

**EXPLORING THE ASPIRATIONS FOR HEADSHIP AMONG FEMALE
ADMINISTRATORS IN PUBLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN KENYA**

**BY
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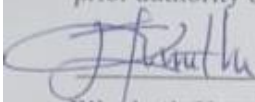
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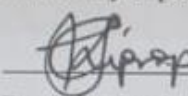
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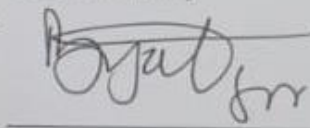


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DEDICATION

My work is dedicated to first, my dear husband Martin Muthengi for the mutual support, love and care he accorded to me. secondly, to my loving children for the moral encouragement, understanding and prayers during my two years of study.

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Many people and a number of institutions played a vital role in ensuring that this thesis was successful. My gratitude and appreciation therefore goes to them all for their tireless efforts, constant encouragements, understanding and cooperation without which this long journey would have been a challenge.

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Finally in a very special way I salute all my family members and relatives and especially my husband, my sons and daughters for their constant mutual support and prayers which motivated me into taking up this thesis with a lot of enthusiasm. Great and honor be to our almighty God who has brought me this far.

ABSTRACT

Sustainable socio-economic development of any country requires the effective participation of all human resources irrespective of gender. Successful leadership is a function of identifying the factors that influence aspirations to pursue headship positions and the belief of others in women leaders. The purpose of this study was to explore aspirations for headship among female administrators in public primary schools in Tharaka Nithi County in Kenya. The specific objectives of the study were to: determine the female administrators' self-efficacy that influence their aspirations for headship, identify socio-cultural factors that influence female administrators' aspirations for headship and finally examine institutional factors that affect female administrators' aspirations for headship in public primary schools. This research was anchored on the theory of planned behavior as expressed by Ajzen (2005). The philosophical underpinning for the study was pragmatic paradigm. A mixed method design consisting of both quantitative and qualitative approaches was utilized. Concurrent triangulation design was applied in data collection and analysis. Both probabilistic and non-probabilistic techniques of sampling were used. The study population consisted of all the female administrators from the 470 schools in the Tharaka Nithi County. Stratified and simple random sampling techniques were used to sample 175 female administrators from the total 320 target population. Purposive sampling technique was used to sample 10 female deputy head teachers to participate in the interview. A survey questionnaire was used to collect quantitative data and interview guide was used to generate qualitative data. Data was collected concurrently. Piloting of the instruments was done in two schools in the neighbouring county of Meru. Ethical issues were strictly observed at all levels. The quantitative data was analysed using descriptive statistics and the qualitative data was analysed thematically. Both results were integrated at the interpretation stage for validation purposes. From the findings it was found out the low aspiration rates among female administrators were a function of low self-efficacy which works together with other factors like academic qualification to discourage them to ascend into headship. Moreover, the results of the study indicated that factors such as the tasks of the job, domestic responsibilities of women and the societal in acceptance of female heads do influence aspirations for headship. In addition factors such as geographical context of the school, transfers, lack of role models and support from other school administrators greatly affects women aspirations for headship. The following recommendations were made: The Teacher Service Commission to come up with policies to ensure that the school administrators are gender balanced in each school irrespective of location. Capacity building institutions such as KEMI and professional bodies such as KNUT should organise for programs on site with courses that deal with gender and leadership. It is therefore hoped that the findings of this study will help establish appropriate programmes to train female teachers on leadership skills in order to solve the problem of underrepresentation of women in headship positions.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AEO	Area Education Officers
BOM	Board of Management
CDE	County Director of Education
CEB	County Education Board
FPE	Free Primary Education
ILO	International Labour Office
KCPE	Kenya Certificate of Primary Education
KEMI	Kenya Education Management Institute
KNBS	Kenya National Bureau of Statistics
MoE	Ministry of Education
P1	Primary 1 Qualification
P2	Primary 2 Qualification
PTA	Parents Teachers Associations
PTTC	Primary Teacher Training College
RoK	Republic of Kenya
TSC	Teachers Service Commission

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

This chapter will examine the background to the study, the problem statement, the purpose and significance of the study. It will also deal with the objectives of the study, research questions, hypothesis and the scope of the study. Finally it will look at the limitations of the study, assumptions of the study, theoretical framework, conceptual framework and operational definitions of terms.

1.1 Background to the Study

Sustainable socio-economic development in any country requires the effective participation of all human resources. Women constitute approximately half of the population of the world and thus potentially half of its work forces (United Nations, 2010). According to International Labour Office (ILO) (2013) only 52% of women participate in the labour force, compared to 77% of men, suggesting that there is a huge population globally that is underutilised economically. Furthermore, in all regions, the proportion of women in headship is much less than their overall proportion in the employed population. According to United Nations (UN) (2010), the proportion of females in higher occupation rank ranges from a low of 10% to 40% globally, with less than 30% in Eastern Africa.

In Kenya, women represent one half of the active population (Kenya Demographic Profile, 2014) and should therefore be able to participate on an equal footing with men in all spheres of political, economic and social life of the country, and particularly in the decision-making process. However, Kenyan women are under-represented in the

labour workforce and also in the management and decision making positions (Republic Of Kenya, 2010).

Women involvement in headship accrues more benefit to organisations including educational institutions. Obura, Wamahiu, Warue, Bunyi, Chege, Njoka, and Ruto (2011) explains that women's inclusion in education system planning and policy making is a human rights concern and is a democratic representational requirement which ensures efficiency, mainly due to the diversity which is encompassed. Ostos (2012) contends that a gender balance in educational administration encourages a broader opinion and experience to guide the attainment of school goals. Ostos also points out that having both men and women in leadership gives children that mental model which depict that anyone irrespective of gender can hold positions of leadership. It is of paramount importance to therefore increase women in leadership to ensure that the balance is achieved.

This concern of under representation of women in development and decision making in society has become the focus of international programmes and conferences which aim at integrating women in the development process as equal partners with men. This includes the 1979 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) which called upon all states "to take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the political and public life of women" (UNESCO-IIEP, 2011). The Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (1995) required member states to ensure increase and effective representation and participation of women at all levels of decision-making.

The 1995 Beijing Platform for Action, also “recognizes that women’s empowerment and full participation on an equal basis with men in all spheres of life, including participation in the decision-making process and access to power, are fundamental to the achievement of equality, development and peace” (United Nation, 2010, p.111). The Beijing platform came up with two strategic objectives which are: to ensure women’s equal access to and full participation in all power structures and decision making; and to increase women’s capacity to participate in decision making and headship. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially goal number 3 supports the processes for the advancement of gender equality.

These international initiatives have recognised that for development to be observed in any society, women have to be given a chance to actively participate in social and economic activities. Despite nations ratifying these international instruments and putting in place policies and strategies, few women enter into positions of headship, a situation replicated in schools. School headship is one sector, across countries in which women hold few management positions in comparison to the men and yet the teaching profession is dominated by women especially at the elementary level (United Nations, 2010). Studies done in various countries have revealed the under-representation of female school administrators. Examples of these studies include, Barmao and Mukwana, (2013), Wangoi (2012), Gaus (2011), Norris and Inglehart (2008) and Lacey (2003).

Studies regarding women and leadership are now on the increase. Shakeshaft (2006) traces the history of leadership theory before the 1970s when it was majorly based upon studies of males. Researchers then began to investigate how women head while making comparisons to the men. Studies that researched on women alone emerged as more

women moved into school administration. These studies did not dwell on the differences between female and male leadership styles but instead sought to identify the ways in which women head while describing their best practices. According to Arar and Abramovitz (2013), research on gender equality in educational leadership indicates that in developed societies, issues of prejudice against women principals have lessened and we have more women joining school management. In the USA, Glass (2000) explains that one reason for the steady increase of women principals is that superintendent search firms have been more aggressive in identifying women aspirants, and there is a gradual shift by school boards towards a more even distribution between women and men. This shows that there is concerted effort in developed nations to ensure that women join headship without which the scenario would be similar to that of developing nations. Despite this, research reveals that women are still not at par in numbers with the male headship.

In the recent past, research has revealed factors that have contributed to under representation of women in leadership positions in schools. These factors vary depending on various countries and cultural backgrounds. For example, a study by Cubillo & Brown (2003) examined barriers faced by women aspiring for leadership in educational context from different countries. The study reveals that the barriers differed from context to context, and was determined by specific cultural and religious beliefs and values, and socio-economic and political factors. In countries such as the US, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and the UK, research has been done widely to unearth the conditions under which women aspire to and lead schools, however more research needs to be done about women educational heads in other parts of the world (Shakeshaft *et al.*, 2007).

In the UK, educational administration is not only grappling with issues of under-representation of female leaders but also with under-representation of ethnic minority leaders (McNamara, Hawson, Gunter, & Fryers, 2009). The study report by McNamara, Hawson, Gunter, & Fryers, (2009), on the headship aspirations and careers of black and minority ethnic teachers, which was commissioned by national college for leadership of schools and children's services and national association of school masters union of women teachers (NASUWT), concludes that the black and minority ethnic teachers were ambitious enough and that the findings suggests existence of prevalent culture of institutional racism that work against their rising into leadership. Women teachers cited workload, self-confidence and family responsibilities as the most significant obstacles to them in taking up a headship position. This indicates that female teachers could be facing barriers to leadership in part due to their gender and in part due to their race. This has reduced the likelihood of female teacher minorities to access leadership positions.

African countries still portray under-representation of female leaders in school, a case similar to that of the Western countries, however in Africa; teaching may not be dominated by female teachers (Shakeshaft, 2006). According to Oplatka (2006) review of 13 English-language published papers, developing countries experience low levels of girls' education and therefore few women join the teaching profession. Even in Seychelles, being one African country that has met the targets for most of the eight millennium development goals, and having women account for the majority of teachers, their full participation in decision making processes at the administrative levels in primary and secondary schools has still not been achieved (Pardiwalla, 2009).

Rights of Women in Africa (1995) required member states to ensure increase and effective representation and participation of women at all levels of decision-making.

The culture in Africa may play a role in determining who becomes a leader. Africa is a patriarchal society where the male dominates all aspects of life, even the work place (Kariuki, 2006). A similar case that saw colonial influence in the spread of patriarchy in Africa is Zimbabwe, where Makura, (2009) reported that, overt colonial practices and policies discriminated against the advancement of women. This is because, uninterrupted or continuous teaching experience was the prerequisite for advancement into headship, women teachers found themselves 'lacking experience' hence they were side-lined when opportunities did arise.

In South Africa, experiences of women have been influenced historically by apartheid, where black women have been affected mostly as they access leadership (Uweziyimana, Modiba & Mathevula, 2014). The low numbers of women in school leadership in Africa is not only due to cultural stereotypes but also a ripple effect of past colonial inequalities against women.

This is confirmed by Kamau (2009) who said that the Kenyan traditional culture was predominantly patrilineal and patriarchal and the conditions of women were made worse by the coming of the colonist. This situation was aggravated by the introduction of formal education which was mostly available to men, and the introduction of cash crops that made the female farming systems not to fit the economic criteria of the colonists. In Kenya, women represent one half of the active population (Kenya Demographic Profile, 2014) and should therefore be able to participate on an equal footing with men in all spheres of political, economic and social life of the country, and particularly in the decision-making process. However, Kenyan women are under-represented in the labour workforce and also in the management and decision making positions (Republic Of Kenya, 2010). Women involvement in leadership accrues more

benefit to organisations including educational institutions. Obura, Wamahiu, Warue, Bunyi, Chege, Njoka, and Ruto (2011) explains that women's inclusion in education system planning and policy making is a human rights concern and is a democratic representational requirement which ensures efficiency, mainly due to the diversity which is encompassed. Ostos (2012) contends that a gender balance in educational administration encourages a broader opinion and experience to guide the attainment of school goals. . Ostos also points out that having both men and women in headship gives children that mental model which depict that anyone irrespective of gender can hold positions of headship. It is of paramount importance to therefore increase women in headship to ensure that the balance is achieved.

It is however noted that Kenya has made great strides to ensure that girls' access and retention in schools is made compulsory (M. o. E, 2012). There is a steady increase of female student teachers enrolment in PTTC (M.O.E.S &T, 2014, R.o.K, 2010). In 2014, 19,323 female students enrolled in public and private primary teacher training colleges compared to 18,148 male students (M.O.E.S &T, 2014). This study will seek to establish why the number of female leaders in schools is low despite increased primary female teachers into the profession.

In Kenya, a survey carried out by the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Development in 2010, revealed that in the public sector women make up 32.1% and men 67.9% of the workforce. Of the women employed in the government ministries 71.9% work in the lower cadres of job groups H and below. The survey further reveal that out of the total labour force of 69,833 surveyed in 35 ministries only 0.5 % were women in top management position of job group P and above compared to 2% men (Republic of Kenya, 2010). In the Kenyan corporate world a similar scenario is

replicated. In a survey of 61 companies listed on the Nairobi's securities exchange conducted in 2013, cumulatively out of the 467 directors, only 54 are women, representing just 12 percent (Kiberenge, 2014). This means that most companies and public bodies are not complying with the two thirds gender rule anchored in the constitution of Kenya 2010.

The education sector has experienced a gender gap in employment in favour of the men. In the year 2008 female primary school teachers constituted 46% against 54% male teachers. The trend in the secondary school level is the same and even wider with the male teachers still dominating at 64.7% compared to 35.3% females (Republic of Kenya, 2010). This suggests that we have more female teachers at the primary school level as compared to other levels of education in Kenya. Despite the relatively larger population of women in primary schools as compared to the other levels of education, female leaders are still under-represented in primary schools.

Historical imbalances in the intake of student teachers in the pre-service certificate and diploma training institutions has been experienced in Kenya due to low performance of girls in secondary school and primary schools as noted in RoK (2007). Consequently low proportions of women join the teaching profession thus providing a smaller pool of teachers from which leaders can be appointed.

Booth (2005) defines aspiration for headship as a measure of intrinsic career inspiration or motivation for becoming a leader and pursuing opportunities. Research reveals that aspiration for headship is largely associated with the access to leadership. Findings from a study by Nazemi, Mortazavi and Shahla (2012) strongly supported the relationship between low headship aspiration and women's inclination in adopting managerial positions. The study further identified career role salience and the women's perceived

organisational barriers moderated their aspiration for headship. Riehl and Byrd (1997) showed that the factors such as having aspirations, having qualification and experience were important in predicting whether one was to become an administrator for both women and men teachers. However for women the probability of becoming an administrator remained lower than for men due to other intervening factors which probably could be gender related. By identifying these factors that influence aspiration of women to lead would be most important in encouraging them to pursue headship position. Aspirations in career are regulated by self-efficacy. Self-efficacy is a construct that has been applied to a variety of fields. Bandura (1997) described self-efficacy as a key determinant of psychological change, choice of settings and activities, quality of performance in a specific domain, and level of persistence when one meets adverse or negative experiences. A belief of low personal competency will lead people to avoid activities. Confidence in one's leadership capabilities influences leadership behaviours such as attempted leadership (McCormick, Tanguma & Lopez-Forment, 2002). The need for encouragement and the belief of others in women leaders are vital factors for women seeking promotion (Schmidt, 2002).

In Kenya, a study done by Tikoko and Kiprop (2014) in Rongai District pointed out the lack of support from spouses when female teachers are offered administrative jobs. This study has identified the attitude of husbands to some aspiring female teachers as hindrances to their career mobility. This could be stemming from the cultural standpoint of the community where the leadership role in the family is occupied by the man and therefore men are expected to head all other institutions in the society. Tikoko and Kiprop study employed a qualitative approach and also identified low self-esteem, dismissive attitudes against women, lack of ambition among female teachers and competition from male colleagues. Chisikwa (2010) also found out that in Vihiga

district mixed secondary schools, dual role of the female teacher and spouse attitudes were perceived as influences on gender imbalance in the appointment of head. Chisikwa's study further went ahead to employ quantitative – descriptive techniques to generate the findings.

It is therefore noted that the under-representation of women in management and leadership in schools is still high and is attributed to varied reasons. These are the influence of gendered socialisation due to culture affecting female teachers approach to their roles in their careers (for example Tikoko & Kiprop, 2014; Gaus, 2011 and Chisikwa, 2010;); work life balance (for example, Onyango, Simatwa & Ondigi, 2011 and Oplatka, 2006); overt and covert discrimination in the workplace (for example, Brown & Ralph, 1996); lack of role models (for example, Mwebi & Lazaridou, 2008) and ineffective government policies (for example Chisikwa & Indoshi, 2010). However, most women make their own decisions not to apply for promotion (Oplatka, 2006). Stufft and Kelly (2009) suggest that women are motivated to remain in the classroom, where they get to have the most direct influence on their students because of their stereotypical innate ability to nurture and care for children. This study therefore explored aspirations among female administrators in public primary schools in Tharaka Nithi County in Kenya.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Sustainable socio-economic development of any country requires the effective participation of all human resources irrespective of gender. Successful leadership is a function of identifying the factors that influence aspirations to pursue headship positions and the belief of others in women leaders. In the 21st century a lot has been done on women empowerment in Sub-Saharan Africa. Sustainable Development Goals

and the vision 2030, all remain focused to empower women and aspire them in into leadership. In Kenya the new constitution advocates for a third gender rule to empower women in leadership and all spheres of influence. Despite all these efforts, Statistics reveal that male administrators are still dominating at 64.7% compared to 35.3% females in school headship in Kenya (Ministry of Education, 2017). In Tharaka Nithi County for example, only 43 (9%) public primary schools out of 470 are headed by females (Tharaka Nithi County Education office records, 2018). There is therefore need to understand why women have not availed themselves as candidates for these high-level school administration post because If this underrepresentation is not addressed, the implication will be the absence of women in the ranks of senior school management, a telling sign that the above goals will remain unattained. This implies that there will be creation of a generation where gender stereotyping, gender inequality, gender disparities lack of role models and gender discrimination will be of great dominance. It is in the light of the above that this study sought to explore aspirations among female administrators in public primary schools in Kenya.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study was to explore aspirations for headship among female administrators in public primary schools in Tharaka Nithi County in Kenya. In this regard the study explored women perceptions on self-efficacy, social cultural influences, and institutional factors that affect their choice to aspire for headship in primary schools.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The specific objectives of the study were:

1. To explore female administrators' self-efficacy on aspirations for headship in public primary schools in Tharaka Nithi County
2. To identify socio-cultural factors that influence female administrators' aspirations for headship in public primary schools in Tharaka Nithi County.
3. To examine institutional factors that affect female administrators' aspirations for headship in public primary schools in Tharaka Nithi County

1.5 Research Questions

The research was guided by the following research question:

1. How do female administrators' self-efficacy influence their aspirations for headship in public primary schools in Tharaka Nithi County?
2. What social cultural factors influence female administrators' aspirations for headship in public primary schools in Tharaka Nithi County?
3. What institutional factors affect female administrators' aspirations for headship in public primary schools in Tharaka Nithi County?

1.6 Justification of the Study

The concern of under representation of women in development and decision making in society has become a global focus. School leadership is one sector across countries in which women hold few management positions in comparison to the men. The current representation for women as heads of school has not been equal to that of men in public primary schools (Chubb, 2015)

Predominant societal and cultural stereotypical beliefs and expectations explain the factors that have contributed to the few women aspiring for headship in primary schools. A goal of having gender equality in school leadership is possible (Steyn &

Parsaloi, 2014) hence understanding the structure of power within schools and what is preventing a large potential pool of candidates consisting of female administrators to pursue top leadership positions is important. This needs to be considered objectively so that changes can be made so as not to perpetuate a gendered perception and experienced society (Burton and Weiner 2016).

It is important that we learn from this research and listen to the voices of the women as we seek to change the imbalance and fix the inequities. The justification of this study therefore rests on the need for the study to serve as a strong foundation for a comprehensive.....because gender stereotyping has a permanent damage on human growth and development (Onyango, 2007;Foyld 2012; Golshirazian et al., 2015)

1.7 Scope of the Study

The study limited itself to only one county, Tharaka Nithi County. The findings of this study may not be generalised to other counties due to the unique social, economic and geographical characteristics of the county that may affect patterns of leadership in educational institutions

The study focused on the aspiration of female administrators for public primary school headship and did not include aspirations for headship in community or political establishments or other educational institutions other than public primary schools which are at times subjected to specific policies laid down by the Ministry of Education for appointing school leaders.

1.8 Limitations of the Study

The questionnaire method used to obtain data from female administrators may not have allowed for the collection of detailed and rich information. However the interview

method addressed this limitation by eliciting as much as possible in-depth information about the female administrators.

Female teachers, female senior teachers, and female deputy head teachers who were on duty by the time of study participated in the study. Those on study leave, maternity leave or any other leave did not participate although their input would have been of significance; however this was overcome through generalisation of the findings.

At times the researcher visited the school for data generation only to find out that it was a sports day and all the schools are gathered for competitions. Other times it happened that the deputy head teacher to be interviewed has attended a meeting. This forced the researcher either to reschedule for another day or had to follow the participants and sometime request to collect data at the place of meeting or even during lunch break. This may have compromised the quality of data because might be the respondents were not relaxed or not comfortable as this was not their natural setting.

1.9 Assumption of the study

This study was based on the assumption:

That the female administrators are aware of the requirements needed for one to be promoted to headship positions in public primary schools and that they know of the gender inequalities in leadership in public primary schools.

That the female administrators would give the required data on the socio-cultural, self-efficacy and institutional factors which affect their aspirations for top leadership positions.

That the participants would be willing to give honest, sincere, and unbiased responses in order to assist the researcher generate accurate and sufficient data for the study.

1.10 Significance of the Study

The study findings will inform TSC as a commission concerned with offering employment to teachers and also coming up with rules and regulations governing the promotion and transfer of teachers at all levels.

The information will enable those in the education sector to design management and leadership programmes that motivate and encourage women toward leadership positions which is aimed at ensuring gender equality in primary school management. Institutions charged with capacity building of school administrators such as the Kenya Education Management Institute (KEMI), will also benefit from the outcome of this study.

The findings of the study will inform policy makers by providing a framework within which existing practice may be reviewed and new policies formulated and elaborated, so as to accelerate the participation of women in primary school leadership.

The findings will serve to strengthen efforts to implement equal opportunity policies such as the “two thirds gender rule” proposed in Kenya constitution 2010 in appointing decision makers in schools and also inform future training programs indicating adjustments that can be made to primary school culture in order to better prepare and foster the growth of women for headship roles

1.11 Theoretical Framework

A theoretical framework is a lens which becomes an advocacy perspective that shapes the types of questions to be asked, informs how data should be collected and analyzed, and provides a call for action (Creswell, 2014). The Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 2005) underpinned this study. The theory of Planned Behaviour (Ajzen, 2005),

was based on the assumption that human beings usually behave in a sensible manner; that they take account of available information and implicitly or explicitly consider the implications of their actions. The theory states that attitudes towards behavior, subjective norms and perceived behavior control together shape an individual's behavioural intentions and behavior. The theory also postulates that a person's intention to perform behaviour is the most important immediate determinant of that action. In relation to this study, female administrators' aspiration to headship is most likely to influence access to headship.

Ajzen (2005) suggests that intentions and behaviour are a function of three basic determinants, one personal in nature, second reflecting social influence and a third dealing with issues of control. The personal factor is the individual's attitude toward the behaviour. Attitude towards behaviour is determined by accessible beliefs about the consequences of the behaviour. The second determinant of intention is the person's perception of social pressure to perform or not to perform the behaviour under consideration. The third determinant is the perceived behavioural control which is the sense of self-efficacy or the perceived ability to perform the behaviour of interest. Control beliefs lead to the perception that one has or does not have the capacity to carry out the behaviour.

The theory of planned behaviour will be used to explain why female administrators aspire to or do not aspire for headship in schools by looking at social factors and personal factors that shape aspiration. By identifying a female administrator's intention to aspire for school leadership greatly contributes to the depth of our understanding of how female leaders will be nurtured and developed.

1.12 Conceptual Framework

As female administrators aspire for headship, many variables influence their decision. Interrelated concepts believed to influence leadership aspirations of women formed the basis for this study. **Figure 1** displays the conceptual framework showing the various components of the study. The components were made up of the independent variables, namely the self – efficacy, the social cultural factors and the institutional factors. The dependent variable was successful leadership.

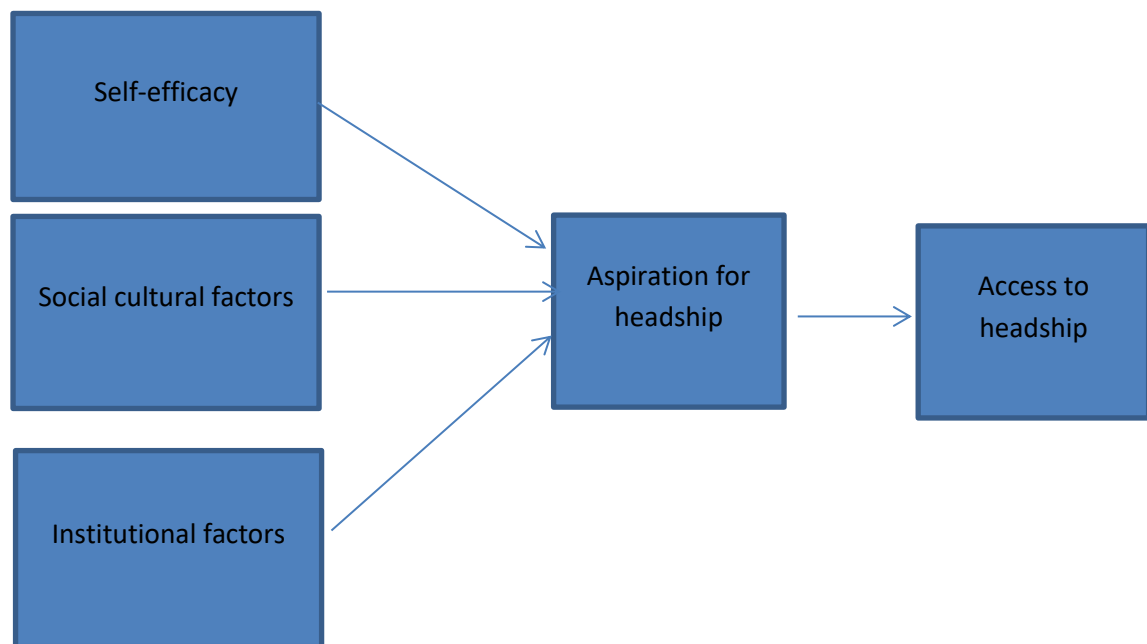


Figure 1. Conceptual framework on female administrators' aspirations for headship positions in public primary schools.

Source: Ajzen (2005) Theory of planned behaviour.

1.13 Operation Definition Of Terms

Access: Entry into headship positions by the female administrators

Aspiration: An intention by the female administrator to move up into top leadership positions within the public primary school

Deputy Head teacher: A teacher who deputises for the head teacher on all matters pertaining to school administration and takes charge of the school in the absence of the head teacher. In addition to the teaching responsibility, he or she is delegated to management of school stores, discipline of pupils, class registers among other duties.

Headship: The lead administrator of a public primary school charged with the responsibility of being the accounting officer of the school. He/she interprets and implements policy decisions pertaining to training, overall organization, coordination and supervision of activities in the institution as well as maintaining high training and learning standards.

Institutional factors: Factors associated with the primary school organizational structure which shape and define the behaviour and positions of women.

Public Primary School: An institution owned by the government to offer compulsory basic education and training from class one to eight for children between 6 years and 13 years. The government provides all the facilities in public primary schools, pays the teachers and appoints school managers and school leaders through their agents.

Self-efficacy: Beliefs female teachers have about their ability to successfully apply for and enter into leadership positions.

Socio-cultural Factors: Social constructions of gender and the assignment of specific roles, responsibilities and expectations to women and men due to the prevailing culture.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

To understand the female teachers' perceptions and aspirations for leadership positions in primary schools, a review of literature in female leadership will be given. The review of literature first will examine the aspiration experiences of female teachers for leadership. Literature on socio-cultural factors, institutional factors, as well as self-efficacy, and how they influence female teachers' aspiration for leadership will also be reviewed.

2.1 Importance of women headship and management

The literature on gender and leadership suggests that gender has a significant impact on women's access and entry into headship positions (Blackmore, Thomson & Barty 2006; Coleman, 2005). 'This is because women are still discriminated against and lack administrative preparation for the positions on the basis of their gender despite equal and to some extent preferential treatment policies put in place' (Moorosi 2010: 10).

The causes of women's under-representation have been described as 'overt and covert barriers' (Coleman 2001, 2009), or 'internal and external barriers' (Blackmore 1989; Hall 1996; Shakeshaft 1989), to women's career development. The term 'glass ceiling' has internationally become the most representative metaphor comprising the whole range of inhibitors limiting women's accession to senior positions.

Shakeshaft (2002) recognises that there were still a lot of women who reflect that parental responsibilities restrain them from performing their jobs as school principals, and that such responsibilities may make women reluctant candidates for headship positions. Additionally, Coleman (2004) notes that the classification of women as

sympathetic, domestic, as and of lesser importance and status than males, influenced them.

In most countries, women were expected to preserve traditional family roles or new job responsibilities (Sanchez & Thornton 2010). When women attain or seek positions as educational leaders, it is not easy to balance their work and family obligations (Coleman 2001, 2005; Mahitivanichcha & Rorrer 2008; Moreau, Osgood & Halsall 2007; Wrushen & Sherman 2008).

International research shows that women's efforts to become leaders can be even more difficult if there is a lack of support from partners/husbands and extended family (Coleman 2011; Hall 1996; Kaparou & Bush 2007; Young 1992). Additionally, women take career breaks to have a family, putting them in a disadvantageous position compared to their male colleagues and making them think twice before applying for leadership positions (Coleman 2009, 2011; Evetts 1994; McLay 2008; Moreau et al. 2007; Thornton & Bricheno 2000). As Coleman (2007) explains the expectation that women will take maternity leave, rather than having a more extended career break may not in itself have been helpful to women, as it has fuelled the expectation that women will take only short breaks for childbirth and childcare.'

Coleman's (2004) UK research, based on the orthodoxies relating to gender and leadership, signifies that women principals often mention some 'commonplace misunderstandings which are brushed aside by the women who mentioned them, but they still have to be regularly overcome and are indicative of the underlying assumption that the leader is male and that women as leaders are outsiders (Schmuck 1996).

Wirth's (2001) research in Geneva shows that the gendered division of time between work and family is probably the most significant gender issue of all and explains many of the differences between the work patterns and job types of men and women. A barrier that female might have faced in order to aspire to headship is that 'motherhood takes priority over work and hampers women in balancing their work and family life. Female often have to make a choice between their career and children.'

Researches in Greece show that those who succeed despite this role conflict usually have other people looking after their families (Kaparou & Bush 2007).

In Cyprus researches states that women have not been given space to express their achievements and have been given even fewer resources to help them to aspire to leadership positions (Hadjipavlou, 2003). One main reason is the structural organization of Cypriot society, which could have been considered as patriarchal and gender specific. Linked to this, research in Ohio showed that women need to be assertive enough to aspire to headship positions, and to apply for them when qualified to do so (Pirouznia 2013). Moorosi (2010: 16) notes that 'social barriers in the form of broader cultural expectations in terms of the sex role stereotypes, political, traditional and historical influences are even more problematic because they are so deeply rooted in the society and in the institutional cultures and are therefore not easy to eradicate'. Women experience a glass ceiling arising from gender stereotypes and the difficulties of combining motherhood with a career (Coleman 2011).

Research in South Africa also identifies other barriers to women's promotion to leadership positions, including discriminatory hiring and promotion practices, lack of mentoring systems in the teaching profession, lack of support systems from family and

colleagues, lack of networking, lack of female role models, and lack of support from colleagues and administrators (Chen, Doherty & Vinnicombe 2012; Chisholm 2001).

2.2 Aspirations of female teachers for leadership positions

Career aspiration is the expectation for the level and type of position which teachers ultimately hope to attain (Lacey, 2003). It is the degree to which women aspire to headship positions and continued education within their careers (Gray & O'Brien, 2007). Aspiration is therefore the intention of teachers to enter into headship positions in schools.

Women's career choices have evolved over time to address the changing roles and increasing number of women in the labour force (Gray & O'Brien, 2007). In the past women's career choices were looked at as either having a homemaking or a career orientation, to examining the degree of career versus family orientation, traditional versus non-traditional career choice, and prestigious versus non prestigious occupational selection.(Gray and O'Brien, *ibid*)points out that currently these distinctions may be less relevant and too ambiguous, because many women balance career and family, and some women aspire to leadership roles while employed in traditional and non-prestigious careers.

Teaching profession especially at the elementary levels is deemed a traditional female career. According to the UN (2010), female teachers' global share increased from 58% to 62% between 1999 and 2007 however, the proportions of women in the teaching staff at the primary level show a wide variation between developed regions and the less developed regions. It is a profession that is seen as suitable to women as compared to men. However studies worldwide have reported that there is trend that women are less likely than men to desire promotion into a senior management position.

An examination of the literature by Gray and O'Brien (2007) revealed that generally individuals who aspired to advance within their careers often pursued opportunities for leadership and promotion, they were selected to train or supervise newer employees and were often required that they obtain additional training or education to prepare for increased work responsibilities.

Reihl and Byrd (1997) examined factors associated with the career move from school teaching to building-level administration in the USA, using nationally representative data on about 4,800 elementary and secondary public school teachers. Having administrative experience and a degree in administration were the most important predictors of becoming an administrator. Planning to leave teaching improved men's chances, while family context decreased women's chances. In the study, women's predicted probability of becoming a school administrator remained far below that for men. Interestingly, a study conducted by Mertz and Mcneely (1990), revealed that most of the female superintendents and principles reported that they furthered their education in the field of administration because it was readily available, but not with the aim of getting an administrative position. After certification they did not seek administrative positions but rather waited to be asked to apply. This shows that despite having the required qualification for leadership positions women have to wait for approval from others in order to apply for the posts.

In a study conducted by Schmidt (2002) in Ontario, Canada, which investigated the interactions of educational change and the teachers' emotions, women expressed contentment with their careers as classroom teachers and did not aspire to administrative positions. A study investigating leadership aspiration of Victorian government school teachers revealed similar findings, showing that more women than

males preferred staying in the classroom and also more females aspired to the assistant principal role rather than the principal role, whereas more males aspired to the principal role (Lacey, 2003). This echoes Shake's (1989) model in Brown & Ralph (1996) that described female career aspiration as different to that of men and, if judged by the traditional male aspiration definition, women may appear not to aspire. Also, from the model, women could appear to lack aspiration because of organizational and societal barriers that may prevent them from acknowledging or acting on their aspirations. From these studies, few female teachers do not plan any career changes from being classroom teachers, but instead they are more committed to the classroom and may aspire for informal leadership roles. The women show more contentment with their positions as classroom teachers.

From the literature reviewed above, differences between men's and women's desire for advancement shows that women have lower aspiration compared to men to climb up the leadership ladder. Reasons cited for women's low aspiration include low ambition on the part of women, gender stereotypes associating men with leadership positions, and lack of requisite qualification.

2.3 Social-cultural factors influencing women's aspiration to headship positions

Predominant societal and cultural expectation, explains the disparity between the number of male and female leaders (Lewis, 2002; Barngetuny, 1999; Osumbah, 2010). Saeeda (nd) points out that no law can enforce equality and social justice unless equality is socially acknowledged and practiced. This implies that the deeply entrenched social-cultural factors can traverse any advances put in place that ensures women rises to leadership.

Social expectations often put men in roles of leadership and women in supporting roles. Historically speaking, it has been commonly held that the roles of leader, manager, and administrator have been reserved for men. These social norms often keep women from assuming roles of leadership. According to Saeeda (nd), female under-representation in management is due to the female role-socialisation whose emphasis is on domestic responsibilities. She says that in the family, the female child is socialised into stereotypical femininity: to be timid, obedient, silent and soft, of which none of these qualities are associated with leadership. This female socialization may have affected the positioning of women in school leadership.

Addi-Racchah (2006) examined the similarity-attraction perspective in three socio cultural contexts in which women differ in terms of their social power, women teachers were found to enjoy an advantage in holding pedagogic positions. As these positions are frequently perceived as “female” jobs, women’s greater access to them can be regarded as preserving prevailing gender role stereotypes.

Gender role stereotypes have been defined as beliefs about the appropriateness of various roles and activities for men and women based on their ascribed gender attributes (Berkery, Morley and Tiernan, 2013). Crawford (2001) defines stereotypes as the widespread attitudes people have about women in leadership positions and that they are perception with no objective basis. Stereotypical beliefs against women have contributed to the few women’s entry into leadership in schools because often, leadership has been labelled male. A study by Coleman (2003) found out that this stereotypical belief advantaged those women already in leadership in that, “they did not fit the stereotypical male mould and they felt that this freed their behaviour. They did not have to operate within the dominant discourse of male headship” (p. 330).

In a study by Ngan (2011), the leadership experiences of women leaders in higher education in Vietnam showed that culture strongly influenced their beliefs and perceptions about leadership as well as the way they led. The indigenous culture also affected their access to leadership roles and career advancement. Since Vietnam is a patriarchal society and male attributes are seen more appropriate for leadership, the women in the study put in a lot of effort to prove that they are equally capable leaders as men. The women leaders reported that they had to strain their ability to balance home duties and work.

According to Eagly and Karau (2002), female leaders are evaluated less favourable (than men's) potential for leadership, because leadership ability is more stereotypical of men than women. This kind of prejudice stems from the descriptive norms of gender roles where women's characteristics do not go hand in hand with the qualities expected and desired in leaders. Women leaders' choices are thus constrained by pressure from two directions: conforming to their gender role would produce a failure to meet the requirements of their leader role, and conforming to their leader role would produce a failure to meet the requirements of their gender role.

Although leadership is stereotypical referred to as masculine, findings from Coleman (2003) study revealed that the perception of men and women head teachers about their own leadership style are similar and tend to perceive their style of leadership to be more feminine, that is, collaborative, caring and people-oriented, than masculine, which is the 'orthodox' macho gender stereotype that is associated with men.

Another study proving similarity in leadership behaviour in both men and women is Emmerik, Euwema & Wendt (2008), whose "results provide support for the suggestion of diminishing gender stereotypes" (p. 310). Female managers investigated worldwide,

exhibited stereotypical male and female leadership behaviours, and more specifically, female managers score higher on initiating structure – a task-directed behaviour, than male managers. Initiating structure is stereotypically perceived as male leadership behaviour. It should be noted that despite the commonly held notion that leadership is suited for men, both men and women almost employ similar styles of leadership.

Other stereotypes in educational settings are that, women would be better off heading girls' only schools because of the belief that girls' schools conform to rules as opposed to boys or mixed schools (Barngetuny, 1999). This would imply that women are not efficient when it comes to dealing with disciplinary matters associated with boys' schools and therefore limiting their options to joining girls' only schools as leaders. Coleman

(2003) is of the view that such ideas and beliefs are used by employers to justify the appointment of men rather than women. Coleman further argues that women are alleged to suit heading girls' only schools because in such schools the females head teacher's gender may be perceived as less relevant.

Another explanation for underrepresentation of women in leadership in schools is the lack of support from significant others. Shake shaft (2006) found out that quite a number of research identifies "support" as an important factor for women getting into administration. Female teachers in mixed secondary schools in Vihiga district, Kenya, shied off from headship because of spouse attitude which caused family tension (Chisikwa, 2010).

It is also observed that men dominated Schools Boards of Management in Siaya District, Kenya because the women are usually discouraged by their spouses from

accepting positions on Board of Management, and instead expects them to stay home to do domestic chores (Onyango, Simatwa & Ondigi, 2011).

Support from the female teacher's parents has been identified as a major booster to those female teachers aspiring to leadership. Cubillo and Brown (2003) in their study, which examined the barriers to leadership, faced by women from various countries reveals that paternal support played a major role in shaping their early education and subsequent careers. However, the study noted that the emphasis on the paternal support may have been a consequence of the strongly patriarchal societies into which many of the women were born and socialised.

Family responsibilities are widely mentioned in several studies as an impediment to leadership for women (Wangoi, 2012). With the demands of motherhood, women with young children are less likely to pursue administrative roles. The administrative roles and motherhood seem to be in conflict. Shakeshaft (2006) says that family and home responsibilities, place-bound circumstances, moves with spouses, or misalignment of personal and organizational goals were early contributors to women's lack of administrative success. This is either because the demands of family on women aspirants restricted them or because those who hired believed that women would be hindered by family commitments.

Studies on gender factors affecting entry into administration have found out that women in far greater numbers than men had completed the requirements for administrative certification; some have even earned an advanced degree, and waited for their children to be at or through school age before applying for their first leadership role. Some women are often preoccupied with their family responsibilities that they are easily overtaken by events in the office such as promotions (Barng'etuny, 1999). However

according to the findings of Marongiu and Ekehammar (1999) in Ming, Ahmad and Ismail (2007), high work-family conflict did not hinder women in aspiring for participation in the managerial group. “The lower mean score of work-family conflict seems to indicate that middle managerial women, with an average age in the mid-thirties were likely to experience moderate levels conflict between work and family roles. This might be due to the availability and reliability of child care service and “after school service” provided by day care centres or even households in these localities”. Unlike in industrial countries where services of child minders and house-girls are expensive, in Kenya this kind of labour is easily available at rates affordable by women. Barngetung (1999) challenges

Women to show greater ambition in career achievement and apply for promotions as frequently as men.

Teachers in schools have also been found to influence their colleagues in one way or another to join leadership. Female aspirants have complained about the lack of support from teachers and especially their female counterparts (Mertz & Mcneely, 1990). In extreme cases, head teachers have faced unbecoming behaviour from the teachers, which degenerated to verbal abuse. A study conducted by Makura (2009), revealed that Zimbabwean female primary school heads gets problems from all teachers irrespective of their gender. The female primary school heads attributed this scenario to the nature of the Zimbabwean Culture, which is highly patriarchal. As such, women were not readily being endorsed and accepted as leaders. The support given by the teachers to the head teacher may encourage aspiring teachers to join leadership because of guaranteed backing from the teaching staff.

It is noted that teachers' attitudes towards female leaders vary by gender. In a study done by Güney, Gohar, Sevcan, and Mehmet (2006) women's attitudes toward women managers in Turkey were more negative than that of men's while Pakistani women have more favourable attitudes than Turkish women toward women managers. This study also indicated that Pakistani men showed more positive attitudes toward women managers than Turkishmen.

On the other hand, literature reviewed by Eagly and Karau (2002) reveals that the perceiver's gender of leadership roles varies and that the variance between men's and women's perception of managers likely reflect the considerably greater experience of women with female managers. Men are far less likely than women to have a female manager, thus perceiving women as less qualified than men for leadership. This however contradicts findings from a study done by Berkery, Morley and Tiernan, (2013) which tested lord and Maher's recognition based processes to determine whether familiarity with women in leadership positions decreases the "think manager-think Male" Stereotype. Exposure to female managers did not reduce the level of gender typing of the managerial role. In this study, respondents who had experience of working with female managers recorded a stronger correlation between men and managers.

Research has also revealed that teachers view female head teachers to be as capable as men. Thandi (1996) in his study on the teachers' perception of female secondary school principals in Kwazulu-Natal revealed that majority of teachers generally do not think that the sex of a principal is important and feel that female principals are equally as capable as men, if sometimes not more capable than their male colleagues. A few teachers had a negative perception of female principals and felt that female teachers should not run schools, especially secondary schools, because they see female

principals as having favourites, being moody, being inclined to gossip about certain staff members to other staff members, being either too autocratic or too laissez faire; and tending to undermine teachers in favour of pupils. This indicates that the female leaders and male leaders are similar when it comes to performing tasks; however the subordinates are able to experience the differences in their personality and emotional dispensations.

Women have also been found to perceive themselves to be easily affected by their emotions and sensitive in dealing with work, which they saw as not good for leadership (Ngan, 2011). Although men and women head teachers may be perceived as having equal abilities to become good leaders, teachers tend to bring into disrepute the leadership of women because of certain temperamental qualities.

In a study done by Arar & Abramovitz (2013) in the Arab society in Israel, teachers in general has prejudiced perceptions of women school principals. “Women teachers tend to support the perception that women principals have what it takes to lead the school with regard to in-school roles such as improving the teachers’ capability, but both sexes believe that women principals have inferior capability to properly perform the principals role in relation to external entities” (p.27).

Leadership positions have also been observed to entail paperwork and meetings therefore not permitting the teachers to be in close contact with their pupils (Schmidt, 2002). Teachers who are given the opportunity to experience responsibility position before pursuing deputy head teacher or head teacher position may get disappointed if these lower positions in the institutions do not meet their expectations, thus suppressing any positive feelings about pursuing future leadership positions.

In summary, leadership has been viewed as a male arena across most cultures and because of this, women teachers have faced resistance from their own selves and society as they access leadership. Societies are highly patriarchal having few or no women daring to venture into leadership. In addition there is a perception that leadership is demanding, thus women take lesser roles in schools to allow them manage family responsibilities.

2.4 Female administrators' Self-Efficacy

Self-efficacy is not only an individual's belief in their own ability to achieve something, but also it is the belief in one's capabilities to mobilize personal resources, such as motivation, cognitive, and behavioural skills, in order to coordinate task-specific performance. If an individual has a low sense of self-efficacy, he or she may not persevere in challenging tasks (Bandura, 1997). An individual's self-efficacy in a specific domain can provide information about how that individual will perceive and cope with challenges in that domain. Self-efficacy is an important antecedent of career aspiration. In other words, if an individual has a high sense of self-efficacy, they will believe in their ability to do the task well and ultimately will persist in challenging task and aspire for high achievement in their career (Ming, Ahmed & Ismael, 2007). Leithwood (2007), Says that according to Bandura's Theory Of Teacher Motivation, "beliefs in one's ability to perform either a specific task or a more general domain of tasks has a strong influence on the amount of effort one expends, how long one persists in trying to accomplish a task, how resilient one is in the face of failure, and how well one is likely to cope with stress under demanding circumstances" (p. 48). Pajeres (2006) in Ottu and Inwang (2013) say that "self-efficacy can affect the task effort, persistence, expressed interest and difficulty level of goals users attempt to attain" (p.180). McCormick, Tanguma and Lopez-Forment (2002) identified four major categories of

experiences that influence the efficacy estimate according to Bandura (1986). These are personal performance accomplishments, exposure to models, positive feedback from a significant other, and physiological conditions and mood states. However McCormick, et al. Note that feelings of efficaciousness develop gradually through life experiences which the four determinants are encountered and interpreted. Access to leadership requires self-efficacy by the aspirants. Accessing leadership for women has been described as challenging because of existing barriers and therefore one has to be persistent and have confidence in one's ability.

In a study done by Schmidt (2002), most teachers expressed self-doubt and lack of confidence. The women mostly expressed feelings of discomfort when thinking about educational administration. The teachers' lack of self-confidence made them anxious about pursuing a promotion. A study done on female employees in state civil service and related parastatals in Nigeria found that a high self-efficacy increases women's ability to advance in their career aspirations, despite the fact that some may have experienced emotional violence (Ottu & Inwang, 2013). Women in the study who had advanced in their careers may be less susceptible to emotional violence. McCormick, et al. (2002), reported similar findings, where women reported a significantly lower leadership self-efficacy than men, exhibiting low confidence in their leadership capabilities; however, despite men reporting a greater leadership self-efficacy belief, there was no significant difference between the men and women in terms of the number of leadership role experiences reported.

Assumptions that the more one is educated, the higher the ability to embrace egalitarian concepts was overridden by Arar and Abramovitz (2013) findings which indicate that educated women have little belief in women's principals' ability to cope with external

entities compared to those less educated. These findings suggest that having higher education qualification does not improve the women's self-perception to enable them aspire to leadership and effectively head schools. Obtaining an education is therefore not enough, but a change in their perception of their abilities to deal with external school relations is a welcomed idea.

Mccormick, Tanguma, and Lopez-Forment, (2002) identifies four major categories of experiences that influence the efficacy estimate. These influences are personal performance accomplishments, exposure to models and watching a similar other successfully perform a task, positive feedback or the encouragement of a credible person such as a coach, a mentor, a teacher, or a parent and physiological condition and mood states. Basing on these findings it is important that female teachers are encouraged to experience leadership in various capacities so as to enhance their self-efficacy and in turn aspire for leadership

In short, leadership self-efficacy is considered important when aspiring to leadership. Accessing leadership is purported to have challenges (Rarieya, 2011), it is important therefore for women to have confidence to overcome these challenges. Self-efficacy is influenced by a number of factors such as exposure to role models among others. Female leaders who are role models are few and in some cases non-existent. This may impact ones' self-efficacy, making female teachers to have little confidence in their abilities to lead.

2.5 Institutional factors influencing female administrators' aspirations

Institutional constriction may affect the aspiration of females to leadership. Contextual variables such as level of schooling, organisational size, sectorial identity and the gender of students may affect leaders' beliefs and behaviours (Collard, 2001). Because

of such variability within institutions, gender related factors such as sexual division of labour within the institution and promotional procedures are observed.

The way institutions identify potential leaders may discriminate against female candidates. In the USA, the search for key administrators in K-12 education such as the superintendent is left to search consultants (Tallerico, 2000), while this task for Kenyan primary school leaders is mainly left to the TSC staffing section in each county. There are preset requirements which guide the requirement and appointment of school leaders in Kenya (TSC, 2008). It should be noted that identification of the right skills and competencies required of school leaders is not enough, but the institutional context must support a leader's motivation to aspire for leadership.

There are unsaid rules on whether a principal or school leader is female or male, and because traditional stereotypes cast women and minorities as socially incongruent as leaders, they face greater challenges becoming integrated into the organization (Hart, 1995). In a survey of 2000 teachers of Victorian government schools in Australia, Lacey (2003) reveals that teachers consider the identification of potential leaders as unplanned and does not recognise multiple career paths to leadership. This therefore is a strong disincentive to seeking promotion, particularly by women. In Kenya, school leadership traditions influence gender imbalance in appointment of head teachers. In a study conducted by Chisikwa (2010) in Vihiga district, Kenya, the history of any particular mixed secondary school revealed a trend of male leadership. This tendency is often perpetuated by school management boards or hiring committees who in most cases are dominated by men. These boards choose to hire men and thus maintaining the gender gap. Organisational culture may also dictate the age of a prospective leader. There is a stereotypical belief that younger individuals are inexperienced and may not be easily

accepted by older group. Ngan (2011) found out that young people shy from seeking leadership opportunities thus limiting the selection opportunities for young people, who are often considered immature. It is therefore noted that the contextual factors basing on different schools may influence a female teacher to aspire for leadership.

Tallerico (2000) observes that the interview process may not favour the female candidate and may be marred by gender stereotyping. Some school board members emphasize questioning on strong disciplinary and other non-instructional technical abilities of male applicants, but they question female candidates' competencies with considerable scrutiny especially with issues to do with discipline, budgeting and maintenance of equipment. Women aspiring for leadership may seem to express incompetence during the interview process and may score lower compared to the male counterparts.

Teachers have identified the role played by principals in encouraging them to aspire to leadership. In a study by Nandwah (2011) on the experiences of public secondary schools principals in Kenya on how they are prepared and developed for school leadership, identifies the principals' support to the potential school leaders as playing a very big role in preparing them for school leadership. For example teachers are given an enabling environment, are delegated to duties, are internally appointed, are released for seminars, and given advice by the principals. This implies that the principal identifies the leader among his/her teachers and nurtures them into leaders.

Few women in Kenya are in administrative positions which lead to leadership in schools. The most common path to leadership positions is through the administrative ranks, with the deputy head teacher being the position immediately preceding headship. Women are already disadvantaged because those in positions that commonly lead to

headship are few. Obura et al (2011) identified some countries such as Algeria, Angola, Benin, Congo (Brazzaville), Nepal, Papua New Guinea, and Tanzania as experiencing a “pipeline problem”, whereby it becomes a challenge to produce adequate numbers of women for recruitment into leadership in ministries of education and institutions.

Factors within the institutions are both enablers and hindrances into leadership within a school set up. Although an external body- the TSC is responsible for the identification of the two senior most school leaders, school factors foster an enabling environment for professional mobility of the teachers. Nandwah, (2011) for example has identified the influence of the current school administrators’ role in identification of the next school leaders.

The working conditions for head teachers could discourage female teachers from applying for leadership positions. A study done in Massing Province of Zimbabwe (Makura, 2009), revealed that rural based schools heads generally lacked transport for attending meetings, collecting purchased items and visiting other places. Makura claims that a defective and unreliable transport system unfortunately severely curtails school business. Such conditions may also hinder female effectiveness as heads and therefore rubber stamping the already formed stereotypical believes. In addition, women are reluctant to relocate on promotion to schools in other geographical locations. According to Chisikwa (2010) the location of schools influenced gender imbalance. Some schools located in remote areas are inaccessible therefore most female teachers promoted to head such schools declined the appointments. The leadership responsibilities have influenced the attitudes that teachers have towards accessing the leadership role. In a study done in Arkansas, in the USA, Hewitt, Pijanwski and Denny (2009) showed that the number one reason women gave for not becoming a school administrator was that

they saw the job being too stressful. The men ranked this reason second; however there was no statistical difference in how men and women viewed the reasons for not aspiring to school administration.

In a survey carried out by Operando and Kagoda (2010) of female secondary school teachers from six co-educational schools in different areas of Uganda, revealed that majority of them aspired to school leadership, but few had positioned themselves to do well in the competitive application process. Many of the female teachers in the study perceived the process for appointing leaders to be corrupt and did not expect to get support of their current school administrator. This discouraged the female teachers from applying for school leadership positions.

Relationships with mentors are important when leadership is being developed. Women do not have very many female mentoring options available to them because headship is dominated by men. Studies also show that the behaviour of women in headship positions toward other women is diverse. Women principals are a symbol and role model for other female. They may not only act as social agents promoting gender equality and changing the structure of the gender power relations in school but also act as brokers who sponsor other women in teaching positions and take an active role in advancing them. Under women principals, more women teachers were found to hold leadership positions within schools

In summary, institutional factors affecting female administrators' aspirations are majorly contributed by existing and past school headship behaviours. This study will therefore examine the contribution of the head teacher in encouraging female administrators to apply for headship positions. It has been suggested that, at the current rate of progress, 'women's representation in headship will not match their

representation in the teaching workforce before 2040’ (Fuller, 2017: 58). The gender and educational leadership literature suggests that there are a variety of complex and interrelated factors that continue to limit women’s career options and advancement to headship (Bradbury and Gunter, 2006; Coleman, 2002; Smith, 2016). Hence the need for this study which sought to explore aspirations among female administrators in public primary schools in Kenya

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter presented a description of the methodology to be employed in the study. The methodology comprised of the research paradigm, research design, study locale, target population, sample/sampling procedure, research instruments, validity and reliability of the research instruments, data collection procedures, data analysis and ethical considerations. The study explored the self-efficacy, socio cultural factors and the institutional factors that affect the female administrators' aspirations for headship.

3.1 Research Paradigm

The philosophical underpinning for this study was pragmatism whose aim is to determine practical solutions to problems and actual meanings of the results using what works best (Shannon Baker, 2016). Pragmatic world view is concerned with the research problem and allows the researcher to use all approaches to understand it (Creswell, 2009). Pragmatic paradigm is always concerned about the implication of items and aims at the outcome of the research (Biesta, 2010). The pragmatic world viewers' advocate for the use of multiple approaches to understand phenomena. This was of importance in this study in many ways; first, it allowed the researcher to blend characteristics of quantitative and qualitative methods and to identify concrete solutions to women aspirations for headship. Second, it helped in complimenting the advantages and disadvantages of each method utilized since pragmatism allows for complementarity of both qualitative and quantitative methods. (Biesta, 2010). This paradigm also allowed for transferability and generalizability of the results (Shannon-baker 2016).

3.2 Research Design

Kothari (2004) states that research design are the conceptual structure within which the research is conducted; it constitutes the blueprint for the collection, measurement and analysis of data. Orodho (2003) defines research design as the scheme, outline or a plan that is used to generate answers to the research problems. On the other hand Kombo and Tromp (2006) assert that research design is the ‘glue’ that holds all the elements in the research project together. A mixed method research design utilising both quantitative and qualitative approaches to inquiry were used in this study. Mixed methods provided the researcher with room to integrate different methods for generating data both qualitatively and quantitatively hence complimenting each other to produce quality results (Creswell 2017). Due to this advantage therefore, the study applied concurrent triangulation mixed methods design to collect both qualitative and quantitative data concurrently. This is a two phase design in which the researcher collected both data at a time and equal weight given to both approaches. Both data were analysed concurrently and the results merged at the point of interpretation. The qualitative results were used to validity quantitative data in order for the researcher to get a in depth understanding of the research problem (Creswell & Creswell, 2017; Lewin & Mawoyo, 2014) .

3.3 Study Location

The study was conducted in Tharaka Nithi County. Tharaka Nithi County is one of the forty seven (47) counties in Kenya created by the Kenya Constitution 2010. It borders the Counties of Embu to the South and South West, Meru to the North and North East, Kirinyiga and Nyeri to the West and Kitui to the East and South East. The county lies between latitude 000 07’ and 000 26’ South and between longitudes 370 19’ and 370

46' East. The total area of the County is 2,662.1 Km²; including the shared Mt Kenya forest estimated to have 360Km² stretch in Tharaka Nithi County.

The County is divided into four administrative sub counties namely Tharaka North, Tharaka South, Meru South and Maara. This study was carried out in Tharaka Nithi County because the headship in public primary schools experiences under-representation of women (County Education Office staffing records, Tharaka Nithi County, 2017).

3.4 Target Population

The study target population consisted of all the female administrators in all 470 public primary schools in Tharaka Nithi County, There are total of 320 female administrators (TSC unit records, Tharaka Nithi County, 2018).The researcher decided to deal with female administrators (senior female teachers, deputy female teachers and female head teacher)

3.5 Study Sample Size and Sampling Techniques

A sample is a part of target population accessible that has been procedurally selected to represent it (Willis, 2005). Sampling is a process of selecting a group of units, items or subjects from the population to be included in the study (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2012). Both probabilistic and non-probabilistic techniques of sampling were used. A Simple random sampling was used in order to obtain a sample representative of the whole population. The advantage of this method is that individuals in the sample population have equal chances and independent chance of being selected in the sample and also the data generated can be generalized to a larger population. The researcher worked with a sample size of 175 participants which was drawn from the total female administrators in the 470 schools in the county. To determine this sample size, at a

confidence level of 95 % and sampling error of 5%, the Krejcie and Morgan, (1970) table in Cohen, Manion, and Morrison, (2000) was used (see Appendix H). For a population of 320 female administrators, a sample of 175 is deemed suitable. The sample was randomly sampled from all the 470 schools using the register containing the list of public primary school heads in the in the county. This method of sampling was used in Wangeri et al, (2012).

Table 1

Schools and Female Administrators in Tharaka Nithi County

Sub Counties	Total number of Schools	Total number of female administrators
Meru South	150	123
Tharaka South	107	88
Tharaka North	61	37
Maara	107	72
Total	470	320

Source: TSC (2018)

From the total number of female administrators 10 female deputy head teachers were purposively selected as interview participants. Due to the focus of this study, the sample was purposively limited to deputy heads serving in public primary schools in Tharaka Nithi County. The sample was to provide useful in depth information that would help with understanding of the research phenomenon (Creswell, 2017). Female leadership aspirations and its influences was the focus of the interview. Identification of the female deputy head teachers was determined at the first visit (pre-visit) and thereafter was notified of the interview date and process.

3.6 Research Instruments

This study used both quantitative and qualitative research instruments to generate data. Questionnaires were used to collect quantitative data and interview schedule was used to generate qualitative data.

3.6.1 Questionnaire

This is a research instrument that gathers data over a large sample (Kombo and Tromp, 2006). Questionnaire was suitable for this study because it enabled the researcher to collect data from a large number of respondents using the shortest time (Kothari 2006). Questionnaire in this study included both closed and open questions, where closed questions prescribed the range of responses from which the respondents were to choose (Morrison 2007). Both types of questions were included in this research, since they offered different kinds of information and provided a more complete picture of the phenomenon. Part 1 of the questionnaire contained demographic questions which were used to obtain background information on each participant. Part 2 of the questionnaire was in the form of a descriptive likert-scale survey. Section 1 of part 2 questions aimed at measuring the leadership aspirations of the female administrators which was adapted from Gregor and O'brien (2015), Career Aspiration Scale-Revised. Section 2 questions were adapted from the studies of Wise and Bond (2003) to identify institutional factors that influence the aspirations of female administrators for headship in school. Section 3 items investigated social-cultural factors and Section 4 investigated self-concept, and was developed from a review of literature on gender and school headship. The likert-scale was given scores and assigned a weight of 1 through 5. The questionnaire was presented in Appendix D.

3.6.2 Interview Guide

A semi-structured interview guide was used, with prompts, to allow informants the freedom to express their own views in their own terms while having sufficient structure to provide reliable, comparable, qualitative data (Cohen & Crabtree 2006). Semi-structured interviewing offers both flexibility and consistency; this mode of interviewing gave participants the space and time to explore their lived experiences and made sense of their own words (Englander, 2012; Mason, 2002). Interviews enable interviewers and interviewees to discuss their interpretations of the world in which they live, and to express how they regard situations from their own point of view (Cohen et al., 2000). The semi-structured interviews were conducted with women school deputies. This gave the researcher an opportunity to generate in-depth data regarding the participants' perceptions as they aspired for top leadership positions. It also gave the female leaders room to share their experiences on their school leadership aspirations.

An interview guide (Appendix E) consisting of predetermined list of questions was used. This ensured that each participant was asked similar questions thus improving the reliability of data collected. Each participant was asked a series of structured questions. Probes were applied where necessary. The interview guide included open-ended questions focused on individuals' career trajectories to date and their current lives as administrators as well as their occupational aspirations. On average, each interview lasted for 60 minutes. All interviews were digitally recorded. Using a recorder had the advantage that the interview report was more accurate than making Notes (Opdenakker 2006). All participants were asked to give consent that their interviews be recorded.

3.7 Validity and Reliability Research Instruments

3.7.1 Validity of Research Instrument

The validity of a research Instrument is the degree to which it measures well what it is supposed to measure. It is the extent to which results that will be obtained from an analysis of the data actually represents the phenomenon under study (Mugenda and Mugenda 2003, Kothari 2003) it's thus to do with the quality of and how accurate, correct, true, meaningful and right the data obtained using the instrument in the study represents the variables of the study. There are four types of validity: content validity, construct validity, face validity and criterion validity.

To assess content validity in this study the researcher presented the provisional instruments to the experts (supervisors) in the school of education who carefully and critically assessed or inspected the items that make up the instruments and give their feedback. Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) suggest the use of two groups of experts, one, to assess what concept the instrument is trying to measure and the other group, to determine whether the set of items accurately represents the concept under study. For face validity which is the simplest form of validity the researcher shared and allowed fellow classmates to go through the items with the objectives in mind and established whether or not the measure captured the focus of the concept in the study.

For convergent purposes the validity of this study was determined by triangulating different data sources the from questionnaires, interview guides and pilot tests to check on the plurality of words and the information from the research respondents who justified the minimal access of female administrators into top leadership. The piloting helped in modifying and removing any ambiguous items on the instruments (Creswell, 2017)

3.7.2 Reliability of Research Instruments

This is the measure of the degree to which research instruments yields consistent results or data after repeated trials (Mugenda and Mugenda 2003). It is the extent to which an item gives the same response every time it is used. In this study reliability of the instruments was determined through conducting a test re-test reliability method. The researcher conducted test retest reliability by administering the questionnaires to the respondents and then repeated the exercise after two weeks ensuring that the same instrument be administered to the same respondents. The drafted instruments were first piloted among selected female administrators in two schools in the neighboring county of Meru which were not part of the main study. The pretest sample was 10% of the study sample (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). The responses obtained by the researcher were run through computing descriptive statistics.

The interview guide was developed and tested to assist the researcher to stay focused on the research questions. To ensure that the interview guide drew the desired responses from the participants, a pilot test was carried out to test for suitability, repeatability, dependability, comfortability and credibility of questions, and timing. A pilot study was carried out, in which two female deputies interviewed from schools in the neighbouring County of Meru. The pilot study was repeated to help check for any similarities of the information given during the two visits. It also helped the researcher to correct any errors and re-wording of ambiguous terms that might not be easily understood by the participants. The overall reliability was increased through the use of multiple data collection methods, referred to as triangulation, through the surveys and individual interviews. The interview results outcome confirmed the kind of influence that socio cultural factors, institutional factors and self- efficacy have on leadership aspirations.

This is an indication that, indeed, factors investigated in the study measured what they purported to measure.

3.8 Data Collection Procedures

Data collection refers to the gathering of information in order to serve or prove some facts (Kombo and Tromp, 2006). This is actually the real process of going to the field to gather the required information from the selected population. Data for this study was generated both quantitatively and qualitatively. Before proceeding to the field for data collection, the researcher obtained an approval from the supervisors and the head of department, school of education Moi University. An authorization letter from Moi University, school of Post Graduate Studies and Research in written form which was indicated Appendix I was also acquired. A research permit from the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI), which was indicated (Appendix J) was also acquired. The researcher then obtained a schools' entry approval from the County Director of Education, Tharaka Nithi County (Appendix K). Thereafter, the researcher sought permission from the sub-county and the area education officer to enable her conduct research in the selected schools. This was done through a written letter stating the area of research, the purpose of the study, and the exact dates when the research was expected to take place. Further, the researcher sought permission from the head teachers of the schools where the participants were employees, two weeks prior to the commencement of the study in order to give room for any changes. The researcher finally acquired the consent forms of participants duly signed as a sign of agreement to participate in the study.

The researcher started off by visiting the schools. During the first visit the researcher obtained the exact number of female administrators in each school. During this time the

researcher met the administrators, introduced herself, interacted with them, informed them about the research study, told them that the aim of the study was purely academic and tried to build up good rapport. An appropriate date and time for completing the questionnaire was then set. The second visit to the schools involved the actual data collection. The researcher administered the questionnaire with the help of research assistance. Specific dates were set for carrying out the deputy head teachers' interviews. On the third visit face to face interviews were conducted with the 10 willing deputy head teachers. The interviews gave a deeper understanding of the female administrators' leadership aspirations. Furthermore, they also sought to establish any additional factors influencing their aspirations for top leadership positions.

Audio records and field notes were used to generate data from the interviews with the consent from the participants. The face to face interviews were planned for between 45 to 60 minutes. The researcher as much as possible interviewed the participants in the schools where they lead. Majority of the interviews were conducted in the participants' office. This was imperative since qualitative research is pegged on collecting data from participants in their natural setting and having a face to face interaction over time (Creswell, 2009). All 10 women deputies who agreed to take part were interviewed. At the conclusion of each interview the researcher provided a summary of the key themes that emerged from the interviews. The data collection took approximately one month.

3.9 Data Analysis and Interpretation

Data analysis refers to the examining of the collected/generated data critically and making inferences (Kombo and Tromp 2006). This study employed sequential triangulation strategy of presenting and analysing data. More weight was given to the

qualitative data (Creswell, 2017). This means that the data from the interviews was used to confirm and clarify themes and patterns revealed by the survey data

3.9.1 Quantitative Data

Descriptive statistics were used to analyse the quantitative data. Descriptive statistics were prepared for all the questionnaire items that required quantification and means, percentages and standard deviations were computed on the basis of such frequencies. Tables were drawn and used by the researcher in making descriptive discussions of the findings of the study.

3.9.2 Qualitative data

This study used Creswell's (2017) general procedure for analyzing qualitative data. According to Creswell, first, the data was transcribed from audio records and field notes obtained from the interviews. Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2000), adds that transcribing is a very crucial step because it has the potentiality of losing and distorting data, and reducing complexity. The researcher therefore ensured that the different kinds of data were all be recorded in the transcript which included what was said, how it was said, the tone of the voice, pauses, silences and interruption among others. Transcription of the interviews from the audio records and field notes to written text was done within the same time of the week of the interviews to avoid any loses of valuable information. Subsequently data was coded from the sources of information, namely, interview and field notes transcriptions. Coding involved taking text data during the data collection, segmenting sentences or paragraphs into categories and then labeling those categories with a term based on the actual language of the participant (Creswell, 2009). Both predetermined codes and emerging codes were identified by the researcher (see Appendix L). Interview questions guided the researcher in data

reduction. Thereafter, the researcher tried to identify patterns and relationships as the data collected was interpreted and then developed into themes. Conclusions were drawn from the emerging themes..

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSIONS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter deals with data analysis, presentation and interpretation of the findings based on the responses to the items in female administrators' questionnaire and interview guide. The chapter basically presents the results of the analysis of the respondents' views on the aspirations for headship among female administrators in public primary schools in Tharaka Nithi County in Kenya. The findings included descriptive statistics for the sample characteristics and for items comprising the various measures used within the study. The findings of the study are presented in accordance with the three specific objectives as stated in chapter one: determining female administrators' self-efficacy on aspirations for headship in public primary schools; identifying socio-cultural factors that influence female administrators' aspirations for headship positions in public primary schools; and examining institutional factors that affect female administrators' aspirations for headship in public primary schools in Tharaka Nithi County in Kenya.

4.1 Questionnaire Return Rate

A sample of 175 female administrators in public primary schools in Tharaka Nithi County was used. Complete and usable data came from 170 female administrators; this was 97% of the administrators surveyed. The return rate of the female administrators' questionnaire was high thus justifying the validity of the data collected for the study.

4.2 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

The survey was distributed to the sampled 175 female administrators in public primary schools in Tharaka Nithi County who were selected from a list of school administrators obtained by the researcher from the Teachers' Service Commission County office; a government body responsible for recruiting, appointing and promoting the teaching staff in basic education institutions, technical institutions and teacher training colleges.

4.2.1 Ages of the Respondents

The data presents the age of the respondents. The mean age of the respondents was 36.5 years. The distribution of their ages is indicated in the Table 2

Table 2

Age of the Respondents

Age of female teacher	Frequency (f)	Percent (%)
under 30	2	1.1
30 -39	58	33.1
40 -49	76	43.4
50 -59	38	21.8
60 or over	1	0.6
Total	175	100.0

The highest percentage (43.4%) of female administrators who responded to the survey were aged between 40 to 49 years. One administrator (0.6%) was aged over 60 years. one percent (1.1%) of the administrators were 30 years and below. This could imply that the younger teachers who are 30 years and below hardly aspire for headship positions. There is a variation in age among the female teaching staff in the study. It is expected that each age group would aspire for headship differently basing on their dissimilarities in domestic responsibilities, in their teaching and leadership experience which likely grounds their self-confidence. The age of the female teachers therefore,

has particular importance in shaping their perceptions of social norms concerning the occupancy of leadership positions.

The results indicated that the age of the female teacher significantly influenced their aspiration for leadership. Female teachers who were younger (those under 30 years of age) had high aspirations for leadership as compared to female teachers who were older. The teachers with the least aspirations for leadership were those above 50 years of age.

This could imply that the older female teachers tend to hold more traditional beliefs regarding gender roles, which might encourage an understanding that leadership is masculine. Younger female participants in the present study might not consider gender stereotypes regarding who is suited to hold leadership. In addition, since their work experience in the institution is relatively short, younger female teachers may not have experienced some of the inhibiting cultures within the institutions that discourage one who shows interest in leadership. Therefore they could be upbeat about attaining these positions.

Similarly, the older group of teachers in a study by Hewitt, Pijanowski and Denny (2009) cited reasons for lacking interest in becoming a school administrators as, time required was too much, societal problems make it difficult to focus on instruction, and that the job was less satisfying. These findings differ from Kiaye and Singh (2013) findings which revealed that feelings of competitiveness among the respondents were significant as they advanced in age due to experience, maturity and their level of education. The women were competitive between the age of 35 and 44 years however, ironically in the present study we see a decline in leadership aspiration among the female teachers within these years.

As noted from the finding, the older female teachers may not aspire to leadership. This is because they would be preparing to retire and therefore saw no need to actively participate in leadership. Lacey (2011) revealed that the closer women got to retirement, the more hesitant they become to join leadership because they did not perceive its worth at that age.

Findings from the interview data confirmed that the older women who were nearing retirement did not intend to further aspire for leadership. A deputy headteacher who was nearing retirement said:

I do not intend to apply for any higher position. In fact I am just in an acting position now as the deputy. I think I am now aging and I need to prepare for retirement. I want to concentrate on my farming projects, coffee, and I am now developing the plot I had acquired. All these are time consuming and will not enable me to be a school head.
(DHT6)

This shows that the older female teachers have other priorities set for them and leadership in a school is not one of them. At this mature age female teachers may not be held up by child rearing responsibilities as compared to the younger female teachers with young children. The older female teachers get involved in preparing for the next phase of life rather than handling administrative matters in schools.

Two (18%) female teacher interviewees who joined school leadership at a younger age actively sought or vied for leadership, unlike the older teachers who had to be convinced or suggested for by other people. They were motivated to join leadership and they demonstrated a sense of high self-efficacy. However it is unfortunate, like for the case of Rosa who revealed that her enthusiasm for leadership has since waded off. This is a confirmation of the survey results that indicate that age indeed influences the

leadership aspiration and that younger teachers exhibited higher level of leadership aspiration.

Leadership aspiration for the younger female teachers may not translate into access to leadership. The female teachers may be disadvantaged in that they may not be having the required teaching experience to qualify to become school leaders. Those tasked with the selection of school leaders are likely to consider appointing the older and mature women thus diminishing the prospects of the younger female teachers to attain leadership. Closely related to this finding is Ngan's (2011) study which illustrates that age of women in higher education, limits the selection opportunities for young people, who are often considered inexperienced and whose voices are not easily accepted by older people. It is therefore important to come up with strategies to maintain the high levels of aspirations that these young teachers exhibit and build them to successful leaders at higher rungs.

4.2.2 Marital Status and Number of Children.

The following table shows marital status and number of children that female administrators have.

Table 3*Marital Status and Number of Children.*

Marital status	Frequency (f)	Percent %
never married	14	9.8
Married	144	80.1
Widowed	8	5.4
divorced or separated	6	3.8
Partnered	3	0.9
Total	175	100.0
Number of children		
0	8	4.1
1	12	6.3
2	27	15.5
3	47	26.8
4 or more	81	47.3
Total	175	100.0

The Table 3 shows that 144 (80.1%) female administrators were married. 81 (47.3%) female administrators had four or more children. Notably, apart from their teaching careers, these teachers have responsibilities for child rearing and domestic tasks. The women's prescribed social roles concerning family responsibilities may out do their ambition for leadership. In addition, the traditional culture has limited a woman's role to the home and degrades their abilities in other sectors such as leadership (Barngetuny, 1999; Saeeda, nd). It was therefore expected that female administrators will aspire less for leadership if they have more domestic responsibilities.

4.2.3 Female Administrators' Educational Qualification

The respondents indicated their highest qualification. Table 4 shows the highest qualification attained by the female teacher respondents.

Table 4*Highest Education Qualification of Primary School Female administrators*

Education Qualification	Frequency (f)	Percent (%)
Master's degree	6	3.4
Bachelor's degree	32	18.3
Diploma	51	29.1
P1 certificate	85	48.5
P2 certificate	1	0.6
Total	175	100.0

Table 4 indicates that majority of the female administrators (48.5%) had P1 qualification and above. A high percentage (29.1%) of administrators had a diploma certificate in education, followed by those with bachelors' degree (18.3%). P1 certification is provided in certificate level colleges in Kenya through a two year, residential programme. Only 3 female administrators had P2 certification, an indication that this level of qualification is almost being phased out in primary school teaching. 50.8% of these administrators hold qualifications of a diploma and above. Basing on education qualification, this portion of female administrators can qualify for positions of formal headship in primary schools. However, there are other prerequisite conditions set by the Teacher Service Commission (TSC) that one has to fulfill before being appointed to take up these positions. Education qualifications attained by female administrators should translate into feelings of preparedness for headship in schools.

4.2.4 Female Administrators' Teaching Experience

The responses from the female administrators about their primary school teaching experience were grouped into the categories as indicated in Table 5.

Table 5*Female Administrators' Teaching Experience*

Teaching experience years	in	Frequency (f)	Percent (%)
1-5		30	17.2
6-10		41	23.4
11-15		24	13.7
16-20		23	13.1
over 20		57	32.6
Total		175	100.0

The data indicated that slightly less than half (45.7%) of the female administrators had been teaching for over 16 years. Administrators who had taught for five years and below were 17.2%. From the survey, a high percentage of female administrators seem to be more experienced in teaching. Female administrators need to have the required teaching experience to gain access to headship. With a vast teaching experience a female administrator is perceived as having the credibility to possess headship potential. One of the minimum requirements for a teacher to be promoted into administrative positions is to have a minimum of five years' continuous teaching experience (Teachers' Service Commission 2008). By looking at the sample's educational qualification, 80% of female teachers have more than five years in service. Respondents who had been in teaching for fewer than five years were more likely to aspire to be a school leader. Those respondents who had been teaching for more than 11 years were likely to remain a classroom teacher without any leadership responsibilities.

Studies have pointed that female teachers prefer remaining classroom teachers as opposed to joining the school administrative team. The longer a teacher is involved in pedagogical duties the more they get attached to their learners and may never want to

leave them. In a study by Schmidt (2002) the teachers did not aspire for leadership because it entailed a lot of paperwork and meetings and therefore did not permit the teachers to be in close contact with their pupils. A deputy head teacher interviewee revealed that just before she was appointed into leadership she was teaching a class that she was very much fond of and her decision to take up the responsibility was almost held back. The study has also revealed that headship aspiration lessens with age which corresponds with teaching experience.

4.2.5 Leadership Position held by Female Administrators

The leadership positions held by the female administrators are indicated in Table 6. The positions that were enquired were senior teacher position, deputy head teacher position and head teacher positions.

Table 6

Leadership Positions held by Female Administrators in Public Primary Schools

Leadership position	Frequency (f)	Percent (%)
senior teacher	105	60.1
deputy head teacher	62	35.4
Head teacher	8	4.5
Total	175	100.0

Table 6 shows that out of the 175 administrators involved in the study, eight (4.5%) held the position of a head teacher. This is an indication that few female administrators rise to headship. These formal leadership responsibilities are in most cases are deemed suitable for the male teachers rather than the female teachers. As pointed out in the data, more female teachers occupy lower cadre management positions deemed suitable for them, rather than occupying positions that lead to senior and executive positions. The

absence of women in top leadership positions could also be an indication of the presence of the “glass ceiling effect” as indicated by Powell and Butterfield (2003). There could be barriers that prevent women and minorities from moving up the management hierarchy in institutions

4.3 The influence of self-efficacy on female administrators’ leadership aspirations.

The findings of the first objective included a summary of item means and standard deviations for items representing the self-efficacy components shown in table 7. The participants had to choose a response from a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). The highest mean for the subscales was 2.75 for the item “If appointed to leadership I can always manage to solve difficult problems”, while the lowest mean was 2.68 for the item “I can cope with stressful situations associated with school leadership as effectively as men can.

Table 7

Summary of Item Means and Standard Deviations for Self-efficacy Sub-scale.

Items for Self-concept	Percent who responded			Mean	Standard Deviation
	Disagree	Un- Decided	Agree		
	(1)	(2)	(3)		
I can cope with stressful situations associated with school leadership as effectively as men can.	21 (12.3)	14 (8.2)	135 (79.4)	2.68	.67697
If appointed to leadership I can always manage to solve difficult problems.	12 (7.2)	21 (12.3)	137 (80.5)	2.75	.56761
I am confident enough to deal efficiently with unexpected events that come with school administration,	13 (7.6)	21 (12.3)	136 (80.1)	2.73	.59056

Basing on the findings, majority of the female administrators (over 79.4%) agreed that they could cope with stressful situations associated with school leadership just as men can, 80.5% trusted their abilities to solve problems when in leadership and 80.1% responded that they were confident enough to deal efficiently with unexpected events. These findings are contrary to those of other studies such as Brown and Ralph, (2016) which indicated that Ugandan women have low self-esteem and low confidence in their abilities outside the domestic role because of their socialisation. Research conducted in Turkey on gender leadership also showed that women do not apply to be principals, even when they are as well qualified as the male applicants, at least in part, because they have negative self-perceptions and lack confidence in their qualifications and experience (Turan and Ebiclioglu, 2002 in Oplatka, 2006).

The confidence exhibited by the female administrators in the study portrays a gender neutral stand on who is suited to become a leader. It is noted however that despite the impression of confidence exuded by the female administrators in the study very few are coming out to hold headship positions. This is an indication that female administrators in this study have a high self-perception; however it does not propel them into school headship. This suggests that self-efficacy works together with other factors to encourage female administrators to ascend to headship.

Studies such as Ming, Ahmad and Ismail (2007) which investigated career aspirations to top management among women in middle management in the manufacturing sector found that self-efficacy and career aspirations to top management were significant. Similarly, in a bid to determine whether glass ceiling existed in Durban, Kiaye and Singh (2013) found out that majority of the respondents (80%) were confident, emotionally suited for senior roles, competitive, high achievers and they considered

themselves as leaders, however situational barriers and social roles could have impacted more on the women's ability to get promoted. On the other hand, it is noted that at the time of appointment, most interviewees in this study felt incapable of being an administrator in school. These feeling of ineptness came about because the female administrators were ambushed with the suggestion to become an administrator. A deputy headteacher pointed out that:

Being in leadership involves a lot of movement in and out of school to the Education offices. Women are often intimidated in these offices. The female teachers may not be assertive enough to counter the intimidation. This discourages most women from being leaders.
(DHT1)

Another deputy head teacher interviewee mentioned that her appointment came impromptu, without training or even induction. The appointing officer told her that she would learn on the job. This may cause women to lose their confidence as they access leadership. Most women are not risk takers and prefer to be trained, and to be taken through some form of internship before taking up the responsibility. In Kenya this is not the case. One is appointed and then taken through seminars and workshops that enlighten about school management and leadership. School leaders can be said to learn through apprenticeship, where the newly appointed leader learns from his or her seniors, or seasoned leaders from neighboring schools. Newly appointed and aspiring women have few women leaders to turn to for training and advice especially on work-life balance.

A deputy head teacher interviewee reported that she too ascended into leadership without prior training and clear knowledge of the education act and other policies pertaining management of education. She has then been grappling in the dark on some of the issues in school management. As was suggested by Bandura (2000), prior

leadership role experiences predicted leadership self-efficacy. Guided mastery experiences involve creating prior leadership role opportunities and coaching. Bandura asserts that such successful role experiences will in general lead to heightened leadership self-efficacy beliefs. If this claim is what we can go by, then no wonder that school administrators in this study had a low self-efficacy at the onset of their headship.

This study revealed that women get into leadership without any prior training or induction. These findings are supported by Nandwah (2011) which also revealed that there was no specific preparation for head teachers and that most of them learned while on the job. Nandwah (ibid) argues that although there is a claim from the ancient Greeks and Romans that leaders are made, researchers have realized that traits are not completely inborn but can be acquired through learning and experience. Emphasis should be placed in the need for preparation and development of school leaders through learning in forums such as in service courses and workshops, and also through experience. The participants in the study had none of these experience and training. However, as pointed out earlier, some of the female administrators were actively involved in managing other areas of the school before being appointed into school leadership, thus giving them some confidence to accept the responsibility.

There is also a big variation among the teaching staff in terms of experience, qualification and consequently varied in terms of their remuneration scale. There are instances when an administrator's educational qualification is lower than for her staff members and this can pose a challenge. A deputy head teacher explains:

It has been challenging managing staff members who are more qualified than I. Some earn a lot higher than me and therefore they sometimes look down upon me. Although my observation is that many of these teachers have certificates up to master's level but they don't add value to the teaching and learning process. (DHT3)

On asking the interviewees about their aspirations for higher posts, ten women (91%) interviewed said that they had intention of pursuing a higher leadership position in school because of their well-established leadership efficacy. They were enthusiastic to move to the next level in the leadership rungs when the opportunity avails itself. Most women reported that they were studying or planning to enroll in a course that would enhance their chances of becoming school leaders. However, it is noted that they are pursuing general diploma and degree courses. None mentioned pursuing a specialized course in school management and leadership. These courses would be beneficial to them as they aspire to higher positions of leadership. A specialized course in Educational administration is offered at the graduate level. Most of the institutions do not have tailored courses in school management at certificate or diploma level. However Kenya Education Management Institute (KEMI) offers capacity building courses for teachers already in school administration.

The interviewees aspired for higher leadership positions with conditions laid out if they are offered the next big job. These women confessed having confidence now with the experience gained in the middle level leadership positions. A deputy head teacher mentions that she has some training now and believes that she is a performer which is a recipe for successful leadership. However being transferred away from her home might be a hindrance to ascension since her husband also works away from the home. She claims that her movement to another station far from her home might bring a strain to her marriage of which she guards jealously.

A deputy head teacher with small young children, pointed out that aspiring for headship is not in her immediate plans. She says;

I don't intend to apply for headship immediately. The headship position is sensitive and I haven't gained enough confidence to fit the position. My children are still young. I will apply for it at a later time and not in the same area. (DHT5)

For this deputy head teacher so many factors interplay to influence her next move. For her, childcare responsibilities, her confidence and the locality of her institution is her concern. Nevertheless she had the urge to rise up the ladder. Another administrator was not enthusiastic about pursuing higher headship positions. She explained:

Our head teacher is soon retiring and he has been telling us to prepare to take over but I am not ready. I have been telling him to look for another head teacher from out because I will not take over. I will not apply for headship unless allowances are increased and I get transferred to a young school not far from the family home. I think my husband may not even allow me to move far from family. (ST1)

With financial support, women can do so much and will be eager to ascend to headship. Allowances will enable them run their homes with ease as they dedicate their time to the work place. This shows that a high self-efficacy together with other contextual factors interact to ensure that female teachers aspire and ascend to leadership.

From the interview findings female administrators' self-efficacy is an important factor that influences leadership aspiration. In other words, if an individual has a high sense of self-efficacy, they will believe in their ability to handle leadership responsibilities well and ultimately will persist in challenging task and aspire for high positions in their teaching career.

4.4 The influence of Social cultural factors on female teachers' leadership aspiration

The findings of the first objective which was social cultural factors were measured by the influence of stereotypical beliefs held about women aspiring and holding top leadership positions and the societal acceptance of female leaders. Socio cultural factors

were also determined by the influence of other factors such as domestic responsibilities on the decision to join leadership. Table 8 includes a summary of item responses, means and standard deviations for items representing the socio-cultural factors. The participants had to choose a response from a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). To discuss descriptive statistics, the likert scale was adjusted to a 3-point scale ranging from disagree (1) which clamped strongly disagree and disagree, to agree (3) clamping agree to strongly agree.

Table 8:

Socio-cultural factors

Items for Social-cultural factors				Mean	Standard Deviation	
		Percent who responded				
		Disagree (1)	Un- Decided (2)			Agree (3)
1	I do not plan to devote energy to getting promoted to a headship position in primary schools	67.0 (114)	11.8 (20)	21.2 (36)	1.55	.83
2	Extended family responsibilities discourage me from aspiring for headship.	62.4 (106)	9.4 (16)	28.2 (48)	1.58	.87
3	Family responsibilities for child care discourage me from aspiring for headship positions	70.6 (120)	5.3 (9)	24.1 (41)	1.63	.90
4	Spouses discourage female administrators to apply for school headship positions	58.8 (100)	10.0 (17)	31.2 (53)	1.72	.91
5	I fear to be rejected by the society if I seek headship positions.	79.4 (135)	8.8 (15)	11.8 (20)	1.25	.60
6	I fear to compete against my male colleagues when aspiring for headship.	82.9 (141)	4.7 (8)	12.3 (21)	1.25	.63
7	There is a belief that women must be better qualified than men for them to become heads	67.6 (115)	12.9 (22)	19.5 (33)	1.52	.83

The Item 5, “I fear to be rejected by the society if I seek leadership positions” and item 6 “I fear to compete against my male colleagues when seeking for leadership” on the socio cultural scale had the lowest mean of 1.25. Majority of the female teachers did not agree with this statement and did not see the men as a threat when seeking leadership. Basing on the means of these two items (both 1.25) an almost neutral stand was taken by these female teachers.

Societal acceptance of female leaders

A high percentage (79.4%) of female teachers does not fear to be rejected by society if they assume headship roles. This is an indication that attitudes towards women in leadership have changed. Female administrators in this study have embraced the idea that female teachers can lead irrespective of what the society dictates. This could be a positive effect of the campaigns for gender mainstreaming. However, this is contrary to perceptions of the female participants in Ngan (2011) who believed that men are better leaders because of their innate traits such as assertiveness, emotional toughness and willingness to take risks which were considered more appropriate for leadership in higher education. This contrast can be explained by the differences in the institutions that women serve in. Higher education institutions may be perceived to be a preserve of male leadership as compared to the primary school leadership due to the number of women serving in these institutions. The female leaders in higher education institutions are few in number thus leaving women to feel less able and consequently less self-confident to deal with the nature of tasks therein. On the other hand basic education institutions have relatively more women teachers, making the profession at this level feminized. In primary schools in Tharaka Nithi County, Kenya, stakeholders also rated female headteachers’ performance as good and were capable of performing tasks just like men (Barmao and Mukwana, 2013).

The relatively larger numbers of female teachers in schools seem to enable the female administrators in this study to perceive that headship is a possibility for them and that it is acceptable. Other countries such as North America, Europe, and Australia have also shown consistently that women in the teaching force are a majority (Mwebi, 2008; Collard, 2003). A study by Paustian-Underdahl, Walker and Woehr (2014), while drawing heavily from the Role Congruity Theory, found that female leaders were seen as more effective than male leaders in feminine organisations. Educational institutions are occupied by more female staff, especially at the elementary levels. This is evidenced by the increasing number of females enrolling in Primary Teacher Training Colleges compared to the males in both public and private institutions (M.O.E.S & T, 2014). It is noted that the perception of the congruity between the female gender role and leadership roles would be greater in contexts such as primary schools. This could be an explanation of why the female teachers in the study perceive leadership as acceptable to women in primary schools. However from the interview findings, it was revealed that female teachers dominate schools in urban areas and those found within the tea estates yet access to leadership was reported minimal. In this scenario, there are high chances that tokenism influences the appointment of school leaders. School management boards and County education officials most probably tend to consider appointing the high status minority tokens within the schools for leadership. The high status minority tokens are the few male teachers among a staff populated by female teachers.

Majority of the women did not anticipate rejection by the society if they ascended to leadership. Only 8.8% of the female participants agreed with the statement. This shows that the female teacher participants perceive that the community accepts them as leaders. Studies such as Mwebi (2008) have cited community disapproval when a

female teacher takes over leadership. In addition, Wangui (2012) reviewed cases in the dailies (The standard 13th January 2011 and Daily Nation 8th January 2009) where parents in western Kenya protested against having a female teacher. Female teachers in this study were optimistic of the communities support if a female teacher became a school leader.

Majority (87%) of the women believe that women make good leaders. This suggests that according to the respondents, the female teachers who rise to headship are very efficient at their work. This further confirms Paustian-Underdahl, Walker and Woehr's findings. Before a female teacher ascends to headship her competence is first tried in other subordinate leadership roles and then approved by a significant other who urges them to join headship. In most cases female teachers joining leadership are confident enough with leadership experience and with social support making her effective and efficient enough. In addition Huston (2016) confirms that female leaders cannot risk making poor decisions or making poor judgement while at it because it would be costly for them compared to if a man made poor decisions. He attributes this claim to the fact that leadership is perceived male and due to this female leaders put in extra effort to ensure that she is efficient while avoiding risks. Female leaders strive to be perfectionists at their work for fear of being judged harshly and consequently they earn high rating from their subordinates. This could explain the high rating of female school leaders. From the interview results, majority of the female administrators interviewed confirmed that the female teachers make good leaders. An interviewee revealed that the traditional culture that viewed women as subordinate beings unable to become leaders was no longer prevalent. She said;

The traditional culture is not as strong as before. People have become enlightened and women are easily viewed as leaders nowadays. What

has even helped is the fact that the men who are religious easily accept women to join leadership and are slowly influencing the community.
(DHT1)

An issue of whether a leader is a man or woman is no longer the basis of contention as the female deputy head teacher puts it. Another deputy head teacher interviewee explained that nowadays the community looks at performance. If a woman is performing then she is easily accepted as a leader. However the gender may be scrutinized when a school headed by a female may not be performing. This is in agreement with Crawford (2001) who says that if there is no doubt about the management success and outstanding performance of a female leader then she may not be undervalued. Judgement of a female leader's performance will be made based on the available information but not using gender stereotypes. Crawford says "*it is as if women leaders are assumed incompetent until proven competent*". These interviewees insinuates that women are no longer viewed as 'token appointees' because their work is quite good comparable to that of men. Kiaye and Singh (2013) while referring to April et al. (2007) explained that token appointments are the unintended consequences of employment equity legislation and affirmative action. When women are appointed to leadership they are perceived to be products of affirmative action and that the women may be lacking requisite qualifications, skills, networks and experience. As a consequence "affirmative appointees" are consciously set up to fail, not because they are incompetent but due to the fact that they denied necessary institutional and team support. However, a female deputy head teacher interviewee who had been in school leadership for fourteen years said that their previous work experiences and their effectiveness as school leaders have reversed these perceptions in their schools. According to the deputy head teacher, schools in her sub county that are headed by women are performing very well. Stereotypes seem to have shifted such that women

are considered to be better leaders and are even rated to be similar to men unlike the previously identified stereotypes that have worked negatively against women. These perceptions should be translated affirmatively to increase the female administrators in schools.

Domestic responsibilities

A large portion of female administrator respondents agreed with the statements that extended family responsibilities and childcare responsibilities discouraged one from aspiring for headship. The female administrators who agreed with these statements formed 67.5% and 66.2% of the sampled teachers, respectively. This reaction of female teachers could be similar to the views of female leaders in Rarieya (2011) study on motherhood responsibilities. She pointed out that despite female leaders acknowledging the demands placed upon them as working mothers, some of them saw these demands as their personal problem that came with the territory of being a woman employed outside the home. The women viewed it as part and parcel of the female leader and that it was a non-issue. Rarieya suggests that “it is probable that the women felt that in publicly acknowledging these tensions, they would be admitting their inability to cope with the demands of the position, thereby making them unsuitable for leadership”(pg 35).

Interview findings also revealed the strain that female administrators experience when handling childcare and domestic responsibilities while at the same time being heads. Most of the women identified domestic responsibilities as a major hurdle to access leadership. These responsibilities included those of household chores, child rearing, and even small scale farming. All except two interviewees stated that most men delegate total family responsibilities to their spouse, while the two mentioned that they shared

the responsibilities with their spouse. Two of the interviewees also mentioned that their spouses work in other stations away from the home and therefore end up running the home single handedly most of the time. The prevailing culture in the county has gender typed roles in the home, leaving most family responsibilities to the wife. One interview participant said that:

Husbands do not participate in taking care of the children. Those who are employed come late to the homestead and when they come home they do not offer a helping hand. Women administrators have to rush home immediately after work to check whether activities at home are in order. (DHT1)

Most women reiterated that the family responsibilities sometimes do not complement the headship responsibilities at the workplace. One administrator gave her experience when she was newly promoted to deputize in a small school while she was a young mother.

“Sometimes my children would become sick at night. So I would be forced to stay most of the time awake to attend to them. My husband on the other hand would demand my attention. By the time you are sleeping you are totally finished only to be woken by an alarm. You then arrive in school in the morning confused” (DHT3)

This scenario spells out the many challenges that women face carrying out domestic chores while at the same time being leaders. The female administrators demonstrated that being a female school head involved wearing two hats which weighed heavily on them and had consequences. The deputy head teacher further said:

I have a son who was young when I was appointed to leadership. I stayed away from him because of the work, to the point that he did not know that I was his parent. I am trying now so much to go close to him to recover the lost time when it is too late. At 17 [years] he is so attached to me and he never wants to leave my side. I often think to myself that it could be because I never gave him time when he was small. It makes me guilty. (DHT3)

With these challenges, these women in leadership pointed out the importance of hiring domestic help to ease the workload at home. It is ironical though that as much as domestic help may be readily available, many of these school leaders cannot afford to pay for the labor due to low remuneration and allowances. One interviewee, explained;

I had to tolerate a house help so much and I sacrificed a lot to pay her so that I could sustain her to avoid changing all the time. When you keep changing house helps you are disadvantaged. We need to keep one who is reliable because of the heavy workload that keeps us in school. (DHT3)

Due to the workload associated with being a leader and a mother, hired domestic help would come in handy to ease the weight. Even though Barng'etung (1999) confirms that, in Kenya this kind of labour is easily available at rates affordable by women, the women in the study categorically stated that their pay may not sustain the employment of a good house girl. What came out strongly is their ability to cope with the demands and the urge to even aspire for higher positions. No participant reported dropping out from aspiring for leadership, in its place each female administrator developed strategies that enabled them cope with the demands. These included hiring domestic help and enlisting the support of the spouse and extended family.

Spousal support

A larger portion (60%) of teacher respondents disagreed with the statement that a spouse may discourage a female administrator from applying for school headship positions. Spouses may not be seen as overtly coming out to stop a female administrator from applying for headship as was suggested by this group of administrators. They may be non-committal to the issue of their wife's ambition of which may be interpreted positively. The percentage of the respondents who agreed that spouses discourage female administrators from applying for leadership positions was 32%.

Discouragement may come indirectly in the form of limited support when it comes to domestic chores or being rigid to move with the family when it comes to transfers. However, if a spouse happens to show interest and give moral support and encouragement, then it gives a boost to the female administrator's aspiration for headship. Contrary, Chisikwa's (2010) findings revealed that some female teachers opted out of leadership in mixed secondary schools due to family tensions brought about by negative spousal attitude. Similarly some female teachers in Mwebi (2008) felt that their husbands were a hindrance to their aspiration for headship positions especially if the husbands were mere teachers without any positions of leadership.

All the female administrators interviewed and were married by the time of the interview mentioned that their husbands gave them immense support as they carried on with their duties in school. Support came in, in terms of moral support, help with domestic chores and even the technical support. A deputy head teacher who was widowed confirmed her late husband's tremendous support with the domestic chores while away on duty. She reminisced:

My husband was very supportive. Whenever I would reach the house late he would take up the domestic responsibility. In fact we would share the work on a fifty-fifty basis. He never had the attitude that the kitchen belonged to the woman. He would give me advice concerning issues I faced at work and even help me with speech writing. (DHT3)

Another interviewee reported that her husband is her cheer leader despite his alcoholism and his minimum financial contribution towards running the home. She said:

My husband is proud of the fact that I am a senior teacher in school. In the bar he often shouts "don't you know my wife is a very senior person in the school and without her that school would fail". (ST2)

This shows that husband support and approval is so crucial to the women in leadership. It demonstrates the patriarchal nature of the community. The husband is a figure of

authority who gives consent to their spouses' career decisions either directly or indirectly.

Ironically, the administrator claimed that it was her husband's alcoholism that delayed her from taking up headship responsibilities. She was forced to prioritize her family and home duties because her husband was irresponsible and she was the main bread winner. She therefore points out that alcohol should be stamped out of the community because it is an enemy and roadblock to development and opportunities, not only for the addict, but also for those around him or her.

A deputy head teacher who was widowed pointed out that with the absence of her husband her extended family has supported her in terms of taking care of her children. Her mother in law offers to take care of her children while she is away on duty and her children are at home for one reason or another. This indicates that support of the relationships either from the husband or other relatives have enabled administrators to aspire for headship. Having been assured of this support then one is likely to take up headship roles in schools. One of the deputy head teachers for example said:

After appointment by the AEO I was still hesitant to take up the deputy headship. My husband encouraged me saying that there is a reason why I was chosen to that position. After assurance from my partner I took up the role. (DHT3)

Two of the interviewees cited cases that they knew of, where spouses refused their wives to become school leaders for fear of becoming susceptible to infidelity. One of the cases was that of a husband who was insecure because he was a high school drop-out who feared that his wife would mingle with senior people in society and then be disserved. When there are issues of insecurities on the part of the spouse, the female teachers are likely to be discouraged by their husbands to take up leadership roles.

The social cultural expectation of a mature woman in the society and more so those who hold headship positions was clearly brought out by those female administrators who were interviewed. The interviewees except one were either married or once married. Two were widowed. Headship and marital status go hand in hand according to the interview findings. Marriage in Kenya is seen as compulsory for both men and women. Kamau (2009) points out that the traditional Kenyan culture taught women that one actualized at the point of marriage. From the interviewees it was apparent that these beliefs are still held with utmost importance. Similarly in the neighboring country, Tanzania, Mollel and Tshabangu (2014) revealed that most women entering senior leadership would be respected most when married with an established family coupled with substantial personal and work related experience. After noticing the trend of their marital status, one interviewee, explained that;

Single women are not respected when they become school heads because they are perceived to have gotten positions by having affairs or sometimes they are assumed to be having an affair with the head teacher or senior men in higher positions. (DHT5)

This illustrates how the society has very low opinion on women who have not fulfilled the societal expectations on marriage. Their ability to progress and rise to headship becomes questionable. The society tends to believe that a woman has to have some support from a male figure. For a mature woman, it is believed that a husband should back a woman as she transcend through the career ladder.

What is evident is that the respondents did not conform to the gender stereotypes regarding headship as was identified in other studies. Majority of the respondents confirmed spousal support and social acceptance of female leaders in primary schools. Basing on the trend exhibited on these items more female administrators should be ready and willing to move upward within the hierarchies of school management.

However as observed by Addi-Raccah (2006) gender-neutral attitudes exhibited by female administrators imply that they conform to the prevailing dominant culture and may not be courageous enough to express prejudice that they face as the affected lot.

There seems to be a variation between the survey findings and the interview findings when exploring the socio-cultural factors. While survey results depict non influence of stereotypical beliefs about female administrators, the female administrators interviewed exposes that the traditional culture is at play when one aspires for headship. Because of these inconsistencies further research need to be carried out using the sequential mixed method approach giving more weight to the qualitative data. Creswell (2009) describes the sequential exploratory strategy as involving a first phase of qualitative data collection and analysis, followed by a second phase of quantitative data collection and analysis that builds on the results of the first qualitative phase. This approach will likely determine why surveys provide divergent views in relation to social-cultural influence and most probably assist in the revision of the existing survey instrument. Majority of the studies such as Ngan (2011) and Al-Suwaihel (2009) among others utilised qualitative techniques pegging it on its appropriateness when showing different perspectives on how culture and leadership experiences interact. However, it is important to note that the two research approaches are sufficient enough to answer the social phenomena such as leadership aspirations.

4.5 The effect of institutional factors on headship aspirations

According to the third objective of this study, female administrators have been predicted to have low aspirations due to the institutional culture and organizational structure. This is due to the negative attitudes towards female administrators, lack of role models/mentors and lack of support from superiors (Gaus, 2011). The findings

included a summary of item means and standard deviations for items that comprised the institutional factor component as shown in table 9. The items described the factors within the school that could affect headship aspirations of female administrators. The participants had to choose a response from a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). The highest mean for the subscales was 2.53 for the item “Men are promoted to leadership faster than women”, while the lowest mean was 2.04 for the item “Female administrators have to be persuaded by other people to apply for a promotion post”. To discuss descriptively the items, the likert scale was adjusted to a 3-point scale ranging from disagree (1) which clamped strongly disagree and disagree, to agree (3) clamping agree to strongly agree

Table 9:

Summary of Item Means and Standard Deviations for institutional factors

Items for Institutional Factors		Percent who responded			Mean	Standard Deviation
		Disagree (1)	Un- Decided (2)	Agree (3)		
1	Women receive fewer opportunities for professional development at work	30.5 (52)	5.2 (9)	64.1 (109)	2.3323	.91567
2	Male hierarchies are more likely to promote/appoint men for leadership positions than women in schools	25.9 (44)	6.5 (11)	67.6 (115)	2.4286	.86904
3	Men are promoted to leadership faster than women	21.2 (36)	5.3 (9)	73.5 (125)	2.5333	.81467
4	Lack of women in school leadership/ management hinder women career progress	31.2	7.6	61.2	2.2587	.92912
5	Being transferred to other institutions upon promotion discourage most women from applying for school leadership	32.9 (56)	5.3 (9)	61.8 (105)	2.2871	.93266
6	Female teachers have to be persuaded by other people to apply for a promotion post	74 (43.5)	15 (8.9)	74 (47.6)	2..04	.95746

4.5.1 Opportunities for professional development

A high percentage of the participants (64.1%) agree that women receive fewer opportunities for professional development at work. Training and development opportunities seem unavailable to female leaders. The professional development programs not only enables the female leaders to progress career wise but also brings them out of their gender stereotyped cocoon cultures. It is during these trainings that female leaders interact with role models and mentors. The lack of these opportunities may explain the inability of female administrators to transform their aspirations into headship access. These findings agree with the findings of Okafor, Fagbemi, and Hassan (2011) which revealed that fewer developmental opportunities were made available to women in Lagos.

Further findings revealed that female administrators were appointed to headship without being trained for school management. 18% (2) of the interviewees reported attending an in-service management course that was offered by KEMI after they were appointed, while the rest are yet to attend these courses. Other interviewees were studying or planning to enroll in a course that would enhance their chances of becoming school leaders. Specialized courses in school management and headship would be beneficial to female administrators as they aspire to higher positions of leadership

4.5.2 Transfers

A bigger proportion of female leaders (61.8%) agree that transfers to other stations upon promotion hinder them from progressing to headship. This could be because of the duties that women have by being wives and mothers. Most of the female leaders in the study were married and 90 % of them had at least one child. If these leaders were to factor in the family responsibilities, then they would be reluctant to get promoted and

transferred to other institutions. The promoted administrators would have to relocate to other regions in the county far from their homes.

Another factor that may discourage movement from one school to another is the remoteness of the new station. The schools in which female administrators are appointed to are sometimes found in the interior regions of the county which may have insufficient infrastructure such as schools for their children (middle class parents prefer to take their children to privately owned schools), hospitals and roads. Female administrators may opt out of such appointments weighing the benefit of remaining a classroom teacher and enjoying the developed infrastructure *vis a vis* accepting a promotion and being transferred to a remote area where facilities might be limited.

Another issue mainly faced by small rural primary schools is that of understaffing. The school managers are faced with the dilemma of offering quality and sufficient teaching to the pupils amidst a lean teaching staff. Teachers do not take up teaching positions in rural primary schools because of the invariant challenges. In the rural setting, the locals have not built houses for renting. The conditions under which these female administrators work are not favourable. One interviewee gave her experience;

When I was posted to my current school I looked for housing so that I could move my children near to the teaching station. I did not get any house for rental. I managed to get a house near the market centre which is around four kilometres from the school. I walk eight kilometres daily to and fro and sometimes I use bodaboda [motor bike]. When it rains getting to school is a challenge. (ST4)

Basing on the various challenges that are encountered when managing a public primary school in the rural regions, more often than not a man is preferred. A man is seen as macho to handle these challenges even if a woman may equally have the ability to handle the issue.

Male hierarchies in schools have been pointed out in the study as influencing the appointment of school leaders. School committees and top school headship in schools are dominated by men. Since they play a significant role in appointing heads they tend to appoint those individuals similar to themselves. Berkery, Morley, and Tiernan, (2013) study found out that males continue to perceive the males as more suitable for managerial positions based on the agentic nature of the managerial post. This being the case, the suitability of men for leadership would continue to be sustained and would see them succeed in holding the positions.

In this case the social norms and cultural stereotypes such as roles of women in being custodians of the home has provided a basis that is unseen for female administrators to decide whether headship roles are suitable for them and whether they should take them up. These decisions are determined by the way that institutional structures often influenced by the societal culture work hence keep female teachers from advancing in the school's leadership hierarchy. These findings concur with those of Klatt, 2014 which revealed that the female superintendent was more widely accepted as a parent with home responsibilities than the male. The results found that the male superintendent fit under the archetype of a male leader/ruler, and that descriptors used by people such as "strong" and "commands respect" within the district supported that archetype. Conversely, the female superintendent fit the archetype of women as mother/nurturer, and descriptors such as expecting a "passive leader" or "collaborative" were used by people to describe her.

4.5.3 Promotion procedures

A high percentage (73.5%) of the participants agreed that male leaders are promoted faster than the female teachers. The respondents in the study therefore recognised that

the male teachers moved up the ladder to join headship faster than them. According to interaction centred theory identified by Kiaye and Singh (2013) men give clear indications to promotional gatekeepers about their career ambitions, career successes and their readiness for the next step making their movement higher up the hierarchy even faster. The observation that female leaders drag in getting to higher positions may be because they do not have network that spring board them to headship paths. It is through these networks that the female teacher will clearly declare their aspirations for headship to gatekeepers who may influence their promotion decision. Men already have well established network of which it is quite difficult for a woman to fit into the circles because of their meeting times, activities and places (Mwebi, 2008, Ballenger & Stephen, 2010).

The male hierarchy in the schools' organisational structure is likely to appoint the male teachers more than the female teachers. Majority (67.6%) of the female administrators agreed with this statement. Men tend to nurture, inspire and appoint similar others to the schools leadership thus propagating their dominance in school headship. Closely related to this finding is Addi-Raccach (2006) which revealed that men in two of the educational systems under his study, tended to promote other men to vice principal position while excluding women from administrative positions. This becomes a strategy to prepare the next principals who will replicate the process of preparing the next generation of male school principals. Addi-Raccach suggested that the socio cultural context of the educational system seemed to have less impact on the way men behaved toward other men such that even in situations where majority of the staff are women, the men are still likely to appoint a fellow man. Similarly, this study indicates that the majorities of those in headship are men and are likely to appoint their fellow men into leadership even in cases where there are more female administrators in schools.

4.5.4 Role models/mentorship

More female administrators (61.2%) agreed that the lack of women in school management hinder women career progress. Findings from the survey revealed that very few (5%) respondents held top most leadership positions. A female role model in a school has significant positive influences on career aspirations among women (Onyango, Simatwa, & Ondigi, 2011). When female leaders succeed in their roles they can serve as a proof for female administrators that they are capable of becoming heads. On the contrary, the findings of Hoyt's (2011) study revealed that if the role model is "high level" then she is labeled as exceptions to the norm, causing negative effects, in terms of self-perceptions and, in turn, headship aspiration. If female leaders in schools are few, then chances of being branded outstanding and behaving out of the norm may give the female administrator that false impression that headship is unattainable. However Hoyt (2016) suggests that "role models at any level can be inspiring to the extent that individuals identify with them, deem their success as attainable, and they successfully disconfirm, at an explicit level, gender-stereotypical belief", hence other women tend to aspire for high achievements in order to emulate the successful female role models. In any case, for these female leaders to be appointed into headship they might have conformed to the prevailing culture. It is no wonder that the female administrators are left without effective role models.

Efficacy beliefs are raised when observing other people successfully perform a task. This brings out the importance of role models as explained by Hoyt and Simon (2011). Their study suggests that role models at any level can be inspiring as long as individuals can relate to them and can undo gender-stereotypical beliefs. Majority of the female teachers instead identified the male administrators as their mentors and role models. This is not to suggest that female leaders were not worthy of being looked up to but it

is because of their inability to undo the prevailing culture. Most probably the few female leaders who are available conform to the gender discriminative culture and forget to nurture their fellow female colleagues. It is of paramount importance to take up affirmative action that will build a more robust pipeline of upwardly mobile female teachers who will take up leadership positions in order to inspire and successfully lead others to leadership.

4.5.5 Support from school administrators

About 50% female administrators agreed with the statement that female administrators have to be persuaded by others to apply for headship positions. The qualitative portion of Ostos' study (2012) relating to independent schools, indicated that women, as heads of school, noted the importance of developing solid relationships with the board president and other trustees. This indicated that the board may be a barrier to hiring women into the role of head of school. Additionally, women's lack of understanding of how a head of school works with the board may also be serving as a barrier. The role of a mentor was noted and supported in the research as being important for women to further their careers. Burkman (2011) found in her study of women, that female principals felt support was lacking from fellow administrators. Munoz et al. (2014) examined transcripts from two previous studies of aspiring or current female superintendents. They found that the women who were superintendents identified the role a mentor played in developing their leadership skills, encouraging them, and helping them to take the position. All in all there is an indication that institutional factors are perceived to negatively influence leadership aspiration. Structures within institutions encourage gender discrimination and therefore lowering the female administrators' leadership aspirations. The interviewees also explained that it was so difficult to carry out tasks being a school head because colleagues do not give support.

One of the deputy head teachers said that whenever she delegated responsibilities, the teachers would remind her that she is getting an allowance for the tasks and so she should do it herself. This situation leaves her with work overload which de-motivates the leader superiors having in mind that In Kenya there is no policy that guides the payment of teachers and administrators for working extra time thus discouraging them from taking up these responsibilities The headship role is very taxing and delegation of duties to the others, especially the female teachers is almost impossible, yet it is supposed to ease the work load. A deputy head teacher said the following about the difficulties that she faced when delegating;

Whenever I delegate some responsibilities to the madams they give a lot of excuses and make such statements as 'you should have told me earlier' and others. The female leaders are not ready to take up extra responsibility outside their minimum classroom teaching tasks. And at the end of the day they are eager to leave for their homes. (DHT5)

She clearly demonstrates the frustration that comes with holding leadership positions. What is coming out clearly is that as much as the leadership is quite demanding, the female leader hardly gets adequate support from the teachers and especially female teachers. Almost all of the women interviewed described working at home to meet the demands of deputy headship. Many perceived this to be an inevitable aspect of life as a deputy head teacher. Some of the sample, however, argued that the amount of work needed to be completed 'out of hours' was both constraining and excessive. When you are working 70, 80, 90 hours a week, it is ridiculous. There is an intense pressure. Their career narrative featured concern for their health if they were to continue to work in this way. The demands of balancing work and family responsibilities that were noted by the participants were consistent with findings of a study conducted by Laura (2017) which suggest that deputy head teachers can experience pressure to fulfill both their teaching and their leadership obligations (NAHT, 2016).

From the above, it is noted that these findings are consistent with the findings of Delgado's (2016) study that senior deputies experience higher levels of stress compared to their novice counterparts due to their high commitment and workloads besides receiving the delegated tasks provided by their heads. This supports the findings by previous researchers, such as Chang (1997), Hausman et al. (2002) and Delgado (2016), that female senior assistants or deputies have much involvement within their routine tasks which revealed their higher workloads and high commitment to the administrative tasks.

This was also supported by Wallace (2014) who conducted a survey of female superintendents regarding the advice they would give to prospective female principal. The advice included understanding the long hours of being a principal and the impact it would have on families. In a study investigating teacher workload, The Department for Education (DfE, 2014: 13) found that deputy head teachers worked on average 19.1 hours a week 'out of hours' that is before 08:00, after 18:00 and during weekends. All of the women I interviewed described working at home to meet the demands of deputy headship

Sanchez & Thornton (2010) also found in their review of the research, that family obligations were considered to be a barrier to women pursuing roles such as principal and superintendent. The demands of time and responsibility on a head of school may be a barrier to women pursuing these roles in the context of public primary schools. Derrington and Sharratt (2008), in their survey of superintendent hopefuls, also found the women identified barriers to their pursuit of the role of superintendent that included motherhood and obligations to the family. They echo the observations of Rintoul and Goulais (2010: 746), who describe deputy headship as a 'middle role' requiring

individuals ‘to be both a leader and a follower, driven by a juggling act of creative, practical and political demands’.

4.6 Other factors that influence leadership aspiration identified from the interviews

Other factors that were revealed by the interviewed female leaders as significant in influencing leadership aspiration among female administrators included: inspiration to make a change, education policies. Pupils’ indiscipline and criticisms.

4.6.1 Inspiration to make a change

There are issues that motivated some of the teachers to take up responsibilities in school. Five (45%) of the interviewees identified circumstances that inspired them to become leaders. They hoped to deal with certain issues in their capacity as leaders, even though leadership was not in their initial career plan. The women felt that being school leaders would make them agents of change in the right direction in schools. A deputy head teacher for example said:

At first I was not interested in being a deputy head teacher, but I realized that if I became one I could endorse and implement what was right. I saw an opportunity to start the morning preps and ensure that sanitary pads which were budgeted for are bought for the girls. Initially these two were not done, but I am happy that since I become the deputy head the girls are getting the sanitary pads. A woman had to be in this position to ensure that this is done. (DHT5)

In addition, another deputy headteacher interviewee said that she was encouraged to leadership because she intended to deal with issues to do with the girls and to be their role model. The girl child still faces so many challenges in the county such as early pregnancies, forced marriages and absenteeism due to child labor. Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) poverty and discrimination by parents, among others (Ngeno, 2015). These female teacher leaders demonstrated a passion to sort out these challenges.

Whether they are able to solve these issues in their positions of leadership is yet another concern, considering the prevailing male hegemony.

Women are generally encouraged to join educational leadership because they know that they can initiate change, and provide the necessary leadership skills to implement those changes (Adams & Hambright, 2004 in Wangui, 2012)

4.6.2 Education policies

Policies may facilitate more women joining leadership. Some directly impact on the appointment of women to leadership such as the two thirds gender policies which dictates the increase of either gender in any appointive or electoral position while others may impact indirectly. One interviewee reported that in her sub county, educational officials are keen on encouraging female teachers to participate in leadership. This is based on the guidelines the Ministry of Education has laid down to ensure equal opportunity before appointing aspirants to school leadership.

Policies such as Free Primary Education (FPE) re-introduced in January 2003 by the Kenyan Government have impacted on female teachers' aspiration in away. FPE policy has not only played a role to reach a large proportion of the out of school children especially the girls, but has also made management of institutions bearable. This is in terms of provision of learning facilities and also it has reduced conflicts with parents and communities. As a deputy head teacher puts it:

I was lucky I was appointed into leadership when FPE had just been introduced. I therefore did not need to send children home all the time to bring money for this and that. The FPE really supported me. I had told the AEO when I was appointed that I really hated the duty of sending pupils home to bring 5 shillings for a particular school need because that is where conflict between the parents and school administration begins. Parents never cooperate and if you keep asking for money you will be accused of misappropriation of funds. (DHT3)

It is apparent therefore, that some of the policies developed in a way cushion the role of the head teacher. If policies developed are adhered to, then working collaboratively among stakeholders will ensure that schools management becomes a success.

The job itself

Factors within the school have been pointed out as inhibiting the headship aspiration of the female leaders. Although equality policies that legitimize female headship are clearly endorsed in schools, there are practices that are promoted unconsciously that enhance the female administrators' low headship aspirations. Factors such as school conditions, especially remoteness of the school locality (Chisikwa, 2010), transfers upon promotion (Onyango, Simatwa & Ondigi, 2011), school culture on who becomes a leader (Ngan, 2011) and the principal's support (Nandwah, 2011) have been found out as influencing female administrators' headship aspirations. The system is also full of corrupt dealings. One of the interview said categorically said that women do not condone bribery. Education officials are known to ask for bribes so that they can give favors from the Ministry office. Women are either honest beings or may not be courageous enough to offer bribes. One interviewee, explained;

Being in administration forces you to be corrupt. The head teachers have to bribe the education officials at the county headquarters so that they can get favors or get things moving. For instance if they want a teacher transferred they will liaise with the education officials to do so and make a small payment. I would never want to be part of such deals. It can bring curses upon my children. (DHT4)

These women express their disappointments with the systems. They point out that as much as policies have clearly been developed to guide management, people have to canvass for things to be done which draws a lot of bribery. According to Gauss (2011), female administrators have been predicted to have low aspirations due to the institutional culture that is influenced by: negative attitudes towards female

administrators, exclusion from male group, lack of role models, occupational segregation, and lack of support from others. Similarly in Gaus (2011), elementary teacher respondents revealed the existing and prolonged practice of collusion and nepotism in the selection process of school leaders. In Gaus's study, the participants do not get to become leaders because of the corrupt recruitment process, while in the present study; the participants do not want to be leaders because they feel they will be part of the corrupt system. All in all corruption stands out as a stumbling block for the female teachers. There are also allegations of school management committees getting involved in the misuse of school resources. A senior teacher revealed that primary schools often receive funds for development from the Constituency Development Fund, Kenya Education Sector Support Program (KESSP) funds among others bodies which if not carefully monitored the finances can be misused. She gave her experience:

When I was a head teacher in one of the primary schools, I was able to apply for the KESSP fund and we were lucky to get it. When the money came everyone became an interested party including the area Member of Parliament who wanted to endorse projects that were not in the initial plan. I realised that people wanted to use the public resources for their own use. I put down my foot but that was where my problems began. Niliingililiwa sana [I faced a lot of opposition]. I had to resign after sometime. (DHT5)

The management of schools' resources if not checked can be embezzled especially if there is no forum where finances are accounted for. The senior teacher at that time was heading a rural school where parents are illiterate and may not be able to question the use of the finances. She claimed that whenever she tried to question any use of funds, she was referred to as a stumbling block deterring any form of development. Eventually she was isolated and was unable to work. She added that women are honest and do not conform to a corrupt culture.

4.6.3 Traditional culture regarding the authority of a woman in rural areas

In the rural schools absenteeism is rampant among the pupils. Parents are not very keen on their children's schooling. This leads to a higher repeater rate among pupils. Consequently, the schools retain a backlog of mature and older pupils and especially boys in primary schools. It is this group of pupils that threaten the authority of the female administrator. A deputy head teacher gave her experience:

One of the boys misbehaved in my class so I decided to punish him. He refused [to do the punishment] saying that if he was to be punished then it was the senior teacher to do it. Our senior teacher is a man. I had to request the senior teacher to punish him because it was already causing some excitement among the other pupils. (DHT3}

This sends a message to the other pupils that female teachers do not have the capacity of putting their foot down when it comes to issues of disciplining pupils. This also shows that female teachers have also given in to the society's prescribed mode of determining who should be in authority. Female teachers tend to avoid situations that would bring conflict to the already set way of life by fitting into prescribed roles. Another deputy head teacher in a rural school gave an account of the severity of indiscipline in rural schools.

"The major challenge in my school is school dropout. It often starts with the boys. When they are younger in the lower classes they are very good; they attend school almost 100%. As they reach class 7, truancy begins and the parents don't show any concern for this kind of behavior. They start missing school until eventually they drop out. Once they drop out they now come for the girls and impregnate them and eventually marry them at a very tender age. When the performance is lowered the parents and community blame you and give excuses that a woman cannot manage a school. (DHT5)

It is noted that some of the tasks associated with the role of a school leader might not be in tandem with the female ascribed roles. From the discussions it is apparent that the disciplinary role of pupils discourages female teachers from considering headship. All

female interviewees were in agreement that it is very difficult to discipline pupils in public primary schools. On a similar note, it was revealed by Hewitt, Pijanowski, and Denny, (2016) study that dealing with student discipline was a reason for not becoming a school administrator because of the time that it consumed at the expense of instruction and on top of that, parents were not supportive. In the present study it was reported that parents take it personally when one disciplines their children. The villagers assume that there could be some hidden hatred against not only the child but the parents. Accusations become even worse when a female administrator is the disciplinarian. She was viewed as one going against her role. A woman is expected to be docile and lie low in the village. These findings confirm the principle postulated by Eagly and Karau (2012) role congruity theory of prejudice which states that, “the more agentically a leader role is defined or the more completely women fulfil its agentic requirements, the more likely such women are to elicit unfavorable evaluation because their behavior deviates from the injunctive norms of the female gender role”.

People are likely to evaluate the behaviour of women who occupy leadership roles and ascribe to agentic character less favourably than the equivalent behaviour of men because of their prescribed female gender role. Being a disciplinarian is more agentic, that is, one is required to be assertive, controlling and even forceful. Disciplining students or staff involves making hard-hitting decisions that may not favour the pupils and parents contrary to the expectation of the women's behaviour. Female leaders are expected to be communal. Communal characteristics, according to Eagly and Karau (2012) are approved more strongly to women, and are associated with having more concern with the welfare of other people. One who is communal exhibits affection, helpfulness, kindness, sympathy, should be sensitive, nurturing, and gentle. Female

teachers are disapproved when they exhibit tendencies which go against their culturally prescribed roles.

4.6.4 Criticism

Findings reveal that women have identified their colleagues and especially women as their main critics. This confirms the saying that “women are their own enemies”. The interviewees revealed that women leaders are criticized a lot when in leadership by both men and women. A deputy head teacher pointed out that when she was appointed she faced a lot of resistance from her colleagues. Many of them found it difficult to recognize that she was now an authority and no longer a peer. She turned a deaf ear to their criticism and continued doing her duties as per the guidelines. She claimed to have been straightforward when she was a teacher by doing what was required of her. Her critics could not find any basis of the disapproval. She argues that sometimes it is good to be promoted and taken to a new station rather than staying in the same school. She concludes that familiarity breeds contempt. Criticism as a factor that discourages female managers was also identified by Osumba (2010) who explained that women tended to avoid where they risk facing criticism and receiving negative feedbacks. Osumbah (2018) also revealed that women in management tended to be more concerned about how they are perceived by others. (Criticism works on the individual’s self-efficacy) Another deputy head teacher also mentioned about the undoing of critics when in leadership;

When you are a leader you face a lot of criticisms from colleagues and the community. For any decision that I make someone is ready to make a bad comment. Men are usually not affected by gossip like women. In fact you have to be really tough so that gossip and criticism does not put you down as a woman administrator.

In comparison to the men, women revealed that their colleagues were harder on them when they make decisions and deliberations. This finding agrees with Huston (2016) that highlights research in business enterprises and suggests that people judge female leaders decisions more harshly especially if the decisions are bad. According to Huston, leadership is perceived a male domain and people find it easier to accept a bad decision when made by a leader in a gender appropriate role. Female leaders' role conflicts with their gender role and therefore the decisions that they make may be taken with a lot of apprehension and thus the criticisms. Female leaders are therefore very cautious when making decisions and sometimes they may not risk making any.

The conceptual model

The basis for this study was formed on the interrelated concepts proposed to affect headship aspirations of female administrators. These were self-efficacy, the social cultural factors and institutional factors, which made up the independent variables. The dependent variable was headship aspiration. Any or all of these variables may have been intervened by the government policy on gender equality, educational level of the administrator and the experience required of an administrator to access headship.

Basing on the findings, the conceptual framework initially proposed can be adapted such that the socio-cultural factors do not directly affect headship aspiration but instead relates directly to the other two independent variables. Modification can reflect the additional factors mentioned in the interviews, such as the job itself, locality of the school and female teacher characteristics such as age, leadership experience and teaching experience. From the interview findings it was revealed that some of the female administrators did not initially aspire to leadership positions. They were considered for

senior teacher and deputy head teacher positions because they had administrative experience and were viewed as having leadership potentiality by the school administration.

Independent variable

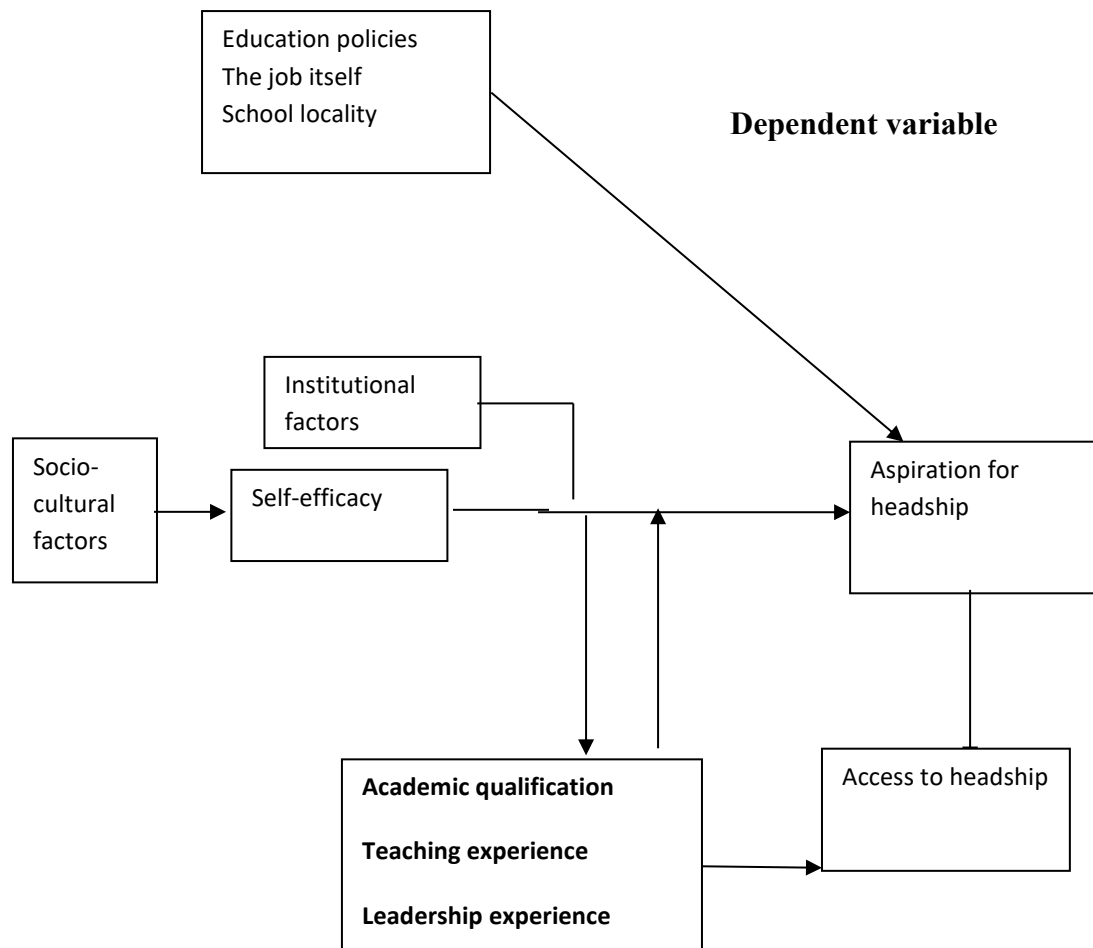


Figure 2. Female administrators' leadership aspiration framework

The modified model shown in figure 2 outlines the factors that influence leadership aspiration based on what was proposed and the findings. Research done in the area of gender and leadership can include the added factors revealed by the study to give a comprehensive analysis of the female administrators' headship aspiration. By having an all-inclusive model, effective approaches can be developed that will encourage female administrators to aspire and ascend to headship.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the summary, conclusions and recommendations of the study based on the research objectives and questions. The study explored aspirations among female administrators in public primary schools in Tharaka Nithi County in Kenya.. The study was guided by three research objectives: To assess female administrators' self-efficacy on aspirations for headship in public primary schools, to identify socio-cultural factors that affect female administrators' aspirations for headship positions in public primary schools; and to examine institutional factors that affect female administrators' aspirations for headship in public primary schools in Tharaka Nithi County in Kenya. The study was underpinned to pragmatic world views and anchored on the theory of planned behavior by Ajzen (2005). A mixed method design utilizing both quantitative and qualitative approaches was used. Both data were collected concurrently and were presented and analysed concurrently and merging done at the point of interpretation.. The mixed method aimed at increasing the understanding of the perspectives of women on the social cultural, self-efficacy and institutional factors that may be influencing a gendered expectation of leadership in public primary schools in Kenya.

The quantitative results provided included; descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages and means of all demographic and other related instrument items. In answering qualitative research questions (research questions 1), the interview data were recorded and transcribed followed by several re-readings of the data as suggested by Braun and Clarke (2006) to achieve a thematic data analysis. Firstly, the researcher had to become familiar with the data through a few rounds of reading in search of the

meanings, patterns, and ideas from the administrators' verbatim transcripts. The coding process involved allocating the sentences with a provisional code, which later helped to distinguish and generate themes (Grant, 2013). The next process was clustering the codes that had similar concepts and finally the researcher identified the key themes that emerged from the interview data. The female administrators' experiences and perspectives gave voice through their own experiences. Their narratives conveyed the determinants to head of school positions perceived in their own words, as they describe their self-efficacy, social cultural and institutional factors as well as reflecting on their work experiences in public primary schools, and sharing their thoughts regarding the lack of women in head of school positions.

A sample of 175 female administrators in public primary schools in Tharaka Nithi County was conducted. This was based on administrative title (i.e. senior teachers and deputy head teachers)

Complete and usable data came from 170 female administrators; this was 97% of the administrators surveyed. The return rate of the female administrators' questionnaire was high thus justifying the validity of the data collected for the study. Ten female deputies were interviewed. Sampling for the interviews was done purposively

5.1 Summary of the findings

The findings of the study will be summarized as follows

5.1.1 Leadership aspirations of female administrators in public primary schools in Tharaka Nithi County

Headship aspirations of female administrators are their intention to move up into headship positions within the primary schools. The female administrators' average

mean score on the headship aspiration scale was 2.52. The analysis of the study items were done on a 3-point likert scale that ranged from disagree (1) to agree (3). The study findings indicated that the female administrators have a high aspiration for headship positions within the primary schools however variation exists based on the demographic characteristics together with other factors that affect their aspirations. The number of children a female teacher had, had an effect upon their headship aspiration. The findings of the present study show that the more children one has the less likely she is to aspire for leadership. Majority of the respondents (74%) have more than three children, implying that the female administrators were also involved in the upbringing of their children. Female administrators with three and more children and are married have low aspiration means, however, from the interview findings the society is more accepting this category of administrators to lead schools.

5.1.2 The effect of Self-efficacy on female administrators' headship aspiration

Self-efficacy consisted of the female administrator's belief in their ability to aspire for and access headship positions. The findings revealed that majority of the female administrators over 80.1% were confident enough to hold leadership positions, 80.5% trusted their abilities to solve problems when in leadership and 79.4 responded that they can cope with stressful situations associated with school leadership. The female administrators' perception of their ability to lead in primary schools is high.

5.1.3 The effect of social cultural factors on female administrators' aspirations

Female administrators did not perceive the existence of stereotypical beliefs held about women aspiring and holding headship positions. A high percentage 79.4% does not fear to be rejected by the society if in leadership. 87% of the respondents believe that women can make good leaders. A large portion 67.5% agreed that family responsibilities and

child care discourage one from aspiring. 60% disagreed to the statement that spouses may discourage a female administrator from applying for school headship positions.

5.1.4 The effect of Institutional factors on female administrators' headship aspiration

Structures within the school system have been identified by the female administrators as perpetuating a culture which is unfriendly to them aspiring for headship. A high percentage of the participants (64.1%) agree that women receive fewer opportunities for professional development at work. Training and development opportunities seem unavailable to female leaders. A high percentage (73.5%) of the participants agreed that male leaders are promoted faster than the female teachers. The respondents in the study therefore recognised that the male teachers moved up the ladder to join headship faster than them. About 50% female administrators agreed with the statement that female administrators have to be persuaded by others to apply for headship positions.

5.2 Conclusions

This study sought to explore aspirations for headship among female administrators in public primary schools. Based on the findings of the study the following conclusions were made;

5.2.1 Leadership aspirations of female administrators in public primary schools

Aspirations for headship of the female administrators in Tharaka Nithi County can be rated as above average. However, the age of the female administrator, their leadership and teaching experience, and the number of children one has, had an effect on headship aspirations. Female administrators aged between 30-39 years had a higher aspiration for leadership. These results might represent the outcome of continued campaign of gender equality by different agencies, the Kenyan constitution included. This age

bracket might not uphold traditional gender stereotypes as the older female teachers would do. Although the headship aspiration of the young female teachers is high, they may not access headship due to the unattained requisite conditions for entry into headship positions such as teaching and leadership experience.

5.2.2 The influence of headship self-efficacy on female administrators' leadership aspiration.

There was a relationship between self-efficacy and headship aspiration which supported the findings of previous studies. The theory of Planned Behaviour (Ajzen, 2005) conceptualization of the perceived ability to perform the behaviour of interest as determining intention to perform the particular behaviour seems well founded. Feelings such as a lack of self-confidence and low belief in their abilities can be the product of a gender stereotyped culture that in turn negatively impacts on their headship aspirations.

By demonstrating that leadership self-efficacy is highly associated with a headship aspiration, this study implies that enhancing the leadership self-efficacy beliefs of female administrators should be considered by leadership educators when they design and deliver courses, seminars, and workshops intended for female teachers and administrators

5.2.3 The influence of socio-cultural factors on female administrators' headship aspiration

The study findings revealed that female administrators' perception of socio cultural factors did not have an influence on their headship aspirations. The general expectation basing on previous research reveals that gendered stereotypical beliefs regarding

headship and their traditional roles, influences their aspiration and possibly entry into headship.

Socio-cultural factors may still serve as a barrier into getting an education and subsequently into the teaching profession, but seems to stop playing a role once one is within the school's vicinity and system. The study has identified policies such as the two thirds gender rule enshrined in the Kenya constitution 2010 and Free Primary Education policy as shielding women against gender discrimination, stereotyping their capabilities and exonerates them from being perceived as inefficient.

The importance of support and encouragement from significant others in relation to headship access was identified by the female administrators. Female administrators do not readily take up positions; they tread very carefully before making the decision until they receive approval from a significant others. The study concludes therefore that the path that the female administrators take to headship discount the socio cultural factors as long as there is approval from significant others such as the incumbent head teacher and spouse.

The findings of this study seem to suggest that socio cultural factors are non-significant when female administrators aspire for headship. However, if these socio cultural factors that bring about social inequality are not recognized and acknowledged, then it becomes difficult to deal with institutional factors and personal deterrents to headship. As Saeeda (nd) says that "...no law can enforce equality and social justice unless equality is socially acknowledged and practised"

5.2.4 The influence of institutional factors on female teachers' leadership aspiration.

Institutional factors were seen to influence school headship aspiration. This implies that policies and practices within institutions tend to communicate a mismatch between how women are seen and the characteristics people tend to associate with heads. Interviewees also brought out the experiences associated with the headship roles such as excessive time commitments, the difficulty with handling tasks such as disciplining of pupils as challenging to the female administrator. The respondents were discouraged to seek promotional opportunities due to the demands of the job which were believed to conflict with the needs of their families. There is also relationship between socio-cultural factors and the institutional factors. The prevailing culture and gender stereotypes have a relationship with the way institutions are run. This shows that the societal culture penetrates into the management systems within institutions. For example if the female administrator is viewed as responsible for home duties then at school she may be given less responsibilities or maybe given responsibilities similar to domestic chores basing on the cultural expectation of a woman. Female teachers will continue to handle informal headship duties or only classroom teaching because she is viewed as suitable for such duties. Gender roles within institutions should be viewed from a different aspect which is gender neutral, different from those done in the family

5.3 Recommendations

The following recommendations were made based on the findings and conclusions;

1. Individual schools should develop internal policies of gender equality which will create a management team based on equal opportunities. The policies should take into consideration the different life situations of female and male

administrators. These policies should be engendered from the existing policies such as the two thirds gender rule enshrined in the constitution of Kenya 2010.

2. Since majority of the female administrators take a different route into leadership, school administrators should ensure that the school environment places the female administrator outside the stereotypical nature of the society. Female administrators should be encouraged to openly aspire for top administrative positions rather than waiting for some other people to coerce them apply for positions.
3. Findings revealed that female administrators haven't been exposed to career development programs that would uncover their capabilities in the headship front of schools. The higher education in-service and pre-service programs that teachers enrol in are not enough to equip women with the skills and knowledge for career mobility. Female administrators are not in a position to attend programs specialised in leadership content which are mostly residential and offered in major towns because of family responsibilities. School administrators deliberately leave them out because of the notion that they are more concerned with domestic issues *vis a vis* career development. It is suggested that capacity building institutions such as KEMI and professional bodies such as KNUT should organise for programs on site with courses that deal with gender and leadership.
4. Since perceptions of incongruity may negatively impact female administrators' aspiration for headship depending on whether the men or women are dominant among the staff, the county education staffing officials and the teachers Service Commission should come up with policies to

ensure that the teaching staffs are gender balanced in each school irrespective of location. When male and female teachers are close to equal in numbers, their perceptions pertaining gender-related characteristics of who should be a leader and leader effectiveness is less pronounced. This would give equal chances to both genders to aspire for leadership having held gender stereotypes at bay.

5. Given the importance of self-efficacy, it is crucial for teacher employers and administrators to develop interventions that build up the administrator's confidence and increase their self-efficacy. This will be made possible by the formation of female head teacher association which will initiate a support system among them and create mentorship programs and networks where they can sponsor and stimulate confidence among female administrators.

5.4 Suggestion for further research

The findings of this study leave some issues and questions unanswered which future studies can focus on. These include;

1. Further research should incorporate the perspectives of both men and women in order to obtain a broader viewpoint that compares and contrast the experiences of female educational leaders. In addition further research is needed to explore more deeply into the underlying causes of gender stereotypes among male teachers because their opinion counts especially if they are currently the majority decision makers in school
2. This study provided baseline information on variables such as self-efficacy and leadership aspiration revealing the possible relationships between or among the

variables or with demographic data. Survey results may indicate that relationships exist at a set point in time, but further research would be necessary to determine causality. The survey results represented here is one step in determining whether or not an existing problem or phenomenon merits further study. In addition, an in depth longitudinal study should be considered to examine individual female teachers and cohorts of female teachers over a span of time to investigate their aspiration for leadership at different stages of their careers.

3. Further research should be conducted at other research sites within the country and internationally to determine whether or not the results of this study are out of the ordinary. Perhaps, a more qualitative method would yield more
4. Insights particularly into the influence of socio-cultural phenomena basing on the fact that survey results revealed a gender-neutral pattern and were divergent from the qualitative findings.
5. Further action research which would seek strategies that teacher training institutions could adopt to enhance the confidence of female teacher trainees to prepare for career advancement is recommended. Similar studies which focus on developing strategies to correct people's negative mindsets about women leadership are also recommended.
6. A contextual approach for understanding female teachers' aspirations for school leadership should be adopted. A study following a theoretical direction which examines differences in gender inequality in leadership aspiration, in distinct socio cultural educational settings should be considered. It is noted that despite

Tharaka Nithi county being almost homogeneous in terms of its culture due to the presence of a dominating community, contextual variations exists such as rural set up, urban and tea estate regions which may be constrained by the societal and organizational mechanisms of these regions

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Introductory Letter

Researcher: Elizabeth Kamba Murithi

Phone Number: 0726798568

Email: kambaelizabeth2@gmail.com

Sponsor: DAAD Germany (CERMESA)

Dear Participant,

RE: Permission to participate in research on perceptions and aspirations of female teachers in accessing leadership positions in public primary schools in Tharaka Nithi County, Kenya

I am a post graduate student currently pursuing a Master's degree in Education Research Methodologies and management in the Department of Education Management and Policy Studies at Moi University. This research proposal has been approved by the Moi University and the National Commission for Science and Innovation (NACOSTI).

I am humbly requesting your participation in the study, which will involve completing of a survey questionnaire that ask you basic questions about yourself and a face to face interview, which will last for thirty minutes to one hour. The researcher may also take a video or audio tape of course with your consent. There are no risks or discomfort that is anticipated from your participation in the study. There are no direct benefits gained from participating in the study though the potential benefits of the study may arise by getting an opportunity to discuss feelings, perceptions and concerns related to your own experience.

Your participation in this study is voluntary and if you choose not to participate or to withdraw from the study at any time, there will be no penalty. The research is purely for academic purposes and your identity will be anonymous. If you have any questions about your rights as a participant in this research, or if you feel you need clarification of any kind, you are free to contact me using the contacts given above.

Yours Sincerely,

Elizabeth Kamba

Appendix B: Consent Agreement Form for the Institutions

To be completed by the principal of the selected school

To the principal,

Dear Sir/Madam

RE: permission for your institutional participation in a research on perceptions and aspirations of female teachers in accessing leadership positions in public primary schools, a case of Tharaka Nithi County, Kenya

I am a post graduate student from Moi University, school of education pursuing a Master's degree in Educational research under DAAD scholarship for East and South Africa German Centre of Excellence in Educational Research Methodologies and Management (CERM-ESA). Your institution_____ has been sampled to participate in the research study by the above title: I am therefore seeking permission and your consent to conduct a research among the female teachers in your school on the above mentioned topic.

The researcher administered questionnaires and also conduct interviews with female heads that will be part the selected sample size. Tape recording will also be used during interviews to enhance concentration of the researcher, to be transcribed latter. The research will not cause any harm to your teachers and it is meant for only academic purposes, therefore no caution will be needed when carrying out this research.

My research proposal has been approved the Moi University and the National Commission for Science and Innovation (NACOSTI).The research will commerce in May 2018 and will be conducted for a duration of about one month. You are requested to feel free to ask questions on the information provided in this form. You are also asked to take your time and carefully read the given information and incase anything is not clear to you please ask for clarification. If you have questions regarding your rights as

an institution you may contact the researcher whose contact information is provided on the first page Data collection process ethics shall be strictly adhered to and the collected data kept under lock and key and unauthorized persons will not be allowed to access the data. The findings of this study will be published online or/and in print journals. Written journals will be presented in international conferences for the purposes of dissemination and adding of new knowledge to the world of academia.

I promise that this data will remain anonymous in all written reports via pseudonyms and anonymity. Data evidence will be destroyed soon after it has served the intended academic purpose. Your sign in this consent form is an indication that you have carefully read through the information provided on this form and that you have fully understood the researcher's study expectations.

Consent.

I give consent for my school _____ to participate in the above study. I have read and understood the accompanying letter and information leaflet. I know what the study is about and the part my school will be involved in. I know that members of my institution do not have to answer all of the questions and that can decide not to continue at any time.

Researcher

1. Name ----- Signature ----- Date -----

School Principal

2. Name ----- Signature ----- Date -----

Appendix C: Participants' Agreement Form

The purpose of this consent form is to request you to take part in the research study: female teachers' perceptions and aspirations for leadership positions in primary schools. Before you decide to participate in this study, it is important that you understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please read the following information carefully and ask the researcher for clarification if there is anything that is not clear or if you need more information

Your responses to this study will be anonymous. Please do not write any identifying information. Every effort will be made by the researcher to preserve your confidentiality and any document identifying participant information will be locked in a filing cabinet in the personal possession of the researcher. Your participation in this study is voluntary. It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part in this study. You are also still free to withdraw as a participant at any time and without any penalties. If you withdraw from the study before data collection is completed, your data will be destroyed.

Your signature below indicates that you have decided to volunteer as a research participant for this study, and that you have read and understood the information provided above. You will be given a signed and dated copy of this form to keep, along with any other printed materials deemed necessary by the study researcher. I, the undersigned, have fully explained the relevant details of this research study to the participant named above and believe that the participant has understood and has freely given his/her consent.

Researcher's Name: _____

Date: _____ Signature _____

Participant's statement

I confirm that I have read and understood the information about this study. I have been given the opportunity to ask questions about the study and all is clear. I therefore voluntarily agree to participate in the study

Participant Name _____ Date _____

Signature _____

Appendix D: Questionnaire for female administrators

Section A: Background Information.

Dear Madam,

I am Elizabeth kamba, a postgraduate student of Moi University currently pursuing a master's degree of education in research. May I humbly thank you for accepting to participate in this research and for taking your time to respond to this questionnaire. Your responses will remain completely confidential and will be used strictly for the academic purpose of this study. The survey will first ask about your personal background and your aspiration for headship positions. Kindly complete this questionnaire accurately, honestly and be as precise as possible.

Instructions: Please (✓) one of the choices that best fit what you believe.

1. What is your age in years _____?

3. What is your highest academic qualification?

(A) Master's Degree (B) Bachelor's Degree (C) Diploma (D) P1 (E) P2

4. For how many years have you been teaching in primary schools _____?

5. Your current head teacher is a (A) female _____ (B) Male _____

6. Which leadership position do you hold?

A) Senior Teacher (B) Deputy Head Teacher (C) Head Teacher

D) None (E) Other if any (Specify) _____

7. Have you ever declined promotions in your school?

A) No I have not been proposed any B) No I have accepted promotion

C) Yes once D) Yes more than once

Section B.

Evaluate the following statements and tick (✓) the option that you feel most accurately

Represents your experiences.

Use the scale below to respond to each statement:

1. Strongly disagree (SD) 2. Disagree (D) 3. Uncertain (U) 4. Agree (A) 5. Strongly Agree (SA)

Please indicate the extent to which you agree to these statements by ticking (✓) the

Appropriate box.

PART A Leadership Aspirations and experiences		SA (5)	A (4)	UN (3)	D (2)	SD (1)
1	I wish to aspire for headship in my career profession in future.					
2	Maximum cooperation is given to those in leadership positions in my school.					
3	I would wish to have a responsibility for future direction of my primary school.					
4	I hope to move up to headship/principal positions in my primary school.					
5	I prefer to remain just a classroom teacher to being in a leadership position.					

PART B Social-cultural factors		SA (5)	A (4)	UN (3)	D (2)	SD (1)
1	There is a societal acceptable for women in leadership positions.					
2	Spouses encourage female administrators to apply for headship positions.					
3	There is a belief that women must be better qualified than men for them to become leaders.					
4	The belief from others that women do make good leaders encourage them to apply for leadership positions					
5	The patriarchal beliefs allow women in the primary schools to take up top leadership roles.					
PART C Institutional-factors		SA (5)	A (4)	UN (3)	D (2)	SD (1)
1	Women receive fewer opportunities for professional development at work.					
2	Male hierarchies are more likely to promote /appoint men for leadership positions than women in schools.					
3	Men are usually promoted faster than women.					
4	Women who have progressed in school leadership have relevant work experiences.					
5	Most women in school leadership have advanced their career levels because they have appropriate training.					
PART D Self-efficacy		SA (5)	A (4)	UN (3)	D (2)	SD (1)

1	Female teachers are confident enough to deal efficiently with unexpected events that come with school administration.					
2	If appointed to leadership female teachers can always manage to solve difficult problems as they arise just as men can.					
3	Women can cope with stressful situations associated with school leadership as efficiently as men can.					
4	I believe that am suited to become the principal of my primary school.					

Appendix E: Interview Guide

Researcher made an introduction.

The interview schedule consists of eight questions and should take no more than 30 minutes.

If an interviewee needs a question repeated, then she is free to ask.

1. What attitudes did you have or still have about leadership before you got into it.
2. Were there misconceptions?
3. Who were significant when you decided to apply for this position? What contribution did they make? Were there people who discouraged you from applying for this leadership position? What reasons did they give for discouraging you?
4. Did you work hard to attain your position or is it by sheer luck? Please explain.
5. Depending on the survey outcome (developing a strong self-concept, socio-cultural factors or institutional factors) which factor influenced most your decision to aspire for leadership posts?
6. If given the opportunity, would you apply for a higher position than what you hold currently? Have you planned for the career move? What considerations have you put in mind?
7. Do you think accessing leadership positions would have been different if you were a man? Please explain what aspects would be different.
8. Depending on the barriers identified when accessing leadership positions, which ones did you encounter in your career path to the current position? Are there other barriers that you could have encountered and are not mentioned?

Thank you very much for your time.

Appendix F: Table for determining sample of a known population.

[illegible]

Appendix H: A Map Showing the Location of Tharaka Nithi County

