is adhered to. The study concluded that the participation and representation of women in political leadership have had significant social and political implications in Embu County. This study has helped the political historiography of the area.

Key words: Aembu, participation, political representation, socio-political implication, women.



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INTRODUCTION

Globally, women have faced historical discrimination and marginalisation from political activities, limiting their representation in government and elective political positions. The political marginalisation of women can be traced from the colonial and post-colonial times when political systems mainly favoured men. With an increasingly patriarchal society, women's political representation has come under sharp scrutiny, especially following stellar performances of female leaders in the recent past. It is significant to highlight that the exclusion of women from political leadership was among the topics addressed and echoed during the 1975 first conference on women in the United States of America. According to Kasomo (2012), the conference acknowledged that women's underrepresentation in politics was a glaring and persistent global challenge. In the periods, including pre-and post-colonial times, women were largely excluded from leadership in many nations worldwide. The increased exclusion ensured that women's voices remained unheard since they were never involved in policy and decision-making processes on significant economic and social issues. Women's underrepresentation in politics, according to Wanjiru (2018), is a growing problem for achieving gender parity in political representation and decision-making. However, there has been a recent trend of more African women entering politics, with several African countries having more than 33 per cent female leaders (Wanjiru, 2018).

In Kenya, fewer women have been involved in political leadership since pre-colonial times. While Kenya's current representation of women has improved, the country is still a long way from achieving the two-thirds threshold provided by the constitution. In recent times, Tundi (2014) reported that the rise in the attention to integrating women into political leadership, policymaking, decision-making, and consideration of their influence on government structures have not yielded much fruit. A decade after independence, women's representation increased by 11.9 per cent (Jalalzai & Krook, 2010). Besides, the trend in leadership progressed but at a much slower rate than expected. While the focus on women's representation in political leadership has continued to increase in Kenya, female representation is still low. This is

reflected by the global figures, where only 23.3 per cent of women occupy parliamentary seats (Kumar, 2018). It shows a worrying trend that illustrates the strides Kenya has to take to ensure gender equality.

On a global scale, women are still underrepresented in positions of high leadership. According to Tundi (2014), experts and campaigners for gender equality are still concerned about the lack of women in decision-making and policymaking processes inside governments. Khan and Ara (2006) reported that the Victorian woman concept best replicates the situation, as women lacked voting rights and the rights to sue and own property if they were married. Khan and Ara (2006) also noted that the general growth and development of a nation relies on the maximum exploitation and use of the people, men and women. For instance, women make up about half or more of the population in both Bangladesh and Kenya, indicating that they should have a voice in how the nation is run and that their opinions matter in the formulation of decisions and policies. But in every aspect of life, women's status in society is declining relative to men's. The patriarchal society, much like the pre-colonial past, associates women largely with domestic life and perceives politics as a male-dominated public activity. Additionally, post-colonial scholars have concentrated on the absence of women from important government roles (Oyewumi, 2000; Steady, 2007). During the British colonisation of African countries, including Kenya, female leaders were increasingly ignored as colonialists preferred native men to hold political power and provide labour (Pilema et al., 2014). Women's discrimination also spread to their inferior pay in contrast to their male colleagues, especially in the employment environment.

It is fundamental to note that women's intentions to seek political leadership positions are based on the need to acquire the power to use the position to advance and provide desired goods and services to disadvantaged groups in society. Nzomo (2014) noted that women's leadership encompasses the tenets of accountability, easy access, goal-setting, presence, and influence, making it enormously significant to consider improving and increasing the population of women leaders. For instance, in Embu County, the current governor is a woman. This has illustrated the fundamental change in women's

representation in political leadership in this community. Women's political inclusion and exclusion debate has raged on since the pre- and post-colonisation times. It is viewed through the lens of gender and based on its exercise within the country's constitution. Many African states have developed a tendency to exclude women from leadership, often viewing them as less energetic and capable of excelling in the male-dominated field (Schwartzberg, 2003). Their exclusion from the mainstream political arena has continuously rendered women's public opinions given limited preference and sometimes disregarded. With the gender dynamics in politics and underlying transformations, women's leadership in political leadership portrays a unique perspective, especially in a patriarchal society.

Fundamentally, the place of women in political leadership is increasingly changing dynamically. Bouka et al. (2019) contend that in Sub-Saharan Africa, more than half of the nations have implemented significant steps towards incorporating women in political leadership. Altius and Raveloharimisy (2016) agreed with the position, positing that the region has taken centre stage, emerging at the top in encouraging and improving the participation of women in politics, lawmaking, and executive government positions. For instance, for the first time in history, Kenya has a female Chief Justice from the Meru community. At the same time, the country also produced a female presidential running mate in the 2017 general elections, further cementing its place in fostering women's leadership. While the study indicates that women in the Sub-Saharan African region confront substantial barriers in their quest for political office, the region also offers significant prospects for the advancement of women in political leadership. Furthermore, the East African countries have the highest performance when it comes to women's inclusion in political leadership. Bouka et al. (2019) reported that Burundi, Tanzania, and Uganda have 36 per cent, 34 per cent, and 37 per cent of women lawmakers, respectively. Similarly, Rwanda leads the East African nations with 61 per cent of women members of parliament (Bouka et al., 2019). Rwanda's figure is the second highest behind Ethiopia globally, with Ethiopian women accounting for 39 per cent of the nation's national assembly, while the country also

had its first female president in 2018 (Bouka et al., 2019). Various historical programs have been implemented to empower women and improve their involvement in political leadership. This is primarily seen in the global conferences and symposia aimed at empowering women and encouraging them to join leadership (Anyango et al., 2018). The inability of Kenya to follow the two-thirds gender norm set forth in the 2010 constitution is, therefore, the nation's worst misdeed and atrocity against women, and it calls for an investigation into the political structure surrounding the law's implementation. At one point, former Chief Justice David Maraga lamented the lack of implementation of the rule, going ahead to advise President Uhuru Kenyatta to dissolve the 12th parliament. Similar remarks have been made by the current Chief Justice, which points to the country's biggest constitutional failure.

Since independence, Kenyan politics have been male-dominated, with men winning most political seats during elections. This has bred more men within the political space than their female counterparts. For instance, Mortensen et al. (2022) reported that 5 per cent of the nominated members of parliament were women, with 8 per cent assuming elective parliamentary seats. For instance, the Kenyan National Assembly only had 2 women in 1991. Nevertheless, the reintroduction of multi-party politics, through the real of Section 2A of the Kenyan constitution in 1991, saw many women join politics. Even with multi-party politics, Mitullah (1995) contend that the public was still disinterested in electing women leaders, while many women feared entering the murky waters of politics to allow them to participate in fundamental decisions due to apathy. It is essential to note that the return of multi-partysm provided women with more opportunities to seek elective positions since there were many vehicles to steer their dreams. The improvement of the political terrain allowed women to form women groups that saw increased participation among women in political and leadership matters of the country. At last, women found a channel through which to contribute toward nation-building.

Anyango et al. (2018) report that women's representation and participation in politics remain low despite the country's commitment to women empowerment programs and increased efforts

towards inclusion. It is fair to note that the 2010 constitution remains a significant breakthrough in women's leadership, especially with its requirement of the two-thirds gender rule. By advocating for equality and gender inclusion, the constitution marked a substantial break from the past. Despite its passage, women still face significant barriers in their pursuit of power and are a long way from being in positions of national leadership. However, the constitution has resulted in more women participating in decision-making. Only 22 per cent of women were elected to the National Assembly and 31 per cent to the Senate in the 2017 election, highlighting the difficulty women have in winning office (Bouka et al., 2019). The governor of Embu County, Cecily Mbarire, is one of just three female governors out of a potential 47, according to Bouka et al. (2019). Inclusion and exclusion issues can be found within the Kenyan devolved governments, where the issue of women's representation remains an existing problem. Like the national stage, the problem with gender representation in county leadership can be traced to the formation of political leadership and division of mandates, with society favouring men to lead. One of the counties that has drawn enormous attention is Embu County. Women have faced enormous male threats in political leadership. For instance, Beatrice Kanini Nyaga emerged second in a male-dominated parliamentary contest in 1992 (Nzomo, 2003). Nyaga played a prominent role in the community's leadership. Even though the political landscape had altered and more women were running for electoral office, Embu women continued to experience severe political exclusion that prevented them from taking part in the growth and decision-making of their community.

During the Aembu Mau Mau resurgent against British rule, women had an active role. For instance, women took on an advisory role, a mandate they played away from the public domain. Their opinion could be accepted or rejected. Again, women provided soldiers with food and shelter while also taking care of the injured troops. These occupations complemented women's traditional tasks in patriarchal societies, which included taking care of the home. It should also be mentioned that some women battled alongside men and gave them weapons. Women proved to be astute decision-makers during the war, and their efforts can be

attributed to the success of the group. The scenario makes it necessary to examine the historical trend in women's representation within the political leadership. Therefore, this study examines the trend in women's representation within the political leadership among the Aembu between 1952 and 2017. The study also seeks to predict the future political representation of Aembu women in Kenya's political space.

While women constitute around half of the world's population, they are still drastically underrepresented within the political leadership realm globally. There has been significant progress in the last 20 years, with women's representation almost doubling to 21.8 per cent in 2016. This trajectory is the same for women's representation in cabinets globally. Women held less than 9 per cent of cabinet positions in 1999 but occupy 17.2 per cent today. The above statistics indicate that women's leadership is among the most serious issues in human development and democracy. Women's participation in state structures, such as those that make laws, run the government, and make decisions in the courts, has been severely limited. In addition, there is little information on the contributions that women made to the pre-and post-colonial systems and the difficulties that they overcame in the region's political development. Historically, there have been limited attempts to examine this trend among the Aembu community of Kenya. This means that scholars have historically overlooked women's leadership among the Aembu. Thus, this study investigated the historical trends of women's political leadership and its impacts on the socio-political development of the Aembu of Kenya from 1952 to 2017.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Nordic countries stand out as a remarkable exception, as 42 per cent of parliamentary positions are held by women (Anyango et al., 2018). A legislative representation of 56.3 per cent in Rwanda and 50 per cent in Andorra has been achieved. In terms of gender equality and the presence of women in political leadership at the parliament, the two nations are among the best in the world. On the other hand, seven other nations in the globe, including Saudi Arabia, Micronesia, Nauru, Qatar, Belize, Palau, the Solomon Islands, and Belize, do not have any women in their parliaments (Peace Women,

2012). Kivoi (2014) conducted a study to determine women's representation during the multi-party politics. The article reports that male and female politicians began strong partnerships during the late 1990s, which increased focus on gender-based issues. In 1997, Phoebe Asiyo, the then Karachuonyo MP, introduced the Affirmative Action Motion. In this legislation, Asiyo targeted that women should hold 30 per cent of the local and national elective seats. The motion also contained an amendment that would see two female legislators from each province and give the government the power to consider the population of applicants that political parties fronted while funding these political outfits (Tundi, 2014). At the same time, then South Imenti legislator Kiraitu Murungi was the first male to speak out in favour of the affirmative action legislation, arguing that it was necessary to address the inequality and imbalance that existed between men and women in high-level political posts in order to close the significant gender gap in political leadership. Mr Murungi supported the bill as part of the extended strategy for administrative and legislative reforms to strengthen the country's male dominance. Despite spirited efforts in parliament, the proposal failed as most MPs believed that male politicians represented women sufficiently in the country's leadership landscape. As Donno and Kreft (2018) report, only four women were nominated to the national assembly in the 1997 general election.

Additionally, the 1998 Constitution Review of Kenya appreciated the significance of women's representation in political leadership. However, the executive, led by President Daniel Moi, sabotaged the process by preventing Kenyans from participating in the review. According to the President, *Wanjiku* could not take part in the appraisal process. However, the women's movement in the country embraced the idea of the participation of the common citizens, which resulted in the "Wanjiku Constitution." It is fundamental to note that this document sought to address various issues, including poverty, unemployment, landlessness, and illiteracy. Following Moi's departure, the country elected the first opposition candidate in a general election, Mwai Kibaki, who became president in 2002 through the National Rainbow Coalition (NARC). The political outfit had enormous room for women's leadership, with the country electing more

female legislators than in the previous elections. In his first attempt to give Kenyans a new constitution, Kibaki did not succeed as the proposals faced stiff resistance from the opposition that proceeded to win the referendum. Following the loss at the referendum, the President appointed a new cabinet, dropping the number of women from three to two ministers. This was a shocking development, owing to the fact that Kibaki had initially set a positive precedence with the inclusion of more female ministers in his first cabinet. Again, it was a shock because the President had agitated for a 33 per cent female representation and was expected to portray the same in his government. Again, it can be said that Kibaki's government provided more opportunities for women than even the current administration. As of 2007, the Kenyan parliament had 222 members, 210 elected representatives and 12 nominated members. In this parliament, women composed 7.7 per cent, 18 women, 10 elected and 8 nominated. In his third cabinet after the 2007 elections, Kibaki's government only had two female cabinet members, a great departure from 2005 when more women were appointed to the cabinet.

Furthermore, a report by the Kenya School of Government (KSG), Echo Network Africa, and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (2020) examined Kenyan women in leadership. The report contends that the Kenyan political system is historically designed to discriminate against women. This is mainly blamed on patriarchal ideologies, retrogressive socio-cultural practices, gender-biased belief systems, and male leadership models (Kenya School of Government (KSG), Echo Network Africa. The political marginalisation of women continued after the reintroduction of multi-party politics and the passing of the new constitution in 2010. Furthermore, Biegon (2016) focused on the difficulties and opportunities for women's leadership as she investigated the subject of gender equality and Kenyan political processes. According to the author, the subject of women in political leadership has gained great attention and examination on a global scale. It should be mentioned that from 11.3 per cent in 1995 to 22 per cent in 2015, women's representation in national legislatures and parliaments grew globally. In addition, the percentage of women holding cabinet seats increased globally from 9 per cent to 17 per

cent between 1999 and 2010 (Biegon, 2016). In 2015, there were ten female heads of state and fourteen female heads of government. It is crucial to emphasise how important it has become for women to be represented in senior roles. The 2012 elections were notable because 87 women were sworn in as legislators, according to Biegon's (2016) book. This represented the highest proportion of women in the national assembly and represents a major improvement in the representation of women in politics. Kenya had 19 women in the national assembly in the seventh parliament, 21 in the eighth, 30 in the ninth, and 34 in the tenth (Biegon, 2016). This shows that there were more women in leadership roles in the 11th and 12th parliaments after Section 2A of the constitution was repealed.

The so-called "two-thirds gender rule" refers to a gender-based clause in Kenya's constitution. Aden Duale, the majority leader at the time, introduced the Constitution Amendment (No. 4) Bill of 2015 in parliament in 2015 (National Gender and Equality Commission, 2018). In order for the national parliament and Senate to comply with Article 81 (b), which stipulates that no more than two-thirds of elected members may be of the same gender, this bill attempted to amend the country's constitution (National Gender and Equality Commission, 2018). This bill aimed to increase the number of women who hold elected and appointed public office. Duale requested a constitutional amendment in the form of special seats in the bill to guarantee that the gender rule would be followed beginning with the 12th parliament for a 20-year term. It is projected that by this time, women would be able to compete on an equal footing with males for political power. The Technical Working Group supported the bill, noting that it would ensure that the house is constitutionally constituted at all times. The group also reasoned that the bill would serve all parties as it would serve men when the tide changed against them, while it was a direct and simple formula that obeys the legislation principles contained in Article 82 of the country's constitution (National Gender and Equality Commission, 2018). The group also argued that the amendment would protect and guarantee constitutional gains on gender equality and offer sufficient room for encouraging women's election. During the debate for the bill, it was clear that the principle was viewed as a women's affair and was

handled as such (National Gender and Equality Commission, 2018). However, the fact that this bill was sponsored and seconded by male legislators demonstrated an increased concern and the need to empower women. It was clear that men had realised the potential of women and were ready to have more female leaders in the country.

According to a 2018 study by the National Democratic Institute (NDI) and the Federation of Women Lawyers (FIDA), a record number of women were elected in Kenya in the general election of 2017. Significant political wins for women in the election were noted in the study. For the first time in history, Kenyans elected women to a range of positions, including governor, senator, member of parliament, and county assembly members. Again, there are now more women than ever holding various government positions because 29 per cent more women stood for political office than in the last elections. Women had 172 of the 1883 elected posts in the country in the 2017 election, up from 145 in the 2013 elections, according to the National Democratic Institute (NDI) and the Federation of Women Lawyers (FIDA). Despite the notable progress, women seeking elective seats still face a number of obstacles on the road to power. The country's constitution includes the "two-thirds gender rule," which states that women must hold at least a third of elected and appointed positions, even if Kenya's representation of women falls short of the legal threshold. After the 2017 election, women made up only around 23 per cent of the National Assembly and Senate. It's crucial to keep in mind that this quantity included seats reserved exclusively for women.

Only 9 per cent of candidates were women in 2017, despite the fact that 13 per cent of women who ran for office did so and won (National Democratic Institute (NDI) and the Federation of Women Lawyers (FIDA), 2018). According to the report, Fatuma Dullo, the then-Senate Deputy Minority Leader, Kenyan women must put in twice or perhaps three times as much effort as men to gain parliamentary seats. In Isiolo County, a pastoralist region where it is even more difficult for women to advance into leadership roles before men, she is the first female senator (National Democratic Institute (NDI) and the Federation of Women Lawyers

(FIDA), 2018). Numerous political, cultural, and economic considerations made it difficult for women to vote in the 2017 election. These issues include a lack of financial backing from political organisations, gender stereotypes, and patriarchal social structures. The nation's legislature has made important and successful attempts to adopt laws to ensure that the two-thirds quota is met since the inception of the gender issue in the 2010 constitution (National Democratic Institute (NDI) and the Federation of Women Lawyers (FIDA), 2018). The challenges these legislators have faced demonstrate how challenging it is for women to enter politics and be successful there. Because important gatekeepers like political parties are growing less eager to nominate and support them, it is challenging for women to be successful in politics.

The issue of violence against women during the election season is another crucial element that the National Democratic Institute (NDI) and the Federation of Women Lawyers (FIDA) (2018) emphasised. It is important to mention that women experience physical and psychological abuse during elections, with male politicians funding violence to frighten and intimidate female candidates. Again, women are increasingly subjected to gender-based propaganda, with their sexual morality questioned. Again, economic hardships due to harassment and boycotts have compounded the gender gap. Women who were successfully elected mainly had past experience in politics and were better prepared for the battles. With women's representation in political leadership still dwindling, it is essential for the country to take the necessary steps to address the huge gender gap. Some of the possible solutions, according to the National Democratic Institute (NDI) and the Federation of Women Lawyers (FIDA) (2018), include policy and legislative programs, compliance and regulatory reforms, empowerment programs, and training and capacity-building measures. Attaining the two-thirds gender rule constitutional requirement should be the primary focus of the current legislative, executive, and judicial arms of government.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study used a descriptive research design. Kivoi (2014) reports that descriptive research is essential

for monitoring a variable when there is a limited conceptual foundation on distinct elements of the variable. Data was gathered for this study to analyse the participation and representation in Embu from 2013 to 2017 and to determine the socio-political ramifications of that participation and representation among the Aembu in Embu County, Kenya, between 1952 and 2017.

Target Population

The Aembu community in Kenya's Embu County was the focus of the investigation. The study's target population was 309,468 registered voters in Embu County (GoK, 2019). It is unknown how many women in Embu have participated in politics, though. The study specifically targeted Mau Mau warriors, female political aspirants, voters, political party executives, and male political aspirants.

Sampling Procedures and Sample Size

Purposive sampling with a snowballing technique was used in the study. Women who have participated in or attempted politics in Embu County during the study period were identified and interviewed. Purposive sampling was used since it allowed the key respondents to be included in a sample because of their positions and status, allowing them to address specific issues as directed by the study's objectives (Kathuri & Pals, 1993). Additionally, this sampling technique was useful because the study was guided by the knowledge, feelings, experiences, and emotions of the respondents.

Research Instruments

The study deployed interview schedules and Focused Group discussions to collect the required data on the historical trends in women's political leadership in Embu, Kenya, from 1952 to 2017.

Data Collection Procedures

Primary data, such as oral data, archival data, and secondary data, were used in the study.

Data Analysis Procedures and Presentations

In Kombo and Tromp (2006), data analysis is the process of examining study data in order to draw inferences and conclusions. The researcher conducted a qualitative data analysis. In Embu County, Kenya, between 1952 and 1991, and their

involvement in politics after Kenya repealed section 2A of the constitution.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Ideological groups remain the significant substances through which individuals can pick their agents and are possibly fundamental foundations for popularity-based legislative issues and portrayal. The focal elements of ideological groups in current delegate vote-based systems are to foster steady approaches and government to send requests from society and total them to enrol, select and situate individuals for positions in government and the council and to manage and control government Caton (2007). Despite the fact that it is broadly acknowledged that in many nations, ideological groups are vital to delegate a vote-based system and to the course of democratisation, they are likewise seen to be progressively frail and to have various defects in carrying out roles fundamental for a solid majority rules government. These flaws incorporate institutional, underlying, and philosophical qualities and societies that can make parties act in manners that are opposed to a majority-rule government. In particular, ideological groups will quite often make boundaries for women and are, by and large, failing to meet expectations on the equivalent cooperation and portrayal of women and men in strategic, influential places and navigation at all levels.

Orientation balance in the different political fields overall has been a provoking errand to accomplish regardless of the endeavours made by most nations in embracing a majority-rule government. Additionally, the administration of orientation equity in matters of political collaboration has not yet been completed. Worldwide and not just in African countries, there is a low association of women in political administration.

The political field in the whole world is overwhelmed, and a couple of women are running for elective posts. Additionally, Pippa and Inglehart (2016) contended that cooperation in governmental issues clears the way for a vote-based system, albeit the majority rules government gets tested attributable to steady inconsistent support of sexual orientations. One of the inherent challenges is the persistent orientation, such as the lower level of female members in legislative matters than male members,

suggesting that women's interests are not consistently represented in the parliament (Potter, 2009). Any country that adopted a vote-based system would benefit by having women participate equally in positions of control at the local, state, and federal levels, as well as in all promotion positions.

Writing from the early period reveals the impact of colonisation on African women's roles in political administration (Almasry, 2012). Measurements, according to Satymbekova (2016), reveal that there is inequality in political administration since women have less political clout than men, and as a result, their needs are not as frequently addressed by the government. Anyango et al. (2018) argued, in addition to agreeing with Satymbekova, that the concepts of hierarchical orientation imbalance and positional strategy inclination advance the study of how women are hindered politically. The ability to determine the relationships between women's involvement in political issues and the policies they support is enabled by the presence of various structure orientation predispositions.

Tabuka (2015) likewise noticed that as additional women get opportunities to political authority in different regions of the planet, they likewise keep on being faced with a ton of difficulties to their full political support. The number of women in parliament is growing, but overall, they are still vastly outnumbered by men in the executive branch and other institutions that make up the political system. Oral information from key sources uncovered that the ongoing orientation imbalances among women in the Aembu society were because of issues brought about by orientation disparity in perspectives existing in the general public in Embu region because of a complicated arrangement of elements (Vuri & Njagi, 2023). Further, she noticed that while a portion of the elements are native to the African societies, others are because of the presence of rules, strategies and guidelines planned in the pilgrim period. Kamau (2010) contends that in Kenya, women are underestimated in political authority, and the consequence of the persistent minimisation of dynamics on political issues is a verifiable result of Kenya being a patriarch state, with respect to both free and pioneer states. These works fault the subjection of African women in legislative issues, not exclusively to native African

societies but in addition to the progressions in African political frameworks achieved by imperialism.

Among the Agikuyu, who profoundly ruled in focal Kenya, older women framed women boards to direct individuals' personal conduct standards as well as implemented fundamental authorisations (Mwangi, 2004). Hence, women in the pre-pilgrim period generally had political command over certain areas of action like exchanging, advertising or family and other family issues. This situation was not announced among the Aembu women in spite of being ethnically related. In the pioneer period, African women played a larger part in the dynamic cycle than they had in the pre-pilgrim rule. It is notable that expansionism changed the situation with women and diminished their political power through the burden of Western origination of state and society, women, family and orientation (Tabuka, 2015). The frontier frameworks of the organisation permitted the European authorities to manage through native male specialists. Southern Nigeria in West Africa is a genuine illustration of one of the nations that demonstrates where women's political power was dissolved in the pilgrim rule where the frontier government changed the customary male office of the Obi into a salaried position yet didn't place into thought the female partner, the Omu (Bochaberi, 2014).

Oral information revealed that the pioneer managerial framework essentially didn't think about how conceivable it is that there were female designs of governmental issues that should have been carried out into the provincial political framework. The frontier economy roused the movement of men to the rising metropolitan focuses to get formal business, and the women were ignored in the rustic to perform family tasks. This actually improved homegrown and open arenas, which was supported by pilgrim schooling, which prepared men to deal with the public area while women arranged to turn out to be great house producers.

Preceding expansionism, political underestimation of women was not switched by the free state-run administrations. Women who had partaken in freedom and nationalisation developments were not perceived, while men who contributed were

perceived and compensated as the majority of men were engaged in the talks that led to autonomy. In the long run, they took over from the pilgrim government. Kamau (2010) contends that the Kenyan provincial construction waited, and the height of mistreatment and orientation segregation continued, albeit the designs of the arising state were de-racialised.

Further, in the customary point of view, women reserve no option to partake in political administration as they are sub-par and not super durable individuals from the tribe. Further, in grasping political administration and supporting women, one is obligated to perceive the cultural and societal position of women as well as the political domain of culture (Njagi, O.I, 2023). In the Islamic religion, people are qualified for equity and uniformity. They are both responsible for claiming acts. Moreover, in the Islamic setting, a woman's right and obligation in political cooperation stays to be an unanswered inquiry. According to some Islamic scholars, women are severely obliged to care for children at home, undertake stringent tasks like maintaining the mosque, and take part in strict rituals during feast days. (Paxton, Kunovich, and Hughes, 2007). Since they can only engage in political administration and not full power, the debate over whether women may support political authority while also completing stringent exercises stifles their political aspirations. Islamic women are content with their role in taking care of the family, despite the fact that Islamist political organisations believe women should participate in political administration, albeit within a specific framework (Pippa & Inglehart, 2016).

Oral information exhibits that women are impeded in light of the fact that they frequently miss the mark on fundamental assets for electing effort. Up-and-comers are supposed to give little gifts and make commitments to raising support occasions, burial services, weddings and local area projects. Since, much of the time, women are not occupants; they don't get an opportunity to utilise their situations to construct streets, extensions, medical clinics and schools and, in this way, win votes in examining what she calls "general obstructions" to support women in open jobs (Waumbuthu, O.I, 2023). This perception was upheld by an optional source, Potter

(2009), who recognised socio-social strategy, institutional structures and the absence of satisfactory cash. She sees that numerous women are poor and, surprisingly, monetarily stable and might come up short on autonomy. By this, they neglect to manage the cost of the tremendous amounts of cash important to support constituent missions. The relationship of African People for Exploration and Improvement on the 1997 general political race likewise makes a comparable case that the absence of assets forestalls women's cooperation in governmental issues and administration. It further notes that this component is firmly connected with culture: women have less credit, business open doors and training.

A male respondent, Kiritu (O.I., 2023), noticed that the propensity of societies to restrict women to severe jobs since birth prohibits them from making choices of public interest and turning political workplaces into an undertaking. This is in concurrence with Pippa and Inglehart (2016), who concentrate on worldwide administration obstructions to the womenfolk and found that any place there are customary societies, women might get hesitant to strive and, and when they look for office, they might neglect to accumulate the adequate help. Perspectives of social aggression towards the support of women to legislative issues were acknowledged as the obstructions of second most significance towards the parliamentary challenge. According to reports from the field, societal factors have an impact on people's willingness to support political authority. Additionally, women at Regional levels don't have a preference for political careers; instead, diverse professions and family care are their top priorities. It was also observed that societies discourage women from running for political office because they are typically supposed to focus on starting families (Wari, O.I., 2023). As per an oral respondent, Mwaniki (O.I., 2023) from Kirima brought up that social practices contribute to ruining the support of women towards political administration. The homegrown jobs of youngster care, washing, cooking, cultivating, bringing kindling and water are among the customary orientation jobs restricting women to the essential obligation of errands like childcare and keeping up with the home, restricting the women from gaining the abilities of authority, openness and taking up

political of positions in the general public. This concurs with Tabuka (2015) that it is conventional for men to play every one of the jobs of direction and keep a subordinate height for the women, making them mediocre. Attributable to this, the women embrace their quandary in following the orders of the men.

As per this review, the young woman kid has been to the jobs of a mother and spouse since youth by being prepared towards execution of the homegrown obligations, as the kid is situated to be the rancher and pioneer by the openness to jobs of cultivating and animal raising consequently an or more towards gaining abilities in the initiative. In Orange Vote-based Development Party, Mungai (2014) laid out that societies and customs assume an extraordinary part in political support and political headship by women. Women are currently accomplishing fairness socially and strategically, monetarily, being educated, accomplishing ideal participation at all degrees of independent direction, nobility, quality of life, and access to fundamental administrations to advance their societal position. They have yet to accomplish a huge level of essential achievement in the Kenyan political cycle.

The social positioning of women in financial circles culturally affects how they participate in political administration. Due to the fact that men and women make fundamentally different amounts of money, there is a societal burden placed on women due to the division of labour based on gender. When women start using navigational aids, triple weight is frequently used to assess them. According to Alzuabi's (2016) study, women have a responsibility to their families and profession regardless of gender. Women need sufficient financial resources, which are essential when engaging in governmental affairs. As a result, they are significantly less likely to support political leadership. The majority of women find this obstacle to be a barrier, and as a result, they are reluctant to apply for administrative positions, which has led to a reduction in many nations. Financial resources have been distributed erratically along orientation lines, leaving women feeling inadequate for participating in political activities (Nagaad, 2007). Crusade is dependent on a person's financial resources, which could be direct or errant assets and exist in every country on earth. To assert

themselves over their competitors in the race, everyone depends on these resources (Goetz, 2013). Direct assets often consist of appropriations, state financial plans, individual own assets, and givers, whereas indirect assets include money obtained from one's ideological group and gifts from many sources to the competition. When women are competing for various parliamentary seats, the topic of how to treat financial holdings has a significant impact on their decisions. According to the Somaliland model, women will typically be reluctant to compete in political settings for a variety of reasons (Filla & Larimer, 2011). The causes include a fear of managing their financial resources effectively since they feel they belong with their husbands and families.

If someone wants to exercise political influence in today's society, they must be admitted to training and employment. Training and professional development demonstrate initiative skills and inspire confidence in others. Cool (2010) further argues that this self-assurance enables one to obtain political power and to use it effectively; she hypothesises that lack of adequate education renders African women less serious in the modern political sphere. The quantity of young women diminishes as one maneuvers to more significant levels of schooling. The absence of community schooling makes most women uninformed about their freedoms; they know very little of the issues of governmental issues and direction (Bullough et al., 2012). Numerous women, hence, keep on depending on their spouses, fathers, siblings and children to encourage them on whom to decide in favour of and for what position. This isn't an OK practice in fair decisions in light of the fact that each voting form ought to be confidential and free. Metro training adds to assessment formation and dynamic support of the electorate; it promotes mindfulness and looks for the cooperation of residents in all parts of a majority-ruled government (Bochaberi, 2014). Consequently, it is a vital perspective to have women take up constituent positions. In Kenya, city training is worked close by the school system with the end goal that as kids achieve casting a ballot age, they figure out the idea of governmental issues, locally and broadly, as well as the discretionary framework. Hence, women who are denied the schooling system will generally come up short on fundamental abilities in urban training

for their support in races, educationally. The connection between admittance to training by women and the political support of women in the Turkana Focal Body electorate will be tended to in this review.

Schmidt's (2013) contention that women are a simple extra to the human race, are home producers and are ornamental, and are home creators appears to be reasonable. Pollert brought up unambiguous social elements denying women their fearlessness and self-drive. He battles that language, visual emergence and broad communications brief women to consider themselves to be men's sex targets, aides and cooks. This will, in general, burden the women as they work close to the men. The above issues raised by Pollert might be applicable to this study since they highlight potential factors that sustain a feeling of inadequacy in women, consequently forestalling self-drive and fearlessness. As per observational examinations in the USA done by Inglehart and Norris (2003), at whatever point women face monetary difficulties, it turns out to be difficult for them to get wins in political situations, as they need essential assets in the political space of direction. In the concentrate on women's schooling and political cooperation in Malaysia, Goetz (2013) observed that it is difficult to pronounce convincingly that women become more dynamic in governmental issues when they achieve high training levels. It was sure that the inverse had been learned about numerous nations by which the more taught and women of prosperity were differential towards political movement and are exceptionally distrustful towards political commitment.

Information likewise exhibits that financial elements assume an essential part in women's cooperation in the political initiative and accessibility of assets; for example, cash and vehicles are significant determinants of women's support in political administration in Embu. Furthermore, without these assets, women can't send off and support lobbies for political administration. Furthermore, segment factors such as the conjugal status, in addition to the degree of training, were viewed as persuasive in women's support of political authority. The bereaved, separated, and single women showed interest towards political initiative when contrasted with wedded women. Tabuka (2015) concentrated on the

variables impacting the political support of women in political administration in the Kimilili body electorate. He figured out that most Kimilili Voting public women were elementary school quitters, in this way unskilled, subsequently adversely influencing their entrance of political authority. Bocharberi (2014) completed a study concentrating on women's cooperation in political cycles in Nyamira Province. Supporting crusades is one area where Nyamira women face more obstacles than men. Political expeditions are notoriously expensive, and Nyamira women are less likely to have the funds necessary to fund pricy political expeditions because they generally earn less than men and have less financial resources.

Otieno (2012) found that marriage fundamentally altered males, when contrasted with the men, by helping cooperation by men into legislative concerns and becoming unwilling to the women in focus on components affecting support of women towards political authority Rongo Electorate. After getting hitched, the women invest a large portion of their energy doing family errands, and in this way, they have negligible time for relaxation. Likewise, it is assumed that women who have accomplished advanced education levels will have the will to connect with political authority. Since the women are, to a more prominent degree, financially denied, it acts like a test towards them getting into electing workplaces since they come up short on fundamental assets to guide them towards dynamic in broad daylight interest.

Governmental concerns play a significant role in the acceptance of women in politics as well as in the creation of a stable political environment that will allow them to succeed. A major barrier to women participating in legislative issues is the male dominance of formal political culture, governmental issues, and ideological organisations (Barnes & Cassese, 2017). The ideological groupings dominated by men will typically have a male perspective on public issues and dismiss the perspectives of women, and this attitude kills the confidence of women because they are ignored and excluded from party legislative matters. The male authority is biased towards women and fails to provide them with elective positions in the party's plans (Parvin, 2014). Contrary to popular belief,

women in prominent parliamentary or party positions frequently advise their husbands to make decisions that are supported by political culture Randjbar-Daemi et al. (2017). As a result, the majority of women in legislative posts serve as straightforward surrogates for the male relatives who were once politically active but who, for a variety of reasons, were unable to win elections.

Due to the slow rate of systematisation of most ideological organisations in Kenya, men with substantial personal wealth, possessions, and political bases are more likely to be chosen as rivals. Men are typically the targets of these proclivities (Anigwe, 2014). Because of deficient guidelines based on ideological groups in conditions of enrollment enlistment to rehearse inward majority rules government, party decisions are held for arbitrary reasons and at the party authorities' impulses. Now and again, the races are rarely held. This primarily locks out the affirmation of new participation and women. Selolwane (2006) sees that ideological groups are locales and devices of arranging power in Africa. Thus, women's society has been looking at the ideological groups and battling for a majority rule government as a device towards bureaucracy, parliament, and other dynamic bodies. As per her, the best test for women has been to bomb the majority rules government in the ideological groups which are available to mishandle and support. In Kenya, partiality with the party supervisor is basic for permeability and designation. Significant gatherings in Kenya are being overwhelmed by men. The gatherings' way of life is consequently of need manly, and this might itself, at some point, distance women lawmakers. There is likewise the public picture concern that a woman lawmaker seen excessively near the party manager risks being associated with moral inappropriateness.

Also, ideological groups in Kenya frequently utilise misogynist language, symbolism and imagery. Upsides of sheer actual animals are advanced and supported through images like clenched hands, lions, cocks and farm hauliers. They further note that these are macho pictures steady with a culture of predominance, brutality and control, which advance male-centric pictures. Ballington and Matland (2011) concentrate on ideological groups and the cooperation of women in party-electing processes. In

the discoveries, the possibilities of women are significantly impacted by the decision of the discretionary cycle. While appointive frameworks alone don't decide the degree of women's portrayal, they are imperative since they are inclined to powerful changes. Contrasted with the cultural-social situation of women or their improvement level, rules of political race are more adaptable. In Turkey, Kabasakal (2018) found that party rules and standards influence the manner by which a party does the real selection process. On account of women, frameworks that will generally get regulations have the standards consolidated to ensure women of a huge benefit in portrayal, especially assuming they incorporate a party quantity ensuring a rate number to women bid. In the absence of unequivocal assurance portrayal rules, having set up clear regulatory systems by which competitors are picked is in itself a particular benefit for women. With unwritten guidelines, it gets more enthusiasm to devise a system to break into the inward circle of force.

In the US, Barnes and Cassese (2017) laid out that one of the central elements of ideological groups is to name and support their contender for office, consequently assuming a critical part as guardians to the electing system. Along these lines, the most common way of choosing up-and-comers is fundamental to guarantee a female portrayal. Many gatherings neglect to explicitly call upon women to propose their candidatures; left-winged parties will generally be more pleasing in the positive measures towards an increment the women's portrayal appointive than traditional gatherings, which are bound to help non-mediation during the time spent determination and enrollment. In Bangladesh, cooperation parliamentary situating by women has made a specific protected commitment in addition to neighbourhood government bodies through lawful commitments. The standard arrangement of responsibility neglects to ensure unconstrained investment by the women at the degree of nearby strategy. Parvin (2014) found that most women recognise legislative issues as filthy, keeping women from joining legislative issues. The present world of politics has contributed incredibly towards the savagery of women.

Respondents additionally accepted that gatherings in Kenya settle on the contender to be chosen and designated as well as issues of accomplishing public conspicuousness. The review understood that, however, the party strategies regulations have been an advancing necessity and assume a basic part in directing how to standard women in governmental issues, thoroughly searching into regulations utilised or the issues to be represented close by the orientation mainstreaming should be completed by parties that they are not orientation blind in Kenya. In Kimilili Voting public, Tabuka (2015) found that women gained negligible help from ideological groups, the government, and friendly establishments. Public authorities and ideological groups need sufficient designs to help people understand governmental issues. Chapels and Christianity tenets bombed in empowering the women's administration, putting together their contention with respect to man's creation, by which the women were made partners accommodating to the man.

As per the Between Parliamentary Association (IPU), there is a worldwide average of 24.5 per cent of women in parliaments all over the planet. There has been a sluggish movement while checking out women's portrayal over the long run. In 1985, there was a 12 per cent worldwide portrayal of women, and in 2005, 16.4 per cent. Nonetheless, as of late, there has been an extension of female portrayal, particularly in the creating scene where women's political cooperation has sped up. In 2008, Rwanda's parliamentary races brought about the main public regulative body with a greater number of women, 56.3 per cent (Rosen, 2013). After analysing the information provided by the main sources, it is possible to claim that women experience more problems than men, particularly because they are perceived as intruders when they engage in governmental affairs, which is strictly considered to be a male domain. The review sought responses from the respondents regarding women running for political office. About 40 per cent of respondents were ambivalent about the types of political positions that women should aspire to. However, about 35 per cent of respondents agreed that women should hold parliamentary and urban seats. Only 10 per cent of respondents said that women could maintain their composure in official settings.

The range of justifications offered for various viewpoints was exceptional. A small minority of respondents (45%) supported the appointment of women to legislative and official positions and asserted that women are essentially competent in terms of implementation. The level of education is another drawback to women's political involvement. Similar to how education affects a voter's choice of a certain candidate, women often have less formal education than men. Their system administration is constrained as a result of strong political interests. Several respondents attributed the lack of female participation in political affairs to social standards and convictions. The topic of how women are expected to work in the private sphere, handling a greater proportion of domestic duties like caring for children and meeting basic family needs, as opposed to how men are expected to work in the public sphere, taking decisive action in important situations, was one that kept coming up.

All types of people have this behaviour, but males tend to have it more firmly in their hearts. It plays a big role in victimising women in legislative matters. This study also shows that there is still a substantial prevalence of gender segregation in education, which favours male students, especially in urban settings. The perception that young women are inferior to young men leads even the most impressionable among them to believe that males are narrow-minded. Due to the fact that they have more responsibilities at home than young men do, young women are burdened, which reduces the amount of time they have for homework. Because of this, there is occasionally a disregard for education, and young women generally have greater dropout rates than young men.

The media is another concern for women. Female key sources demonstrated that they do not receive the level of inclusion they would desire. They also demonstrated how insufficient the overall inclusion of women is, which is a factor in their poor performance in races. For instance, some candidates for elective positions expressed upset when they learned they were unmarried, while others were informed they couldn't lead because they hadn't had circumcision. Some women vowed never to look for situations like that again because of the nasty words used. The general public has an obligation to

encourage emerging female stars who decide to get involved in political issues. This should be done starting at the level of the ideological group. Especially at the party level, ideological groups ought to push more women to run for government. The women should show up to publicly support other women who are similar to them.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions: This chapter demonstrates that the participation and representation of women in political leadership have had significant social and political implications in Embu County. Clearly, Aembu women have faced a number of social and political hindrances to their inclusion in political leadership, as shown by the above discussion; for instance, despite a few being elected in political positions like Members of parliament and gubernatorial, as in the case of Hon. Cecily Mbarire, political space in Embu is still male-dominated. Women don't have a clear voice in making political choices without intimidation from the male chauvinist that is prevalent in local politics in Embu County, Kenya. As a result, some candidates for elective positions, for instance, were furious when they learned they were single, while others received the message that they couldn't lead because they weren't circumcised. Some women vowed never to look for situations like that again because of the nasty words used. According to the study, gender parity remains elusive despite significant attempts to increase women's representation through the constitution. From Cierume to Cecily Mbarire, the study paints a picture of strong and persistent women whose quest for leadership faced massive challenges. One of the primary problems women face in the country's political scene is male dominance, especially the patriarchal culture. In Kenya, leadership is seen as a preserve for men since it requires courage and persistence, qualities largely found in men. Few female leaders have arisen in Kenya as the electorate tends to favour male candidates. Again, women were expected to marry, and they belonged to their husband's tribe once they left their fathers' home. Like Wambui Otieno and Cecily Mbarire, women face this challenge as they are attacked for being outsiders. Mbarire was attacked because of her marriage to a Teso, with her challenger informing the community that they would lose their resources if they elected her. This played

against her, preventing her from being elected as Embu governor.

Recommendations: Colonialism continued to perpetuate the traditional beliefs that side-lined women outside the political mainstream. It is, therefore, crucial that the government establishes mechanisms that can be used to promote women's roles in political leadership in the post-colonial regimes. Women played a key role in political decision-making and, therefore, used various means through legislation and civil rights groups to achieve this mandate. Thus, the post-colonial governments

should come up with more legislation that can be implemented to facilitate the inclusion of women in politics, including the implementation of the two-thirds gender rule. Due to the inadequacy of women's involvement in politics, the social and political implications were realised in the study location. It is equally important that the government establishes forums where such social and political issues relating to the participation of women in politics can be openly discussed.

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