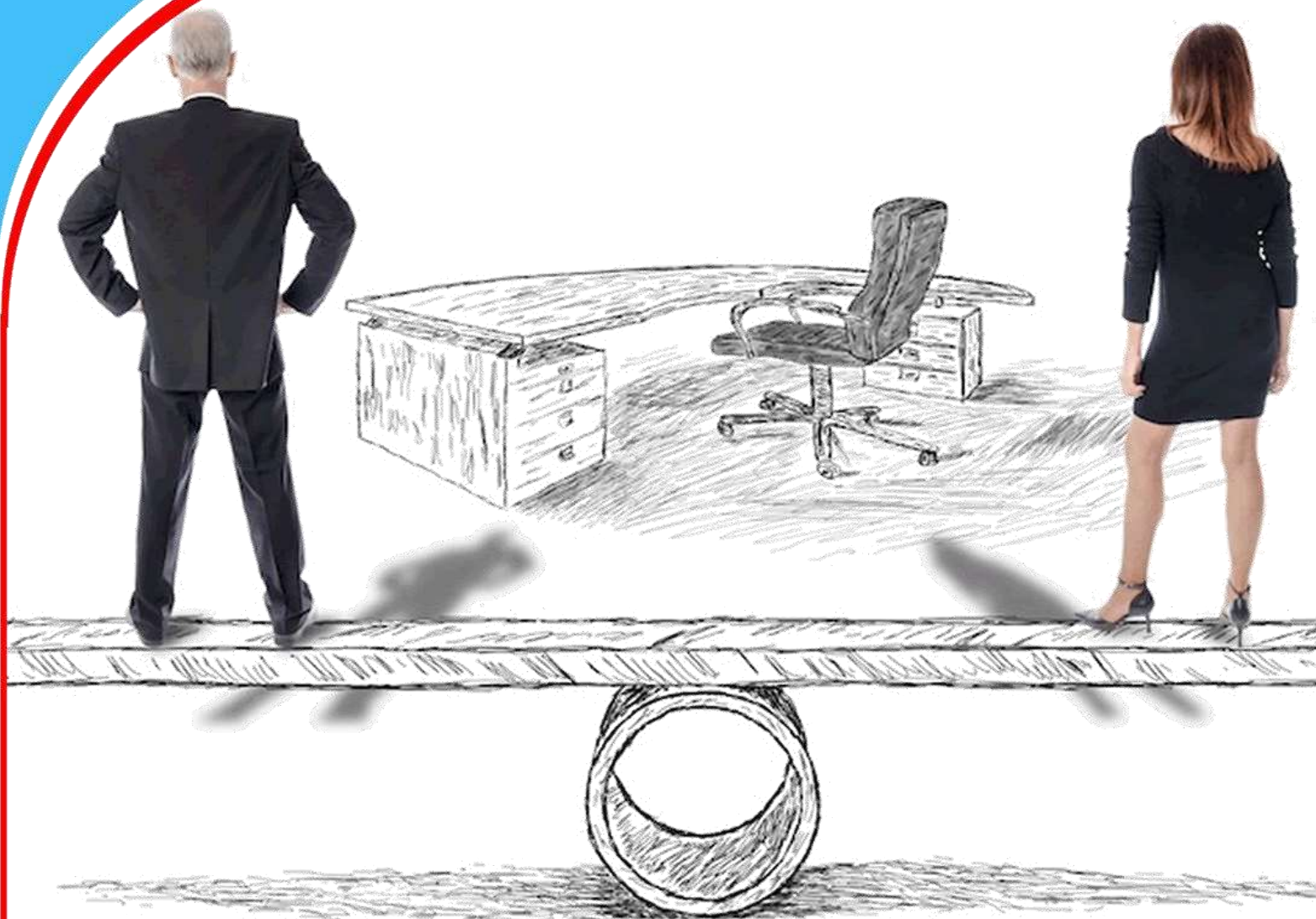


European Journal of Gender Studies (EJGS)



EFFECT OF EQUALITY RULE ON WOMEN EMPOWERMENT IN POLITICAL PARTIES IN NAIROBI, KENYA

Alice Mumbi and Dr Joyce Gikandi



EFFECT OF EQUALITY RULE ON WOMEN EMPOWERMENT IN POLITICAL PARTIES IN NAIROBI, KENYA

1* Alice Mumbi

^{1*}Post graduate student, Mount Kenya University

*Corresponding Author's Email: lizmugambi@gmail.com

2* Dr Joyce Gikandi

Lecturer, Mount Kenya University

ABSTRACT

Purpose: The purpose of the study was to find out the effect of equality rule on women empowerment in political parties in Nairobi, Kenya.

Methodology: The study used a descriptive survey research design. The study used primary data which was largely be quantitative and qualitative in nature. The data was analyzed using content analysis. Qualitative data was presented in continuous prose form. On the other hand after quantitative data is obtained, it was prepared in readiness for analysis by editing, handling blank responses, coding, categorizing and keyed into statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) computer software for analysis. The statistics generated included descriptive statistics. The particular descriptive statistics included frequencies and percentages while the particular inferential statistics included correlation analysis and regression. Correlation analysis was used to establish the association between the variables. A multiple linear regression model was used to test the significance of the influence of the independent variables on the dependent variables.

Results: The study found that equality rule has a positive and significant effect on women empowerment in political parties in Nairobi, Kenya.

Unique contribution to theory, practice and policy: Based on the research findings the study concluded that all political parties should embrace 1/3 rule so as to boost women empowerment. In addition women should be educated on the best strategies of politics. This can be achieved through frequent attendance at social and political gatherings where political information is likely to be shared, as well as engaging in a wide reading of any available political literature and media articles, with a view to beefing up one's bank of political information.

Keywords: *Equality rule, Women empowerment, political party*

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Political parties are the most important institutions that affect the political participation of women. In most countries they are responsible for candidate recruitment and selection, and decide on which issues are placed on the policy agenda. How women participate in political parties or how political parties encourage and nurture women's involvement is key determinant of their prospects for political empowerment. Because of the influential nature of political parties on women's political empowerment, civil society organizations (CSOs), international organizations and development assistance providers have heightened their focus on the role of political parties (Ballington *et al.*, 2012). Globally, women remain sidelined from the structures of governance that determine political and legislative priorities. In the world's parliaments, women hold 19 percent of the seats up from 16 percent in 2005. The proportion of women ministers is lower, averaging 16 percent. The proportion of women heads of state and government is lower still and has declined in recent years, standing at less than 5 percent in 2011 (Ballington *et al.*, 2012).

However, women's representation and participation in politics has been an uphill task throughout the world. Since pioneering work of women and development in the Third World, studies continue to confirm her finding that women are not equal beneficiaries with men of the fruits of so called modernization and development. Campbell (2010) agrees that across the world there seem to be barriers to women's participation than it is to men. This is demonstrated by underrepresentation of women in the political cadres. In cases where women get a chance to lead, they are often seen as ersatz men Margaret Thatcher of Britain as Iron Lady or Golda Mier of Israel as the only man in the cabinet (Campbell, 2010).

In addition one of the main obstacles to women's representation is found in the process of candidate selection. Without mandatory quotas the number of women enlisted as candidates by political parties has invariably been much smaller than the number of men. The number of women actually elected by a political party may reflect bias on the part of the electorate, but the number of women selected as candidates gives a good indication of whether or not a party is gender biased. A few political parties have recently introduced more democratic procedures into the processes of selecting their candidates. In Mexico the PRI, the PRD and the PAN have been using direct elections for selecting their candidates, and in Brazil the PT has had direct elections since 2001. However, participatory forms of candidate selection have not been the norm. The tendency is that the leaders of political parties will select their candidates employing criteria that are far from clear (Tremblay, 2012).

In South Africa there was a percentage drop of female representation in Parliament between 2004 and 2009, and a further drop to 10% in 2014. In addition the percentage of female ministers has been dropping since 2004. Also, female ministers tend to be appointed in "softer" portfolios in the social sector, such as Health, Education, a Social Welfare. The number of female deputy ministers is, however, on the rise. After 1994, Cabinet was dominated by men, at 60%. Looking at provincial government departments and structures, the GCE found that the numerical balance of women appointments was generally being met, but not necessarily because of gender mainstreaming programmes and targeted interventions, but rather in a bid to meet Employment

Equity (EE) targets. While an increasing number of departments were therefore appointing women, this was not happening at the level of seniority required. Many government departments were found to be operating without clear gender-mainstreaming strategies and programmes with clearly defined objectives. Where gender-mainstreaming was focused on, it was generally as part of a “basked” of functions, such as disability, the youth, the elderly, and those with HIV/Aids or TB (Morna & Makaya-Magarangoma, 2013).

1.2 Problem Statement

Women’s engagement in political leadership is a global concern because in virtually all societies leadership is gendered masculine. They are less involved in political leadership. However, though the situation of women continues to improve in most countries, Kenya inclusive, women are disadvantaged in political participation and decision making precisely because their numbers are comparatively lower (in decision making positions) than those of men. In addition Women’s wings’ of political parties have rarely provided the essential incubating ground for women leaders, for female solidarity in parties, and for feminist policy proposals. Instead, Women’s Wings are commonly captured by the spouses of male leaders and have developed a species of female sycophancy. Clearly, if the concern is to bring gender equality perspectives into politics and public policy, a focus on packing public space with female bodies is misplaced unless supported by efforts to bring gender issues into the many other spaces where political interests are formed. It has also been observed that political parties have rarely assigned priority to gender issues or promoted women as candidates for office without being formally obliged to do so. Proof of the stubborn resistance of parties to women’s leadership is their unwillingness to introduce internal leadership quotas (Kabeer, 2005).

In addition political parties in Kenya have failed to tackle gender inequality, with men out earning women by hundreds of millions every year. According to Elischer (2013) many political parties in Kenya are based on a system of patronage and many electable women candidates get knocked out at party primaries. The more entrenched women become in their political parties, the greater their chance of being elected. According to Hornsby (2013) women are demotivated from running for political position because of threats, question on their marital status and sexuality.

1.3 Objective of the Study

The main objective of the study was to find out the effect of equality rule on women empowerment in political parties in Nairobi, Kenya.

2.0 Empirical Literature

2.1 Theoretical Framework

2.1.1 Gender Inequality Theory

Gender inequality theories are a subset of feminist theories. Gender inequality theories recognize that women's location in, and experience of, social situations are not only different but also unequal to men's. Liberal feminists argue that women have the same capacity as men for moral reasoning and agency, but that patriarchy, particularly the sexist patterning of the division of labor, has historically denied women the opportunity to express and practice this reasoning. Women have been isolated to the private sphere of the household and, thus, left without a voice

in the public sphere. Even after women enter the public sphere, they are still expected to manage the private sphere and take care of household duties and child rearing (Ritzer & Goodman, 2004).

Liberal feminists point out that marriage is a site of gender inequality and that women do not benefit from being married as men do. Indeed, married women have higher levels of stress than unmarried women and married men. According to liberal feminists, the sexual division of labor in both the public and private spheres needs to be altered in order for women to achieve equality (Ritzer & Goodman, 2004). This theory is relevant to our study since it focuses/advocates for gender equality which ensures women empowerment in political parties.

2.2 Empirical Studies

Kivoi (2014) sought to determine the factors impeding political participation and representation of women in Kenya. The study found out that data on the numbers of elected Parliamentarians (including Senators, Governors and County Representatives) and holders of senior government positions shows that gender equity is still a mirage. The study also revealed that cultural impediments to women's economic emancipation have also denied them political representation in the Legislature. Further, the study revealed that Kenya has the challenge of identifying and implementing mechanisms policies and practices so as to achieve gender equity. The study also noted that political parties are not keen to try and implement the minimum one third constitutional requirements for their lists of candidates nominated to vie in elections. The study recommended that advancing the participation of women in devolved governance structures requires serious consideration by putting in place policy measures and interventions that would further this cause since equal gender participation is enshrined in the Constitution. It appeared that lack of political will is the biggest obstacle in addressing gender imbalance in the country. Thus there is greater need to address gender inequality in political representation and decision making in the country.

Ponge (2013) sought to determine the status of women within key political parties in Kenya. Results revealed that equality of access to and attainment of educational qualifications is necessary for more women to become agents of change. Results also revealed that increase of women presence in the key decision making organs has not resulted into key influence within the party hierarchy and has not been seen to impact on party affairs and activities as this is still under the tight grip of men. The study concluded that more gender equality in terms of participation in education has not resulted in more gender equality in the areas of political economy.

Githinji (2010) in his review of Kenya's Vision 2030 found out that persisting gender neutrality has kept women in lower paying jobs even as their share of the labor force has increased from 18% in 1966 to 30% in 2006, and a likely 55% by 2016. It should be noted that achieving gender equity as stipulated in Vision 2030 will not be easy. Oduol (2011) sees lack of institutional political party structures with which to enhance women's participation, which he blames for the low levels of women in politics thus their limited representation in Parliament and also within political parties. Political parties seem to be a Waterloo for increased women representation since stringent party rules, violence meted against women; cultural barriers among other impediments always appear to halt increased women participation in active politics and decision making. Kenya's social cultural beliefs and practices such as patriarchy and elder veneration have most of

the time worked against women empowerment. That is why Kenya's extensive commitment to various gender equality protocols has hardly narrowed the inequality gap (Nyanjom 2011).

3.0 METHODOLOGY

The study used a descriptive survey research design. The study population was 275 executives in all the 55 registered political parties in Nairobi, Kenya. The sample size was 90 executives in all the registered political parties in Nairobi, Kenya who were selected using simple random sampling. The study used primary data which was largely be quantitative and qualitative in nature. The data was analyzed using content analysis. Qualitative data was presented in continuous prose form. On the other hand after quantitative data is obtained, it was prepared in readiness for analysis by editing, handling blank responses, coding, categorizing and keyed into statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) computer software for analysis. The statistics generated included descriptive statistics. The particular descriptive statistics included frequencies and percentages while the particular inferential statistics included correlation analysis and regression. Correlation analysis was used to establish the association between the variables. A multiple linear regression model was used to test the significance of the influence of the independent variables on the dependent variables.

4.0 RESULTS

4.1 Demographic Characteristics

The results revealed that majority of the respondents who were 55% indicated that they were between 36 – 45 years, 33% indicated that they were above 45 years, 9% indicated that they were between 26 – 35 years while only 3% indicated that they were between 18 – 25 years. In addition majority of the respondents who were 67% indicated that they were married, 20% indicated that they were single, 7% indicated that they were separated while only 6% indicated that they were divorced. The respondents were further asked to indicate their highest level of education. Majority of the respondents who were 64% indicated undergraduate as their highest level of education, 22.1% indicated tertiary college, 8.1% indicated post graduate, 4.7% indicated secondary while only 1.2 indicated primary education. The respondents were further asked whether they hold any position in the party. Majority of the respondents who were 87% indicated no while only 13% indicated yes. The respondents were further asked to indicate the number of years they have been in political position. Majority of the respondents who were 60% indicated more than 10 years, 26% indicated 6 to 10 years, 9% indicated 4 to 5 years while only 5% indicated less than 3 years. This implies that most executive members and party members of the registered political parties in Kenya had been in political position for many years and thus had good information about women empowerment in political parties.

4.2 Descriptive Statistics

The objective of the study was to find out the effect of equality rule on women empowerment in political parties in Nairobi, Kenya. Results in table 1 revealed that majority of the respondents who were 77.9% (68.60% + 9.30%) agreed with the statement that there has been fair treatment of men and women in nomination in the political parties. The results also showed that majority of the respondents who were 70.9% agreed with the statement that there has been fair treatment of men and women in leadership position in the political parties. The results also showed that

majority of the respondents who were 68.6% agreed with the statement that their party had applied the 1/3 gender rule. The results also revealed that majority of the respondents who were 61.6% agreed with the statement that women are given equal rights with men in decision making.

On a five point scale, the average mean of the responses was 3.54 which mean that majority of the respondents were agreeing with most of the statements; however the answers were varied as shown by a standard deviation of 1.02.

Table 1: Equality Rule

Statement	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Mean	Std. Dev
There has been fair treatment of men and women in nomination in the political parties	5.80%	9.30%	7.00%	68.60%	9.30%	3.66	0.98
There has been fair treatment of men and women in leadership position in the political parties	7.00%	11.60%	10.50%	65.10%	5.80%	3.51	1.02
Our party has applied the 1/3 gender rule	8.10%	7.00%	16.30%	62.80%	5.80%	3.51	1.00
Women are given equal rights with men in decision making	3.50%	20.90%	14.00%	46.50%	15.10%	3.49	1.09
Total						3.54	1.02

In addition the respondents were further asked to indicate how effective is the 1/3 gender rule as per the current constitution in their party. Most of the respondents said that it was effective.

Table 2: 1/3 Gender Rule

Responses	Number
Effective	62
Not Effective	24
Total	86

4.3 Inferential Statistics

Inferential analysis was conducted to generate correlation results, model of fitness, and analysis of the variance and regression coefficients.

4.3.1 Correlation Analysis

Table 3 below presents the results of the correlation analysis. The results revealed that Equality rule and women empowerment are positively and significant related ($r=0.694$, $p=0.000$). This implies that an increase in any unit of the variables leads to an improvement in and women empowerment

Table 3: Correlation Analysis

		<u>women empowerment</u>	<u>Equality Rule</u>
women Empowerment	Pearson Correlation	1.000	
	Sig. (2-tailed)		
Equality Rule	Pearson Correlation	.694**	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	

4.3.2 Regression Analysis

The results presented in table 4.13 present the fitness of model used of the regression model in explaining the study phenomena. Equality rule was found to be satisfactory variables in women empowerment in political parties. This is supported by coefficient of determination also known as the R square of 55.1%. This means that equality rule, human rights, social protection and non discrimination explain 55.1% of the variations in the dependent variable which is women empowerment in political parties. This results further means that the model applied to link the relationship of the variables was satisfactory.

Table 4: Model Fitness

<u>Indicator</u>	<u>Coefficient</u>
R	0.742
R Square	0.551
Adjusted R Square	0.529
Std. Error of the Estimate	0.22128

In statistics significance testing the p-value indicates the level of relation of the independent variable to the dependent variable. If the significance number found is less than the critical value also known as the probability value (p) which is statistically set at 0.05, then the conclusion would be that the model is significant in explaining the relationship; else the model would be regarded as non-significant.

Table 5 provides the results on the analysis of the variance (ANOVA). The results indicate that the overall model was statistically significant. Further, the results imply that the independent variables are good predictors of performance. This was supported by an F statistic of 24.872 and

the reported p value (0.000) which was less than the conventional probability of 0.05 significance level.

Table 5: Analysis of Variance

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	4.871	4	1.218	24.872	0.000
Residual	3.966	81	0.049		
Total	8.837	85			

Regression of coefficients results in table 5 shows that equality rule and women empowerment are positively and significant related ($r=0.505$, $p=0.000$).

Table 6: Regression of Coefficients

	B	Std. Error	t	Sig.
(Constant)	0.13	0.108	1.197	0.235
Equality rule	0.505	0.067	7.553	0.000

Thus, the optimal model for the study is;

$$\text{Women Empowerment} = 0.13 + 0.505 \text{ Equality Rule}$$

5.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusions

Based on the findings above the study concluded that equality rule have a positive and significant impact on women empowerment in political parties.

The study also concluded that more gender equality in terms of participation in education has not resulted women empowerment in the areas of political economy.

5.2 Recommendations

Based on the research findings the study concluded that all political parties should embrace 1/3 rule so as to boost women empowerment. In addition women should be educated on the best strategies of politics. This can be achieved through frequent attendance at social and political gatherings where political information is likely to be shared, as well as engaging in a wide reading of any available political literature and media articles, with a view to beefing up one's bank of political information.

REFERENCES

- Ballington, J., Davis, R., Reith, M., Mitchell, L., Njoki, C., Kozma, A., & Powley, E. (2012). *Empowering Women for Stronger Political Parties: A Guidebook to Promote Women's Political Participation*. United Nations Development Programme.
- Elischer, S. (2013). *Political parties in Africa: Ethnicity and party formation*. Cambridge University Press.

- Kabeer, N. (2005). Gender equality and women's empowerment: A critical analysis of the third millennium development goal 1. *Gender & Development*, 13(1), 13-24.
- Kivoi, D. (2014). Factors Impeding Political Participation and Representation of Women in Kenya. *Humanities and Social Sciences*. Vol. 2, No. 6, pp. 173-181. doi: 10.11648/j.hss.20140206.15
- Marmot, M., Friel, S., Bell, R., Houweling, T. A., Taylor, S., & social protection and the empowerment of girls and women. (2008)., 372(9650), 1661-1669.
- Morna, C. L., & Makaya-Magarangoma, M. (2013). The Impact of Women's Political Leadership on Democracy and Development in South Africa. *The Impact of Women's Political Leadership on Democracy and Development: Case Studies from the Commonwealth*, 7.
- Nyanjom, O. (2011). *Devolution in Kenyans' new constitution. Constitution working paper series no. 4*. Nairobi: Society for International Development.
- Oduol, J. A. (2011). *Woman in leadership and governance In Okoth Okombo et al., (Eds) challenging the rulers: A leadership model for good governance*. Nairobi: EAEP and Community Aid International.
- Ponge, A. (2013). Gender Mainstreaming and Women Empowerment in Political Party Processes in Kenya: Implementing the New Constitution in Earnest. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science* , 3 No. 3;
- Ritzer, G., & Goodman, D. J. (2004). *Classical sociological theory*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Tremblay, M. (2012). *Women and legislative representation: Electoral systems, political parties, and sex quotas*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Babajanian, B. (2012). Social protection and its contribution to social cohesion and state building.