

Electoral Challenges Encountered by Women Aspirants in Kericho and Bomet Counties during Elections Campaigns in Kenya

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This study focused on electoral process and conflicts encountered by women aspirants in Kericho and Bomet counties during electioneering period in Kenya. Past studies indicates that women candidates in the world face many hurdles during electioneering period and Sub-Sahara Africa has been leading on elections offenses meted on women followed by Asian countries. It was as a result of this that the studies on women participation in elections drew the attention of United Nations and various treaties were signed to give women a level ground to express their political right by contesting like men. However, the Kenya politics even after promulgation of 2010 constitution elective positions is still domineered by men. The purpose of this study was to explore electoral challenges encountered by women aspirants during elections campaign period in Kenya. The study areas was Bomet and Kericho County. The study was guided by patriarchal theory. The literature was reviewed from global perspective, Africa and Kenya context. The study adopted both qualitative and quantitative research method which was suitable in collecting opinions of the electorates. The target population comprised of 4,000 registered voters in Bomet and Kericho Counties. A sample of 10% of the target population yielded 400 sample sizes. Simple random sampling was used to obtain 200 respondents from each county. Opinion leaders were sampled purposively from the two counties who were knowledgeable about women participation in politics and the challenges they encountered. The research instrument included interview schedule, questionnaires, documents analysis and focus group discussion. To ensure validity and reliability of the research instruments, a piloting study was carried out in Nakuru County on February 2017. Data collected was analyzed using descriptive statistics in form of percentages, frequencies by computing using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 20. The findings of indicated that there was need to protect and promote the rights of women to participate in the electoral process. This right is not confined to voting but also includes the free of expression and the right to vie for any political seat and to hold public offices in all levels of government. The study recommended that Funding for women candidates and those who have emerged from nominations because this study found out that they were financially incapacitated, intensive civic and voter education. It is hoped that the findings would assist with policies and strategies in support of achieving two third gender rule.

Key words: Electoral Process, Gender, voters, aspirants, candidates, elections, electorates

1.1 Background of the Study

Focusing on explaining levels of women's representation in politics has continued to grow during cold war and post-cold war period. Following the end of the cold war in 1990s, global emphasis in Third World shifted to good governance and promotion of democracy led by International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank. Development partners brought pressure to African countries Kenya included to expand the political space for greater involvement of other actors like women and civil society for any assistance to be accorded to the government (Shvedova, 2005). As a result there was increase of participation of women in politics. Despite this pressure it is imperative to note that women's legislative representation has largely ignored this disconnect between women's parliamentary representation and their right to stand for election (Dolan, 2004). While some might argue that societal rather than state characteristics may play the greatest role in explaining this gap and determining women's political participation, research has shown that to a large extent it is state and political structures that have the most influence on the phenomenon of women's political participation (Paxton, 2005 & Shvedova, 2005). States grant this right, but they may do little to act upon it. Societal influences surely play a role in this decoupling, but without state adoption of the right of women to stand for election, the first woman cannot spontaneously be elected as a result of societal pressures (Nzomo, 2003). More recently, research on women's representation has begun to look more closely at international influences on the election of women according to the United Nation's resolution (2012), there is a need to protect and promote the rights of women to participate in a free and fair electoral process. Evidence shows that the growth and influence of the international women's movement, as well as country memberships in Women's International Non-Governmental Organizations (WINGOs) are positively related to achieving specific milestone levels of women's representation (Paxton et al., 2006). These factors point towards a direct role the world society influence on the level of women's representation in the developing world. For example, since 1945, only 30 countries in the world had elected a woman to parliament by 1990, this number had risen to 136. By 2007, more than 170 countries have followed suit (IPU, 2007). With the institutionalization of democracy in much of the developing world, research has shown an increase in women's political representation globally, including in the developing world, as of

2007. The country with the highest level of female political representation was Rwanda, where 48.8 percent of their representatives were women (IPU, 2007).

Kenya is a signatory to other international treaties on women empowerment, key among them being the African Union's Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa (2004), the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (2003), the African Plan of Action to Accelerate the Implementation of the Dakar and Beijing Platforms for Action for the Advancement of Women (1999) and the Constitutive Act of the African Union, the Dakar Platform for Action (1994). International fora, including the Cairo Conference on Population and Development in 1994, Fourth World Conference on Women of 1995, and World Summit for Social Development of 1995, however, inequalities still persist in women's political representation despite the progress made globally in improving their status. Despite subscribing to international commitments to empower women, Kenya still lags behind in terms of women representation in politics and decision making in East African region (Wanyeki, 2009).

Although Kenya is considered a democratic state that holds periodic elections, the country's performance on women's representation has been dismal. In the 10th Parliament (2008-2013), women comprised only 9.8 percent of the parliament, compared with Rwanda's 56 percent, Tanzania's 36 percent, Uganda's 35 percent, and Burundi's 30 percent according to (FIDA report, 2016). Overall, Kenya is 10 percent below the EAC's regional average of 20 percent representation of women in parliament according to (Odida, 2010). According to (Odida, 2010), women are yet to meet the two-third gender rule enshrined in 2010 constitution. In the just concluded 8th August 2017 General Elections, the number of women who got elected to various positions at the county and national assemblies increased significantly by electing three women Governors; three Senators respectively; as the number of women representatives elected to the August house also increased from 16 (in the 11th Parliament) to 23 in the 12th Parliament. At the county level, the number of female members at the county assembly also increased from 84 to hundred in 2017 (I.E.B.C report, 2017).

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Evidence shows that the growth and influence of the international women's movement, as well as country memberships in Women's International Non-Governmental Organizations (WINGOs) are positively related to achieving specific milestone levels of women's representation in politics (Paxton et al., 2006). These factors point towards a direct role for world society influence on the level of women's representation in the developing world. The 2010 constitution in Kenya, enshrine a principle that not more than two thirds of any elected or appointed body parliamentarians should be the same gender. Half a decade women Kenya make less than 17% in the National Assembly. More recently, research on women's representation has begun to look more closely at international influences on the election of women. These factors point towards a direct role for world society influence on the level of women's representation in the developing world. Despite Kenya being a signatory to international treaties on women empowerment, women performed better in the 2017 elections, compared with 2013, but the numbers still fall short of the constitutional two-thirds gender requirement. It was in view of this that this study embarked on exploring the electoral challenges women face during election campaigns in Kericho and Bomet Counties

1.3 Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study was to explore electoral process challenges encountered by Women aspirants in Kericho and Bomet counties during election campaign period in Kenya

1.4 Justification of the Study

The study seeks to contribute to the literature in the academic field by interrogating the varying explanations of electorate process in relation to gender participation in politics. This study was concerned with understanding the dichotomous relationship between electoral process and political women representation. This study is presumed to be an eye opener for all candidates seeking elective positions to be tolerant of each other. The gender rule would be realized if electoral challenges facing women is addressed as enshrined in 2010 Constitution of Kenya.

1.5 Scope of the Study

The study focused on female candidate's politicians who had gone through party nominations, campaign period and made to ballot paper and registered voters from the two counties. The female candidates comprised of winners and losers

1.6 Limitations of the Study

Being an electioneering period in Kenya when this research was carried on during the month of August 2017, there was a lot of suspicions from the electorates especially those who did not have proper understanding of questions posed to them were reluctant to participate and most of the respondents were in a hurry to catch up with aspirant's campaigns. The researcher overcame this limitation by establishing a rapport and assuring them of confidentiality of the information they shared. Despite the limitations, various measures were taken by the researcher to ensure that the study process remained objective and was accurately brought to completion

2.1 Gender Perception of Political Aspirants from Global Perspective

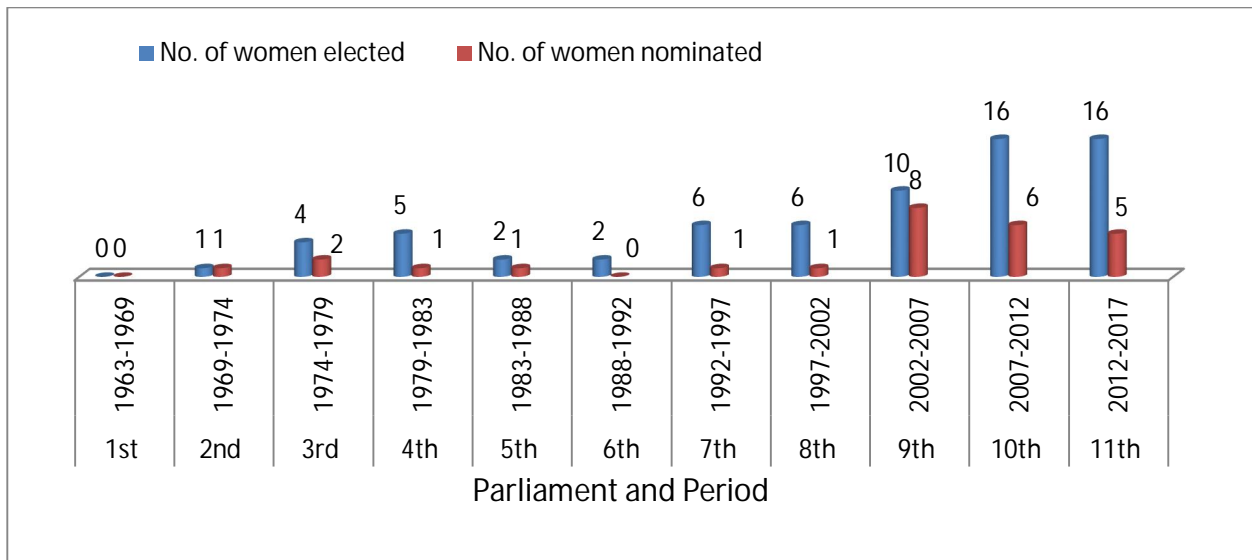
A survey prepared by UN women and inter parliamentary union shows that Cape Verde has the highest number of women occupying ministerial positions. In Africa with nearly half of its 17 ministers are females. Finland is ranked the highest with 10 out of 16 ministerial positions are occupied by women (IDEA, 2005). However, for these women to make it to the top it is believed they have gone through man challenges in arena that has been dominated by men for a very long time. Empirical analyses reveal that women and men who enter politics continue to be perceived differently in terms of their ideologies, characteristics, and policy expertise. First, women candidates and office-holders are generally perceived as more liberal than men candidates of the same party (Paxton, 2003). Second, citizens tend to view women and men candidates and office-holders differently in terms of the characteristics and traits they bring to the electoral arena. Citizens are more likely to identify men as assertive, active, and self-confident, while they identify women as more compassionate, willing to compromise, and "people-oriented" (Burrell 1994). Third, men candidates are often perceived as more competent than women in terms of

legislating in the areas of military crises, crime, the economy, and agriculture. Women tend to garner more perceived expertise when the issues at hand are gender equity, education, health care, and poverty (Dolan 2004). In each case, the issues and traits associated with women are linked to the traditional domain of the family, whereas the policy expertise and characteristics linked to men tend to be visible in the public sphere. This kind of gender stereotyping is relevant not only because it demonstrates the degree to which traditional gender roles and expectations continue to exist in contemporary society, but also because it carries implications for the selection and evaluation of politicians (Swers, 2002).

2.2 Women Representation in Parliament during post-colonial period

Since Kenya attained her independence in 1963, women have not fared well in elective politics. In fact, Kenya's first parliament did not even have a nominated women representative. Kenya's oldest women's organization Maendeleo ya Wanawake Organization (MYWO) which is one of the oldest women empowerment groups was founded in 1952 by white women settlers as a non-political NGO with branches all over Kenya. Its main focus was centered on empowering women economically through capacity building programs according to (Kambua, 2009). MYWO never ventured into empowering women to take a proactive role in political participation and representation. Women were thus excluded from participating in elective politics since independence partly because MYWO did not play its role well and also because of the oppressive culture which made them believe that politics and leadership is for men only (Nyokabi, 2007).

Figure 2.1 No. of elected women in Kenya parliament since 1963 - 2017



Source: IEBC, 2017

Figure 2.1 indicates the performance and election of women to parliament since Kenya attained independence in 1963. The results indicate that women elected to parliament increased from 1 in 1969 to 16 in 2017.. The underrepresentation of Kenyan women in matters of politics and governance necessitated the formulation of two-third gender principle to ensure that women have a say. Despite the introduction of two thirds gender rule women parliamentarians continue to be subjected to stereotypes sexism and accusations of incompetence. In the 11th Parliament, there were 68 women in the National Assembly, both elected and nominated. This constituted 19 per cent of MPs the lowest in the East African Community. The 2017 election, there was a slight increase to 21 per cent, still the lowest in the region compare to Rwanda which has the highest women representation in the region, with 64 per cent; The Rwanda's constitutional quota reserves 24 of the 80 seats in the Lower House and guarantees 30 per cent of seats in the Upper House to women. (IEBC, 2017 report). Despite more women participation in political aspiration and leadership, Pinto (2007) argues that women are their own enemies. He is of the view that women once they are elected to leadership they forget their fellow women. On the other hand women elected try hard to prove to men that they can provide leadership which Pinto in his argument says women suffer from stigma. Okumu (2008), is of the opinion that this is a weapon

used by men to derail women in politics. In conclusion election of women is expected to increase to meet gender rule according to Kenya constitution.

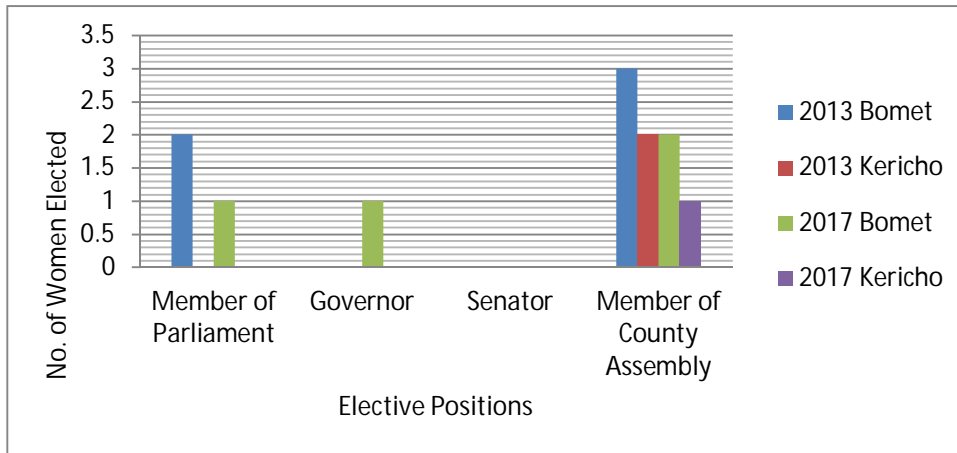


Figure 2.2 Summary of Women elected in 2013 and 2017 in both Counties

Source: Researcher, 2017

The findings in Figure 2.2 represent women who contested position of Member of Parliament, Governor, Senate and Member of County assembly in 2013 and 2017 in Kericho and Bomet county. Bomet County in 2013 elected two women as Member of Parliament and one in 2017 while Kericho County did not elect any Woman Member of Parliament. In 2017, Bomet County elected one of the first woman governor in Kenya. No woman Senator was elected from both counties. The finding in figure 2.2, indicates that Kericho elected 2 women in 2013 and 1 woman in 2017 while Bomet elected 3 women in 2013 and 2 in 2017 to the County Assembly. That means two-third gender rule under the constitution of Kenya amendment bill 2015 should be expedite to ensure women make up at least one-third of all elected bodies (Kenya Constitution, 2010). It was imperative for this study to shade light on women performance in politics by comparing the two counties so as to understand the challenges women face in an election campaign.

2.3 Selected Women in Politics from Kericho and Bomet County

2.3.1 Bomet County

It is imperative to look at how the female aspirants in the two counties have managed to handle politics. The first Kipsigis woman to be elected to Kenya National Assembly in 2007 was the late Hon. Lorna Laboso representing Sotik Constituency. Her participation in leadership as convener of women assemblies at grassroots enabled the late Hon. Lorna Laboso's journey to the national assembly as the first Kipsigis Member of Parliament to be elected for Sotik constituency (Wambui, 1999). She educated her constituents on the power of women's leadership which included civic education on accountability of public funds. The county women have benefited since. Unfortunately she passed on a plane crash on July, 2008. However, the voters during the by-election of 2008 voted for her sister Dr. Joyce Laboso who rose in her career becoming first woman to be elected as the deputy speaker of the 11th Parliament and becoming first woman governor of Bomet County. (Kimutai, 2017).

Similarly, when the Roads Minister, the late Hon. Kipkalya Kones perished in a plane crash on 10th June, 2008 the electorates voted for the widow Mrs. Beatrice Kones during the by-election held in 2008 according to Kenya constitution. She was appointed the assistant minister for Home Affairs a position she held until she lost her parliamentary seat in 2013. She contested as Member of Parliament for Bomet East constituency in 2017 and won by a landslide. Her experience in politics dates back to when she served as the national vice chairperson for *Maendeleo ya wanawake*. Extreme male chauvinism marred her campaigns in 2017 whereby she was competing for parliamentary seat with her first born son who was contesting on a different *Chama Cha Mashinani*. It was alleged that her rivals were using the son to frustrate her political ambitions according (Kimutai, 2017).

2.3.2 Kericho County

Since the incumbent of Kericho politics, among the first women to venture into politics was the late Martha Maseti from Chepkutung Location in Belgut constituency. She made history by becoming the first woman to vie for Member of Parliament for Belgut constituency in 1979 (Toru, 1984). However the community did not vote her because she was a woman. That didn't

kill her spirit in politics, the late Martha Maseti was vocal in “*maendeleo ya wanawake*” movements in Kericho district. She was instrumental in self-help projects where she chaired women groups referred to as self-help Association Movement and Development. She has been described by Toru (1984) as a fearless woman who served self-help projects in the larger Kericho County with honesty and commitment in a study she carried out on self-help groups in Kenya currently held by Oita University in Japan.

2.4: Theory of patriarchal

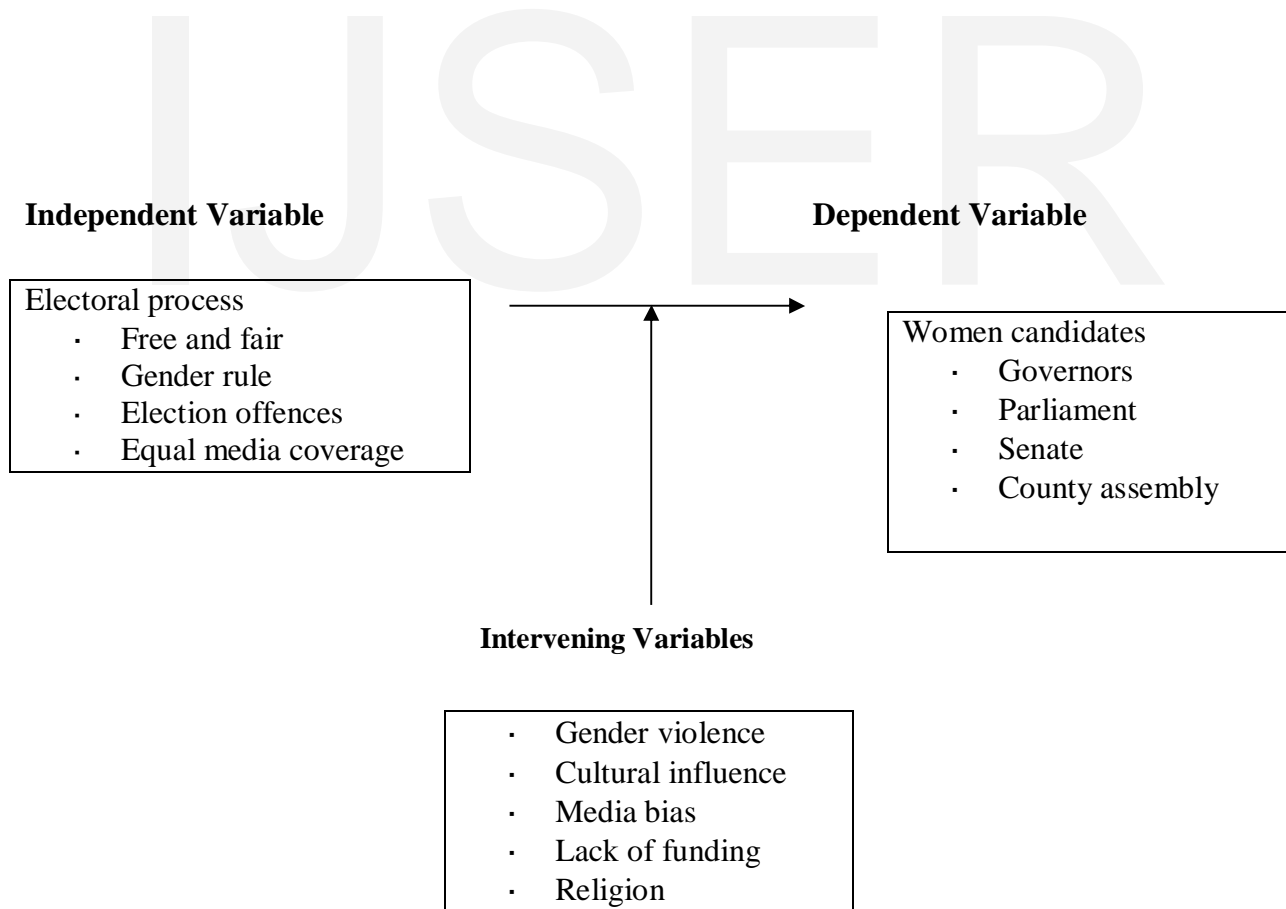
This study was guided by theory of patriarchal which its traces its origin on Marxists theory. The theory was preferred because this study, on challenges facing women candidates is connected to patriarchal society. A major reason for the strength of the attraction of the theory of patriarchy is that it is a term with a history in those very theories that appear to be most important for feminism which has been quoted widely by Marxists theory according to (Meeks, 2004). Marxism talks of the crucial relations between patriarchal and private property. The issue of private property occurred due to exchange and control of women, causing the ‘world historic overthrow of the female sex’. Marxism states that private property, which gives rise to economic inequality, dependence, political confusion and ultimately unhealthy social relations between men and women, is the root of women’s oppression in the current social context. The idea of patriarchy enables women to see their personal experience as part of the general sexual politics in which they shared interests with other women according to (Hayes, 2011). It makes the subordination and oppression of women by men visible and illegitimate and stimulates meaning that focuses on the rule of the father; it can be an important instrument for analyzing and interpreting the subordination and exploitation of women in society.

On the other hand, one of the criticisms of patriarchy, an otherwise significant theory for feminist writing, is that it is too universalistic and nonspecific. It was first articulated by radical feminists to express the systematic character of the oppressive and exploitative relations that affect women and the basic critique of radical feminism was that patriarchy takes all societies as essentially characterized by male dominance and female subordination at the peril of historically specific analysis of relations between sexes (Meeks, 2013). Theory of patriarchal was used in Feminist theory by Hughes & Parton (2007) to explain feminists from a new perspective in approach to women politics. This theory was relevant to this study because patriarchal relations

have characterized the interaction between men and women in Kenya (Nyokabi, 2007). Similarly, the same is being reflected more specifically in Kericho and Bomet County. According to Wood, (2010), the concept of patriarchal theory, has a theoretical construct which rose to prominence in anthropological and Marxist circles in the late 1970s as researchers looked for a way to conceptualize the social construction of masculinity and femininity in politics and leadership that can be traced to Marxists theory.

2.5: Conceptual Framework

This conceptual framework was guided by patriarchal theory. The Independent variable is electoral process conflicts, while dependent variable is the women candidates however, the intervening variables are the challenges encountered by women in political arena. This is what informed the Conceptual framework in this study.



Source: Researcher, 2017

3.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research design

This research adopted descriptive research design. Descriptive research design was used in the study because data was collected using one or more appropriate methods such as questionnaires, interviews and focused discussion groups on large group of respondents. According to Kothari (2004), descriptive research design allows for the collection of data from large number of respondents in a relatively short period with minimum cost. Secondary sources included written sources: published books, theses, seminar papers, newspapers, and magazines.

3.2: Study area

The study was conducted in Kericho and Bomet County in South Rift Valley. Bomet County was carved out of former Kericho District in 1992. Bomet County is located in the former Rift Valley Province bordering Kericho County to the North, Narok County to the South and Nyamira to the North West.

3.3: Study Population

The study population refers to the population marked for study. It refers to all units the researcher intends to study (Rea & Parker, 2007). The target population was 4,000 aspirants from both counties. 400 respondents were sampled from the target population by obtaining 10% of the target population. Every county was allocated 200 respondents each. A simple stratified random sampling was used to allocate every 10 constituencies each 30 respondents the study population consisted of 400 participants from both counties. 2 opinion leaders were purposively sampled who were key informants on women in politics.

3.4: Research instruments

Information was gathered through in-depth interviews with key informants who were selected purposively. The researcher also made use of questionnaires which was used to collect data from registered voters. For the purpose of standardization, focused group discussion was held in the two counties comprising of women candidates who contested and lost in the past and new entrants into politics

4.0 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Bomet County Results

A total of 200 respondents were interviewed with gender parity being considered. It was a requirement that the respondents should be over 18years and registered voters of the two counties. The respondents were asked whether they would vote for a woman, man and youth to represent them in parliament. The question was vital for the two counties so as to know why Bomet County was voting in many women to parliament compare to Kericho County. They results are recorded in table 4.1

Table 4.1: Voters Response in Bomet County

Aspirants	Frequency	Percentages
Women	88	44.0
Men	70	35.0
Youths	28	14.0
Any	14	7.0
Total	200	100

Source: Field Data, 2017

Table 4.1 indicated that 44 % of the respondents were ready to vote for a woman representative in parliament while 35% preferred a man. Another 14% preferred the youth while 7% preferred any. This study found out that Bomet county electorates were more receptive voting women to represent them in parliament. When the electorates were asked why they preferred a woman during focus group discussion they stated that women are more sentimentals and compassionate towards the needy when it comes to challenges facing the community like poor roads, dispensaries, orphans, widows. The findings of this study are in concurrence with that of Okello (2010) and Odida (2010) who advocated for more representation in parliament because women are seen as symbol for change. Similarly, Omtatah (2008), is in agreement with the findings of this study that women face a lot of gender violation abuses metted on their political career yet they can make the better leaders and managers.

4.2. Kericho County Results

A similar questionnaire was administered in Kericho County to 200 registered voters in the six constituencies. The results are recorded in Table 4.2

Table 4.2: Voters Response In Kericho County

Aspirants	Frequency	Percentages
Women	40	20.0
Men	80	40.0
Youths	70	35.0
Any	10	5.0
Total	200	100

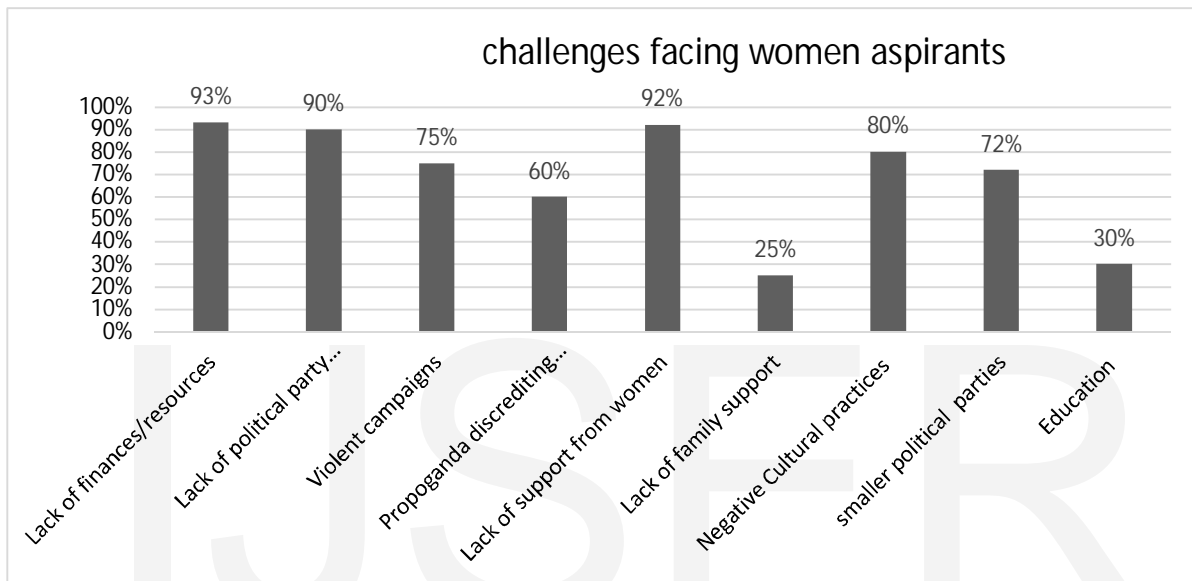
Source: Field Data, 2017

Table 4.2 indicated that 20% preferred a women while 40% preferred a male representative. Another 35% preferred the youths while 5% preferred any. This study found out that majority of the voters preferred voting for males. According to purposive sampled respondent, woman cannot be voted to parliament because in their culture a woman is referred to as “*Kwondo*” meaning she cooks, so if a woman is voted to represent them in parliament she paused “*who will be cooking for the children*” . This study established that Kericho county would prefer a youth than a woman. One respondent had this to say, “*women should contest for the position of women representative only. Positions for governor, senator, member of parliament and member of County Assembly is preserved for men*”. This study established that electorates were of the view that the position of an Member of Parliament is preserved for men. According to the voters, women should struggle to vie for women representative position created in the 2010 constitution of Kenya. The findings of this study are in agreement with Omutatah(2008) that women require to be educated on good governance and their right to be voted. However, Dolan (2004) is of a different opinion that women should front their rights, men will always overlook them in terms of leadership. Wood (2010), has argued that women tend to scrutinise political candidates more than men, saying that, Women’s performance tend to be more scrutinised than men’s and judged by stricter. It can be concluded that sensitizing the voters that women can represent them as member of parliament can deliver development record just like the men.

4.3: Challenges Women Face in Politics

Women aspirants were asked to rate the challenges they encountered during their elections campaign. The questions were presented in a likert scale where by 1. Strongly agree 2. Agree 3. Undecided 4. Disagree 5. Strongly disagree. The results are recorded in Table 4.3

Table 4.3: Challenges facing women



Source: Researcher, 2017

The findings in Table 4.3 indicated that 93% of the women indicated that they lacked finance, while 90% lacked political party support. Another 75% cited violent campaigns while 60% cited propaganda discrediting their campaigns. 92% lacked support from their fellow women while 25% said they lacked support from their families. Another, 80% cites negative cultural practices as a stumbling block to their political careers, while 72% said smaller political parties had no impact. Lastly, 30% said they lacked education. This study established that the 75% cited violent campaigns where by the supporters of the male opponents disrupted their campaigns. In most occasions, funerals were used as a platform for campaigning and exchange of unkind words was rampant. The findings of this study are in agreement with that of Meeks, (2013) who opined that women in politics should be given similar level support with male counterparts especially in terms of finances. According to Nzomo & Kibwana (2003), women faces more challenges compare to their male counterparts. Lack of resources places many women aspirants at a

disadvantage in running for political office. The respondents cited that running a political campaign is expensive affair ranging from nomination fee, printing of fliers, hiring of public address systems, mobile phones, agents' fees, campaigners' expenses, hospitality, transportation, accommodation and subsistence for candidate's team. This study established that not many women are able to foot their own campaign bills due to the fact that in the business field just like in politics they are also disadvantaged. For example, one focus group discussion member had this to say "*I organized for a mini fundraising and many people promised they would turn up or send their contributions, but they did not turn up*" According to Nyokabi (2007) aspirants using small parties are never supported or recognized and it is unfortunate when women contest on small parties. One respondent had this to say "*political parties has it's "owners' dominated by male egoism*". A similar study by Afifu (2008), alluded that party clearance for women contesters lacked political will.

This study found out that 80% attributed cultural practices as a challenge to women. According to Nzomo (2003), many patriarchal communities in Kenya do not see the need for gender parity since most of them are patriarchal in nature and often see gender equality as a challenge to male dominance and hegemony. In an interview with Nation TV (NTV on 17th, 2017), Bomet governor alluded that "*the patriarchal society we live in is killing women's leadership roles*". Political opponents during her campaign nicknamed her "*chemarinda meaning a skirt*" demeaning her to derail her campaigns. According to a study carried out by Manners (1963), among the Kipsigis, he described Kipsigis men as proud man with little respect for a woman. Similarly, In USA, Elizabeth Dole was running for republican president nomination was ridiculed in the book "*She brought only a skirt*" according to Heldman et al (2005). This study established that most political parties in Kenya are dominated by men who monopolize the decision making structures. These men are the ones who make decisions on who to back for the various seats and due to the patriarchal nature of our society this is means a man will always be favored (Karl, 2001), similarly, according to Mittulah and Owiti (2011), lack of political goodwill by their male politicians to include women in structures of political governance is to blame for limited participation in political parties. In conclusion women face many challenges during pre-campaigns and after.

5.0: SUMMARY

The study established that women voters had been brainwashed to think that the position of Member of Parliament was preserved for men and women candidates should compete for position of Women Representative. On matters to do with voter education on gender issues Bomet county was a head of Kericho in electing women to elected positions. Both counties male chauvinism towards women candidates was noted with 80% lacking support from their families. However, Bomet County has broken the norms by electing woman governor, Member of Parliament for two consecutive terms. Kericho since 1963 has not elected a woman to Parliament. This study noted that woman elections are rich in conceptual intrigue. Most notably, these elections create a new dynamic for women because of their gender becomes shared with their opponent, which requires voters to move beyond simplified scheme of women seeking to enter a highly masculine arena area that has been dominated by men. In Bomet County, This study found out that women have access to being portrayed and perceived as change-agents compare to their male counterparts. This study noted that women politicians, from Bomet County regardless of party, are typically considered more liberal than men a similar view. This perception, explain why in Bomet county has more women elected compare to Kericho County. Taken together, the rise of all-female elections and the complexity of such elections create a dynamic space for investigating how gender and party collide and affect contemporary notions of electability and voter evaluations

6.0: CONCLUSION

In reference to the objective of the study and its findings, the following conclusions were drawn. The influence of cultural effect on women candidates should be enhanced by voter education by state, the community, and stakeholders. There is need to educate the voters that the position of governor, senator, Member of Parliament and Member of County Assembly are not reserved for men, women are free to contest any without being discriminated. These results are important not only because they demonstrate that gender stereotypes continue to exist in contemporary society, but also because they work to the detriment of women candidates for high-level political office. Individuals who deem men are more competent than women are significantly less likely to be willing to vote for a qualified woman Member of Parliament candidate who garners the political party's nomination. Thus, a political climate dominated by male owning political parties, appears

to account for a large part of the reason that overall willingness to elect woman Member of Parliament is as low in Kenya.

7.0: ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The author, wish to thank the candidates who participated in the past and current election for sharing their challenges in an election campaign and electorates from the Bomet and Kericho County. This work was supported in part by a discount offered by IJSER

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