

**COPING STRATEGIES ADOPTED BY KENYAN WOMEN PARLIAMENTARIANS
IN PERFORMANCE OF THEIR LEGISLATIVE MANDATE**

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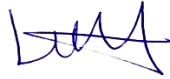
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DECLARATION

This project is my original work and has not been presented for examination in any other university.



Signature

2nd December 2023

Date.....

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This project has been submitted with my approval as the university supervisor.



Signature

Date: 3rd December 2023

Prof. Owuor Olungah

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my beloved family, whose unwavering faith in my ability has been my guiding light throughout my academic journey. Your persistent encouragement, sacrifices, and the values you instilled in me have been the pillars that held me strongly during challenging times. Your enduring love and support has been my greatest motivation and for that, I dedicate this accomplishment to you. May this serve as a testament to the powerful force of a loving family and as a symbol of my deep appreciation for each one of you.

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ABSTRACT

The overarching objective of this study was to assess the coping strategies adopted by Kenyan women parliamentarians in performance of their legislative mandate. The specific objectives the study were to examine the role of women parliamentary caucuses in enhancing their participation and delivery of their mandate; to establish the influence of access to affirmative action funds in performance of women parliamentarian's duties and to examine the role of women's leadership in parliamentary committees. The study used a cross-sectional exploratory study using qualitative data collection methods. The study population consisted of 30 women parliamentarians (members of the National Assembly) from the 11th and 12th parliamentary sessions. Data was collected through in-depth interviews as well as through key informant interviews with five informants. The findings indicate that the caucuses such as KEWOPA plays a crucial role in enhancing women parliamentarians' participation and mandate delivery in Kenya. Equally, access to affirmative action funds, like the National Government Affirmative Action Fund (NGAAF), significantly impacts the performance of women parliamentarians' duties, notably in representation, legislation, and oversight. It was noted that women's leadership in parliamentary committees substantially influences the performance of women parliamentarians' duties in Kenya. The study concludes that to foster women's leadership, continued focus on mentorship, capacity-building initiatives, and providing sufficient resources is critical. The study recommends for the strengthening of KEWOPA, enhancement of affirmative action funds and robust support of women's leadership in parliamentary committees.

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CPA UK	Commonwealth Parliamentary Association United Kingdom
IEBC	Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
IIDEA	International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance
IFES	International Foundation for Election Systems
IPU	Inter-Parliamentary Union
KEWOPA	Kenya Women Parliamentary Association
KNBS	Kenya National Bureau of Statistics
MCA	Member of County Assembly
MP	Member of Parliament
NACOSTI	National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation
NDI	National Democratic Institute
OAS	Organization of American States
PWC	Parliamentary Women’s Caucus
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
UWOPA	Uganda Parliamentary Women’s Association
WPA	Women’s Parliamentary Association
WPC	Women Parliamentary Caucus

Chapter 1.0: BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

Historically, women have been for a long time considered second class citizens. Domination of power and leadership positions by men was attributed to the glass ceiling which prevented women from occupying top positions in social, organizational and political realms despite their potential and proven ability to successfully perform in various capacities at the highest level (Volden et al., 2010). Women's efforts to rise to the top, whether in politics, business or community advocacy were met with resistance, discrimination, double standards and social stereotypes. Unfortunately, this notion continues to persist in some parts of the world today. Politics being one of the areas where women have continued to face obstacles, the subject of women and politics has largely been written and researched on (Sundström & Wängnerud, 2016; Shames, 2013).

Traditionally, politics has dominantly been a male domain that many women have found unwelcoming and even hostile. Women with political ambitions begin facing challenges even before throwing their hats into the political arena. Resistance and stereotypes based on the social norms and cultural practices is normally the first hurdle women have to contend with. This challenge tends to be more prevalent in societies in which patriarchal values remain strong thus frown on women entering politics (Kassa, 2015). In addition to unfavourable cultural predilections, women face other barriers making it difficult for them to enter and succeed in politics. Among the shortcomings women face include inadequate funding to successfully run for office, lower levels of education in societies where women are not given priority academically and poor access to relevant information (Pandit, 2010).

It is noteworthy that the struggles by women do not end at the point of seeking political office. Even after taking up positions, women politicians face hurdles which they must strive to overcome. One of these major obstacles is male dominance not only in parliament but also in their political parties. According to the study by Cigane and Ohman (2014) women politicians in Tunisia experience financial limitations which hampers their abilities to deliver effectively on their office duties. A similar finding is captured in a separate study carried out by Ohman (2016) that advances that women's political activities including effective delivery of services to their constituents while in office is impeded by access to financial resources needed to participate effectively to carry out their duties. In Ethiopia, political participation by elected women politicians to address their basic problems and needs in their community is impeded by economic, religious, social and cultural factors. Further, most women politicians in the country do not have direct and adequate political decision-making opportunities as compared to their male counterparts at all government levels (Kassa, 2015). Similarly, in Nigeria, effective performance of the duties of elected women politicians is obstructed by an unhealthy political environment characterized by threats, humiliation and blackmail by most men who intimidate them. A notable finding in the study carried out in Lagos State, Nigeria is that there is lack of support from fellow women as evidenced and manifested by character assassination, smear campaigns, jealousy and envy used by women in attempts to pull down their equals in political offices (Odebisi & Iwuagwu, 2018).

Non-discrimination and the equal rights of both female and male parliamentarians are principles of the Kenyan constitution and international law. The rights of women parliamentarians to participate in parliamentary activities are enshrined in the legal and policy instruments. In practice however, there has been a tendency to marginalize women parliamentarians in some activities. Admissibly, Kenya is a predominantly patriarchal society with deeply rooted resistance to women's leadership, especially in the political arena. This is

evidenced by the number of elected women versus that of elected men in the parliament. According to Bouka, Berry and Kamuru (2019), women in elected positions in both the National Assembly and County Assemblies account for merely 9% of these bodies. Kenya is clearly shadowed by its neighbours when it comes to political inclusion front. In Uganda and Tanzania, for instance, Women account for 34% and 37% of MPs, a total of 36% of the National Assembly seats in Burundi are substantially occupied by women, and Ethiopia's parliament has 39% of the seats occupied by women, with the 2018 appointment of Sahle-Work Zewde as the country's first female president being the icing on the cake. Finally, with 61% of the parliamentarians being women, Rwanda has not only outdone its peers in the region but is also topping the world as regards women representation in parliament.

As explained by IPU (2013) in the Plan of Action for Gender-sensitive Parliament's report, women parliamentarians are also finding it hard to break into positions of leadership in parliaments. The principles of gender-sensitive parliaments remain a lip service meant probably to please the public (Domingo, McCullough, Simbiri & Wanjala, 2016). The reality is that women have to literally struggle to be appointed by their parties to leadership positions, as parliamentarians, where they can influence legislation and policy directions, and provide a different perspective in debates. As is the case in business, industries and other realms of life, marginalization of women's skills, expertise, experiences and rights is rife in parliament. Despite evidence indicating that in Kenya, women's technical expertise and professional experiences in various professions like law and medicine have been crucial in crafting laws and policies (O'Neil & Domingo, 2016). Watuka (2016) observes that in Kenya, women parliamentarians are still considered incapable of taking on responsibility in the perceived male-oriented areas like finance, energy, economic development, defense and infrastructure. As a result, they are allocated the 'soft portfolios' or 'women's issues' associated with women such as education, gender and social welfare. The general feeling one gets therefore, is that

they are less on their ideas and abilities and more on other inept factors like their looks and their dressing (Bäck, Debus & Müller, 2014).

Kenya's political landscape has in the recent past undergone significant transformations to ensure the space of women in politics and enhance adequate representation of women in political processes. Under the current constitutional dispensation for instance, none of either gender is supposed to occupy more than two-thirds of the available elective positions in parliament and appointive positions in the executive. Despite this apparent progress, the 2017 elections demonstrated that women still struggle to gain access to political positions and to fulfil their functions once in office (Bouka et al., 2019). However, if the argument that investing in girls' and women's right to political participation is a necessary step to achieving global gender equality and democratic governance is to go by, then in view of recent electoral and political processes in Kenya, the country could be miles away from achieving these goals. Reason being that in Kenya some political parties' try to get more women involved in politics and help them to ascend to political offices but without 'real power' (Bértoa & Sanches, 2019). Once they are in these offices, some of their activities are controlled by the parties which are male dominated and rarely allow the women the chance to exercise their leadership capabilities. Nonetheless, efforts have been made by women and other well-wishing stakeholders to break the political yoke to grant women the freedom to fully participate in political and electoral processes. Such strategies include formation of the women movement, seeking support from actors such as non-governmental organizations. Globally, women's movements have been hailed as a major strategy for overcoming the challenges and political space for female participation in politics. In Kenya, various women's movements such as Kenya Women Parliamentary Association (KEWOPA), Maendeleo ya Wanawake, The League of Kenya Women Voters, National Commission on the Status of Women, The Women's Shadow Parliament – Kenya, Kenya Women's Political Caucus and Women's Political Alliance of

Kenya have played critical roles as change agents in respect to advancement of women's rights, gender equality, social justice and engendering governance in general (Nzomo, 2011).

1.2 Problem Statement

Participation in political leadership is imperative for women's empowerment because a greater number of women in politics support women's cause at every level (Aswath, 2015). Besides, researchers have noted that when women get into leadership and management, they bring a different perspective from that of men (Barasa, 2011; Baden, 2012). Women leaders are likely to focus on human development projects such as renegotiation of gender roles in the home, educating the society in order to change the way of viewing effective leadership and mentoring programmes that focused not only on increasing the number of women in government but also enhance women's effectiveness in political positions and their impact on decision-making.

Despite women increasingly occupying more seats in the parliament (Bouka et al., 2019), a study by Ohman and Lintari (2015) revealed that overwhelming challenges are faced by women parliamentarians in the performance of their parliamentary duties. These challenges include inadequate financial and material resources necessary to satisfactorily perform their representational duties (Godia & Were, 2017), navigation of legislation space within parliament, competitively assuming parliamentary leadership positions as their male counterparts among others. As a result, women legislators have been compelled to device coping strategies. These strategies adopted by women parliamentarians to cope with formidable obstacles they face in order to perform and deliver on their duties as expected remains largely understudied or ignored within academic circles. Indeed, extensive research has been dedicated to identifying enablers or impediments to women's political participation and representation (Bouka et al. (2019) as well as investigating political party financing and equal participation of women in the electoral politics (Ohman and Lintari (2015). This study therefore, set out to

identifying the strategies adopted by women MPs to cope with the challenges they face while in office and the effectiveness of these strategies in enhancing performance of their duties.

To achieve the set objectives, the study was guided by the following research questions;

- i. How does women parliamentary caucus enhance women's participation and delivery of their mandate?
- ii. How has the affirmative action fund assisted women in the overall performance of their duties?
- iii. How does women's leadership of parliamentary committees enhance their performance?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

1.3.1 Overall Objective

The overarching objective of this study was to assess coping strategies adopted by Kenyan women parliamentarians in performance of their legislative mandate.

1.3.2 Specific Objectives

The specific objectives of this study were:

- i. To examine the role of women parliamentary caucuses in enhancing their participation and delivery of their mandate.
- ii. To establish the influence of access to affirmative action funds in performance of women parliamentarians' duties.
- iii. To examine the role of women's leadership in parliamentary committees in performance of women parliamentarians' duties.

1.4 Assumptions of the Study

The following are the main assumptions made in this study:

- i. Women parliamentary caucuses strengthen the members' capacity to deliver on their mandates.
- ii. Access to affirmative funds has the ability to greatly influence women parliamentarians' performance of their duties.
- iii. Women membership and headship of parliamentary committees has a positive influence in the performance of their duties.

1.5 Justification of the Study

Women in Kenya and other relevant institutions are increasingly being paid for their efforts that have in the recent years seen a surge in the number of women taking positions in the parliament whether through elections or through nominations by their political parties (Bouka et al., 2019). However, even as the numbers soar, challenges abound in the performance of their duties as MPs. To surmount these challenges, relevant strategies and measures, driven by the women parliamentarians themselves and other supporters are increasingly being put in place. The study outcome raises awareness on what the women parliamentarians face.

This study is important in identifying some of these key strategies that have been adopted by the women parliamentarians to cope with the challenges that they experience in the performance of their parliamentary duties. In doing so, the findings of this study reveals to the women parliamentarians and their supporters the effectiveness of these strategies and how to sharpen their skills going forward. Further, the results may be used by parliament as the legislative and public policy making institution to come up with laws and policies that can be put in place to protect women parliamentarians from some of the challenges they continue to face. These may include laws and policies setting aside quotas for women in the parliamentary committees and commissions among others.

1.6 Scope and Limitations of the Study

Under the current constitutional dispensation, Kenya has two levels of government, the national government and the county governments. Both tiers of government have assemblies which perform roles that are almost identical except that the roles of County Assemblies are restricted to the county level. This study was restricted to the Kenyan parliament hence it covered both the National Assembly (the lower house) and the Senate (the upper house). Subsequently, the study engaged only women parliamentarians serving in these two chambers. Geographically, the coverage of this study was restricted to women of Kenya. The time frame covered by this study was the 11th and the 12th parliaments of Kenya, that is, from the year 2013 to 2022. The recruitment was restricted to female members of parliament from 2013 to 2022 including those female parliamentarians who lost in the 2017 general elections.

This study had potential limitations in light of which its findings should be viewed. The first limitation is that the results may not be generalized beyond the study population. Since this study was restricted to female parliamentarians, additional potential target population whose input could be fundamental in enhancing representativeness and generalization of the study but was left out. These include male MPs, various actors like the Katiba Institute and the general public who may also be well conversant with the challenges faced by their women representatives in the parliament. The second limitation concerned the potential limited access to the informants. It was difficult finding and convincing women members of National Assembly to engage in academic research given their busy schedules. This therefore, implies that only those who could be accessed were interviewed. The third limitation is that the findings of the study is subject to the time scope within which the research study was constrained, that is the 11th and the 12th parliaments. This excluded possible rich inputs of former women parliamentarians from earlier sessions of the legislative branch, who could have arguably experienced more and even severe challenges during their tenure.

1.7 Definition of Key Terms

Affirmative action funds: these are funds set aside for women parliamentarians and special groups among the parliamentarians to spend in helping the special groups they represent.

Coping strategies: these refer to an action or a series of actions, or thought process used by women parliamentarians to address stressful or unpleasant situations. The strategies also include modification of their reactions to stressful or unpleasant situations.

Electoral gender quota system; a system of limiting by gender the number of politicians who may be elected or nominated to political positions by political parties. Electoral gender quotas take two main forms; legal quotas and party quotas.

House committee: a legislative sub-organization in the Kenyan parliament chosen by the members of parliament themselves to handle a specific duty or a particular subject.

Parliament: this is a legislative body of the government of Kenya and comprises the Senate and the National Assembly.

Parliamentarian: an elected or nominated member of the Senate or the National Assembly.

Parliamentary duties: these are duties of parliamentarians enshrined in the Kenyan constitution and other parliamentary policy documents and are mainly representation of the electorate, making laws and overseeing the national government.

Women's parliamentary caucus: this is a cross-party women's political association whose members comprise of all women parliamentarians drawn from across all political parties, elected and nominated in the Senate and National Assembly, with an aim of ensuring that challenges facing women in the society are integrated into legislation.

Chapter 2.0: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviewed literature related to the three specific objectives of the study. An overview of the history of Kenya's parliament and a further brief account of the chronicle of the journey of women in parliament, which is the area of interest of this study, was covered. The chapter also illuminated the theories that guided the inquiry.

2.2 Women Parliamentary Caucuses and Performance of Women Parliamentarians' Duties

Political caucuses refer to political groups or meetings organized by politicians to advocate for a special interest or cause. Usually, political caucuses formed by politicians do transcend class, religion, ethnicity, caste, age and sexuality cleavages, economic status and even political party differences to drive an agenda. Members could be drawn from different parties but have the same vision and mission and therefore, sit together to advance an agenda on matters of common interest (Panagopoulos, 2010). While most parliamentary caucuses have largely been based on gender, there are other instances where different natural differences have brought MPs together to advocate for an agenda. In Bermuda for instance, there have been, in the past, caucuses for black parliamentarians who drove the issues of interest to the black population of the country (Dean, 2017).

In different spheres of life, by coming together, women have been shown to enhance the effectiveness of institutional growth and performance. Whether these institutions are large organizations, small business or even self-help groups, groups formed by women to drive an agenda have been shown to be largely successful because of a stronger sense of identity within their area of activity. The same can be said of women political associations, at least according to the findings of some studies carried out on political caucuses formed by women across the world (iknowpolitics.org).

With regard to women political caucuses, issues can range widely from gender equality in general or strengthening women's participation and representation in politics in particular. Whether at the regional, national or local level, women parliamentary caucuses (WPCs) are customarily established to provide a platform to unite women parliamentarians from different political parties around issues they all relate to and can support beyond party lines to fight for women's causes and collaborate on other policy issues (iknowpolitics.org). By combining efforts, they become more assertive and the impact or contribution of the caucus is bigger than if they act individually.

Zaka (2012) studied the role of women parliamentarians and research practices in Pakistan, which, according to the researcher, is very critical in empowering women MPs regarding their effectiveness as mediators and ambassadors of peace, conflict management and human security. The results of the study established that the Parliamentary Women's Caucus (PWC), the country's official women parliamentary outfit, has not only played an integral role but have also been effective in advocating for women issues in the country. This shows that having in place women's caucus allows them to efficiently channel their commitment to their issues of interest which their male counterparts may not be interested in or may be keen to shoot down on the floor of the house. Such caucuses also allow women parliamentarians to address issues beyond gender, without losing focus of gender-sensitive legislation and effectively performing other parliamentary duties like providing checks and balances throughout the executive's activities.

Sherani et al. (2017) and Shah (2019) further observe that though their official legislative duties and other measures including sensitization, advocacy, knowledge sharing conferences, seminars and study circles, and establishing national and international alliances, WPC has been vital in addressing some of the most hounding issues faced by Pakistani women. Lebanon is another country where WPCs have been central to advancement of women's agenda.

Researching on the origin of women's segregation in Lebanese politics, Sharif and Kiwan (2016) argue that anywhere in the world, where patriarchal and hegemonic masculinity are still prevalent thus leading to exclusion of women in politics, electoral gender quota is necessary to enhance women's political participation.

Internationally, the IPU has found that 81 parliaments have established some form of women's caucus (IPU, 2013). This probably signals the popularity of these associations in advancing agenda, especially gender-based issues facing women. In developing countries where the proportion of women parliamentarians is high, the likelihood of passing comprehensive laws on sexual harassment, rape, divorce and domestic violence is very high. This is according to the findings of a study carried out across 159 developing countries across the world (48 African countries, 43 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa and 111 developing countries outside Sub-Saharan Africa) (Asiedu, Branstette, Gaekwad-Babulal & Malokele, 2018).

In Cook Islands, the Cook Islands Women Parliamentarians Caucus has been effective and fundamental in advocating for equitable outcomes for all citizens, especially women, through law-making, budgeting, oversight and representation. To sour the number of women in the country's parliament, the association is constantly reaching out to and encouraging women in the Cook Islands to stand for elections (Suisuiki, 2019). A rare historic event took place in the Australian parliament in 2006 in the 105-year existence of the Australian parliament. In a Westminster parliament where parliamentary culture is strong and cross-party cooperation a relatively rare chance event, Women Senators drawn from four different political parties co-sponsored a successful Bill that lifted a ministerial veto on the importation of the 'abortion pill' RU486 into Australia (Sawer, 2012). According to this finding, women caucuses are crucial in bringing women MPs together, despite their political tendencies and differences, to address issues of public policies but also to effectively respond to citizens' demands and interests.

Rwanda's *Rwanda le Forum des Femmes Rwandaises Parlementaires*, which was instituted in 1996 has a long history of advancing women's agenda in the country. Through their collective effort, women MPs in Rwanda have been able to pass several laws in favour of equality and developing the legal framework related to gender-based violence (Raman-Preston, 2013). Further, the caucus has played a key role in ensuring that the number of women legislators has grown to what it is now, more than 50% the Rwanda parliamentary membership. The Rwanda case demonstrates that improving the representation of women in legislatures can aid in the formation of women's associations in parliaments which can go a long way in creating a critical mass capable of safeguarding and implementing changes that are favourable to women and girls in countries where they face gender-based discrimination (Raman-Preston, 2013).

The Uganda Parliamentary Women's Association (UWOPA) is somehow unique in the sense that though it is a caucus comprising all women members of parliament of Uganda, its membership is open to male MPs as associates or honorary members (UWOPA, 2020). Since its formation and being made official as a formal institution in the 5th parliament of Uganda (1989-1994), UWOPA has been central in championing progress in the gender dialogue thereby enhancing the passage of gender sensitive laws in the country's parliament (Johnson & Josefsson, 2016; Goetz, 2002).

Recently, the Women's Parliamentary Association (WPA) was formally established by legislators from women's parliamentary associations in Kenya, South Sudan, Somalia, and Uganda in the East Africa-based Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD). With the adoption and execution of the Nairobi Declaration, one of the main aims of the WPA is to be a united voice of women parliamentarians in the IGAD region. This is to be achieved by promoting economic, cultural, political and social development of women as a means of ensuring sustainable peace and security in the IGAD region (National Democratic Institute, 2015).

Women's parliamentary caucus do not necessarily have to be formal outfits like KEWOPA in order to be effective. The caucuses can be informal ensembles where the women parliamentarians form informal networks with good effect. For instance, in Finland, there is no formal women's caucus in parliament. Instead, women parliamentarians have formed the Network of Women Deputies of the Finnish Parliament which has over the years been effective in steering equality issues and furthering the female viewpoint in decision-making (Sawer, 2012). Such informal arrangements can be a suitable alternative arrangement especially in parliaments that have strong party discipline and/or in instances where a significant number of the women parliamentarians do not wish to overtly engage themselves on certain issues. Kenya also has a history of strong political and other social women-based caucuses formed to advance different agenda and interests of the caucuses (Kabira & Kimani, 2012). Examples include the infamous *Maendeleo ya Wanawake*, The League of Kenya Women Voters, The Women's Shadow Parliament, Kenya Women's Political Caucus and Women's Political Alliance of Kenya (Nzomo, 2011). The official women's caucus in Kenya's parliament is the KEWOPA. KEWOPA has been credited with its role in championing parliamentary bills that advance for women's and girls' right such as the 2011 Prohibition of Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting Act (IPU, 2013). Strong whipping by official party whips, especially under stringent regimes, have however sometimes threatened the effectiveness of the caucus. Besides stern party stands, politics is shaped by ethnic division from time to time cloud obscure cross-party parliamentary women's caucus success. The findings by Jobarteh and Josefsson (2016) indicate that cross-party parliamentary women's caucus have been successful in Kenya despite the political and ethnic differences that are more often than not usually at the centre of Kenya's politics. Essentially, the formulation of cross-party caucuses can help provide the peer support essential to promote legislative and policy agenda. The sustainability of WPCs, it must be noted however, relies on the broader consensus over an agreed agenda for development and

empowerment thus enabling members of the caucuses to work beyond and above party lines. Further, roles of the caucuses are not indispensable and may be circumvented by external actors and other prevailing situations hence the need for strong commitment by members.

2.3 Access to Affirmative Action Funds and Performance of Women Parliamentarians'

Duties

Access to adequate financial resources is one of the main centre-pieces for successfully running for and running any political office. However, for women in politics, those aspiring for seats and those in offices, this remains a major challenge (Casas-Zamora & Falguera, 2016)). This often represents a hindrance for women as the socio-economic situation of women parliamentarians in most countries is lower than that of male MPs. In most countries reviewed herein, weakness of legal provisions pertaining to political finance geared towards women's political empowerment is a striking feature. The costs of running their political offices vary greatly across countries but the relatively high cost as compared to men is a commonality.

The question of political financing is an important one in political development of women, especially young women who are just starting off their political careers. In Kosovo, the finding of a survey by NDI (2015) reported that while electoral quota has been instrumental in guaranteeing a minimum number of seats in parliament as observed in the notable and encouraging elections of 2013 where turnout of women was high, women continue to be in financially precarious positions. Incumbents, who are mostly men in party leadership positions received the bulk of financial resources available.

In Colombia, the majoritarian electoral system perpetuates advantage for men (Casas-Zamora & Falguera, 2016). The role of money in Colombian politics has been shown to negatively affect the emergence of female politicians. Politics in the country is dominated by influential political clans that benefit from stress-free access to wealthy networks. Individuals considered

as ‘outsiders’ unsupported by political machines, more so female candidates, do not enjoy the financial largesse of the wealthy networks in their quest for a share of the nation’s political leadership. As such, they have little chance of overcoming the financial hurdles and making it in politics and they either get dropped by the wayside or have to endure a longer wait to realize their political dreams. The electoral gender quota system adopted in 2011 which dictates that at least 30 per cent of candidates submitted by a party for election to five seats or more must be drawn from either gender offering a glimmer of hope for female candidates. Furthermore, political parties are under legal obligation to allocate funds to promote the inclusion of women, minorities and young people in politics (IDEA, 2017). However, that has not been sufficient in releasing women politicians from the shackles of financial hurdles.

Popularity of the electoral gender quota system as a strategy in handling women head start in politics is fast gaining traction especially in less democratic, highly patriarchal societal setups where gender norms and hegemonic masculinity is making it difficult for women to ascend to political positions. Bouka et al. (2019) argue that affirmative action seats have alleviated some of the risks associated with electoral campaigning for open seats. Women with limited resources or political capital can now opt to seek a reserved position or nominated position. But even then, the change has been coming very slowly for some countries in the Asia-Pacific region (True, Niner, Parashar & George, 2012). Despite growth in average number of women’s representation in national parliaments in the region between 2000 and 2013 (Western Asia and Southern Asia from 4% to 12% and from 7% to 19%, respectively), finance seem to be a major impeding factor to women politicians (Choi, 2019; CPA UK, 2012). In Indonesian, Aspinall and Sukmajati (2016) established that as elections become increasingly expensive due to a highly financially unregulated playfield, the financial encumbrances equally become increasingly burdensome.

In Tunisia, where the legal requirement on gender quota has helped aspiring women politicians have one foot in the door thus eliminating some of the difficulties, the tendency of political parties to favour candidates with sufficient financial resources to bankroll their campaign continue to work to the detriment of women, especially in regions with minimal economic development (IIDEA, 2017). In an attempt to address this favouritism problem, many countries including Tunisia have been making efforts to introduce and implement legal regulations on political funding to level the electoral competition playing field. It is important that such regulations are not generalized but are made context specific to respond to the realities on the ground. Even then, women politicians, aspiring and those already in office, struggle to attract supporters and well-wishers to fundraising events. This is in contrast to their male counterparts who besides finding it relatively easy to attract fundraisers also attract huge sums during the fundraisers. This is the case in a country like Ghana where besides socio-cultural impediments, Bawa and Sanyare (2013) found that financial constraints disadvantage aspiring and would-be women politicians. Madsen (2019) observes that even in the process of seeking money to finance their campaigns, Ghanaian women politics go through hurdles including expectation of sexual favours from male consociates in return for financial support. A separate study still in Ghana established that several economic issues including financial constraints prove to be barriers when it comes to participation in parliamentary debates because financial ability, covertly and overtly, determine the 'loudest' voices on the floor of the August House (Musah & Gariba, 2013).

Political financing regulations and access to adequate finance have the potential to enhance women's chances to contest for political positions, campaigns, get elected and after that reach out to the electorates in performing their duties. However, in Kenya, the script and the cast is the same as other new democracies. Kayini and Muriaas (2014) argue that the gendered nature of electoral financing in Kenya is a significant hurdle to women's access to decision-making

roles in Kenya. Due to lack of political party financial support, ascent to political leadership remains a mirage to a majority of aspiring Kenyan women and a huge hurdle to overcome for those who get their feet into the circles of party owners (International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, IIDEA, 2017). Ohman and Lintari (2015) aver that the majoritarian electoral system in Kenya perpetuates advantage for men at the expense of women. In the whole political scheme and game, according to other researchers, women appear to be just pawns being manipulated by political parties to attract voters, meet gender quotas and attract funding. They are given moral support but little financial support. A major contributing factor to this is the unequal access to the resources needed to successfully contribute to the welfare of their constituents and the society at large.

These findings only seem to engrain the notion that politics dominated by money is politics dominated by men. However, to address financial challenges as well as other structural political challenges standing in the way of women in politics, there are institutions that have come forward to help women politicians worldwide to surmount the challenges by supporting women financially in campaigns and elections (Sidhu & Meena, 2007). These institutions include United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Women (UN Women), the IDEA, and the NDI, the International Foundation for Election Systems (IFES), Organization of American States (OAS) and United States Agency for International Development (USAID). Besides financial support, these institutions provide support to female politicians by training women candidates on successful campaigning, spearheading and supporting gender-focused electoral reform processes, buttressing gender mainstreaming in electoral management bodies, incentivizing political parties fielding women candidates and facilitating networking among women and those who intend to support them (Ballington et al., 2011).

2.4 Women's Leadership in Parliamentary Committees and Performance of Women Parliamentarians' Duties

Committee positions can constitute not just important stepping stones to growing an individual's political career prospects but also an opportunity to advance their representational duty and the issue affecting electorates (Taflaga & Dowding, n.d). A report by IPU (2006) accentuated that mainstreaming gender equality in committee work and parliamentary outputs is indispensable for ensuring respect for women's rights. The report further advances that granted leadership positions in parliamentary committees, women parliamentarians were in a position to influence policy directions, change parliamentary procedures and practices, serve as role models to other women and provide a different perspective in debates. Unfortunately, as a number of studies reviewed herein have shown, women continue to be woefully underrepresented in decision-making processes (Grillos, 2018), not just in the political realm but also in the corporate world. To address such issues, a report by IPU (2013), encourages and urges strive to achieve proportional and equitable distribution of women parliamentarians across all committees.

In the UK, the select committee chair position is a coveted, high profile position and influential one. A rise in the number of female chairs directly and significantly impacts the visibility of women in the parliament. Moreover, having more women as chairs of select committees may encourage more women to play a role in the committee system and politics itself. However, in the UK's Westminster, despite a steady increase of female MPs over the years (Taflaga & Beauregard, 2020), data from the Select Committee Data Archive Project established that women MPs were still outnumbered on Commons select committees. With the exception of between 2009 and 2010 when the regional committees briefly existed, the percentage of female chairs on committees has usually been smaller than the percentage of women since 1979 in the

UK's Westminster. This is a surprising revelation about a country considered to be among the democratically developed. The argument advanced by the report to justify the imbalance and underrepresentation is that the number of women elected or seconded to positions of responsibility within Parliament, whether as Cabinet members, shadow ministers or select committee chairs is directly proportional to the number of women MPs in the parliament (Wilson, 2017).

Male dominant culture and environment make it difficult for women to be appointed and to successfully perform their duties without being subjected to frustrations. According to the findings of a study carried out in Jordan, discrimination against women was a major factor in side-lining women when it comes to appointment to parliamentary committees. More so those committees that are perceived to be technical despite their capabilities, skills, expertise and knowledge in certain subject matters (Al Maaitah, Oweis, Olimat, Altarawneh, Al Maaitah, 2012). Such decisions and discrimination against women politicians portray a lack of confidence on women as equal partners in decision making.

In Nepal, while the Interim Constitution mandates 33% quota for women to ensure that they are represented across all boards in village district committees, this constitutional provision is openly being flouted and violated as evidenced by underrepresentation of women in the three local government bodies. Additionally, women's participation in the boards is extremely low and the voice curtailed. For instance, the 10% of the village district committees' budget allocation meant for women and girls is openly and repeatedly misused. In one instance in places like Goganpani, Baraha and Seri, the special budgetary allocation for women and girls was inadvertently directed to developing roads but the decision was never disputed by women who sat on these committees. Similar occurrences are replicated across the country (Nath,

2013). This evidences the unfortunate reality that women have no voice in policy and political decision-making forums.

Away from the modern, formal leadership and governance institutions, traditional governance institutions continue to play an important role at the community level in many communities in many developing countries across the world. In many countries however, these traditional governance structures such as village development committees, and positions of power like those held by religious and traditional leaders, local politicians and village elders, are still male dominated. The picture however is changing in some parts of the world. In Asia, the local and traditional governance structures are still a commonplace, especially in the rural regions that have not been significantly affected by modernity and western-style civilization. While in some countries participation of women in these traditional governance systems are still highly stifled by customary laws, the situation is positively evolving in some parts of China. In the country's rural Shaanxi province, in the period 2003–2009, the number of women elected as village heads tripled. This however did not come easily but as a result of relentless grassroots activism mostly led by women of the province (Xiaoxian, 2010).

The narrative is the same in India where research findings have shown that the number of women in village councils, locally known as panchayats, has increased over the years. According to the report, inclusion of more women has not just been a formality but have notably led to improvement in the quality of decisions made by the councils. For instance, the councils have gradually become more responsive to community demands for infrastructure, improved implementation of various government programmes, and made women citizens more likely to take advantage of state services and demand for their rights. In West Bengal for example, an evaluation study of 265 village councils established that in panchayats where

leadership roles were reserved for women, the type of public services and goods provided were gender considerate and more responsive to women's priorities (Chattopadhyay & Duflo, 2004).

With regard to the traditional leadership and governance systems and inclusion of women in these setups, some African countries are still highly appended to the stringent customary laws that restricted women from sitting or even participating in such forums. Take Sierra Leone, for instance, it is estimated that due to the challenges with poorly developed formal judicial and legal systems, 85% of the population falls under the jurisdiction of customary law as defined in the country's constitution. Because of the highly patriarchal nature of the nation's culture, the customary institutions such as the traditional courts and the development committees are highly male dominated with very minimal positions for women (and in some instances exclusively made up of men) (Naz, Sam & Shah, 2011). In such unbalanced setups, women lose their voice even in matters that are of immense significance to their affairs. The chronicle is no different on the formal modern front. Castillejo (2009) established that women's participation in Sierra Leone's parliamentary committees is limited due to political marginalization.

Although there has been progress in women's access to formal political roles due to legal and constitutional reform and advocacy processes, access to key decision-making roles in the political space remains limited. This is evidenced by glaringly skewed number of male and female parliamentarians in house committees in both houses of the bicameral parliament. Moreover, the gains for women remain precarious and uncertain. This is associated with the highly gendered bias in formal and informal political space and the often invisible pathways of political negotiations, to which women continue to have limited access. Women's formal participation remains limited. Where they have influence, this is often associated with political

skills in strategic networking and leadership capabilities in oppositional collective action rather than formal access to decision-making roles (Domingo et al., 2015).

An examination of Kenyan parliamentary behaviour reveals that sometimes women's voice and influence has been informal and indirect. According to Mzalendo (2020), a parliamentary watchdog institution, Kenyan women parliamentarians continue to be victims of stereotypical sexist, incompetence and ethical remarks. The study by Nath (2013) established that *Sauti Ya Wanawake* (translated The Voice of Women), a local women's movement based in Kenya's coastal county of Mombasa, is taking advantage of the ongoing power balance in Kenyan politics triggered by 2010 constitution to ensure that women are not left behind in policy and political decision-making forums in the six counties of Kenya's coastal region where the organizations operates. The findings of the study indicated that as a result of the efforts made by the movement to empower women at the grassroots level, more women have successfully penetrated the oppressive male-dominated societal structures to rise to positions of decision-making and leadership as chiefs and village elders, schools' committees and boards of trustees' members, and peace and land committees' members in the region.

When women are empowered as political leaders, countries experience higher standards of living, and positive developments are evident in education, infrastructure and health (Beaman et al., 2007). Women's participation positively affects communities, legislatures, political parties and citizens' lives and helps democracy deliver improvements to citizens' lives. Several studies show that women's political participation results in tangible gains for democratic governance, including greater responsiveness to citizen needs (Cammisa and Reingold, 2004), increased cooperation across party and ethnic lines (Rosenthal, 2001) and more sustainable peace (Chinkin, 2003).

Research specifically examining gender styles in legislative committees show that women's leadership and conflict resolution styles embody democratic ideals and that women tend to work in a less hierarchical, more participatory and more collaborative manner than male colleagues (Rosenthal, 2001: 2). Women are also more likely to reach across party lines and strive for consensus, even in partisan and polarised environments (NDI, 2011).

In addition to meeting in plenary sessions, most legislatures or parliaments conduct a significant portion of their work in committees. All legislatures organise themselves according to internal rules of procedure, and committee systems vary among countries. Usually, however, they include some combination of standing (permanent) committees and select or special committees. Typically, committees in the parliament serve as legislative counterparts to and correspond with government ministries (NDI, 2011:1).

Many, but not all legislatures, include committees that have jurisdiction over women's affairs or gender affairs or both. Typically, a committee with jurisdiction over women's affairs reviewed legislation that specifically addresses women's status, rights or needs, including, for example, a national maternity leave policy, legislation mandating non-discrimination in employment or funding for reproductive health care (NDI, 2011: 1). Gender committees, on the other hand, may enjoy a wider mandate, such as the authority to review all legislation from a gender perspective. A gender perspective includes a consideration of the needs of both women and men, and recognition that a policy may affect women differently than men. For example, a gender committee might review a pending land rights bill, even if it does not mention women specifically, to ensure that the equal rights of men and women to land ownership are not undermined, and that both women and men have access to redress if their land is seized.

The gender sensitivity of legislation can also be enhanced by appointing a staff person on every committee to serve as a gender focal point and review all legislation from a gender perspective. Again, the capacity and authority of the focal points determined the success of the mechanism.

In Rwanda, men and women play a leadership role in all parliamentary committees. If the chair is female, her deputy is male and vice versa. This structure is designed, in part, to ensure that a gender perspective is included in all committees, and not relegated solely to the gender affairs committee. Many countries have Gender Equality Commissions tasked with reviewing and evaluating both legislation and its implementation or enforcement (NDI, 2011: 1). Commissions can be convened on a short-term basis to investigate a particular problem or established as more permanent bodies.

2.5 Theoretical Framework

This section introduces and discusses the theory relevant to the research problem on which this study was founded. It also explains the relevance of the theory to the study.

2.5.1 Politics of Presence Theory

This study was guided by the politics of presence theory propounded by Anne Phillips (1995, 1998). The theory posits that though the numerical presence of women within parliament is usually juxtaposed with their representation of women's interests and concerns in policy, the direct link between the two is not overt, as changes or lack of changes in policy cannot be exclusively attributed to the presence, ideas and efforts of women but rather the presence of ideas and individuals who support women's interests. In the representation of women's interests, Phillips argues that it is not imperative to "establish a unified interest of all women" but rather it is vitally important to establish the points of divergence between the interests of women and men (Phillips, 1995: 68).

In addition, Phillips contends that women are not a homogenous group and thus their interests on issues such as childcare, or equal opportunities in employment and education differed. Thus, the manner in which they are defended and represented heavily relies on the distinctive group and background women political leaders identify with. Subsequently, the generally accepted pattern of experiment in this area is measuring women and men politicians' views on women's issues and interests. For instance, Lovenduski *et al.* (2003: 89) tested out the presence theory in Westminster, by examining the difference between the attitudes and values of men and women politicians by measuring "(i) the legislative voting record of MPs; (ii) the roles and activities of backbenchers; and (iii) the underlying cultural attitudes and ideological values of politicians." They found that policies to redress women's issues could only be changed or implemented if the women entering into the legislature prioritize women's issues such as emphasizing "public spending on education rather than defence, or if they raise more parliamentary questions about childcare than about Europe, or if they pay more attention to constituency service rather than parliamentary debate" (Lovenduski *et al.*, 2003: 97). Wangnerud (2000) also found that in the Swedish Riksgad, female politicians, more than their male counterparts; represent the concerns and interests of women. Evidently, descriptive representation only leads to substantive representation if the women elected into politics have different views and values than their male counterparts.

2.6.2 Relevance of the theory to the study

Drawing from the theory's proposition in going beyond the individual presence to examination of presence of ideas alongside the individuals, it explains how women's causes (of individuals and ideas through parliamentary associations/groupings), the affirmative funds access and utilization (the activation of ideas on bridging the gender gap in socio-economic spheres) and the membership and leadership in various parliamentary committees (women parliamentarians'

presence and leadership of various parliamentary units) have become strategic in realizing their legislative and other parliamentary mandates.

Chapter 3.0: METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This section presents the methodology that guided the study. It describes the study site, the study design, the study population and unit of analysis, sample and sampling procedure, data collection and analysis methods. The section concludes with a discussion on the ethical considerations that guided the study.

3.2 Research Site

This study was carried out in Nairobi City County. Being the capital city of Kenya, Nairobi County houses the country's parliament which accommodates both the Senate and the National Assembly. All parliamentarians therefore, have offices in the county in which they operate from when they are in the county. This makes it easy for the researcher to reach them instead of travelling to their native constituencies for data collection. Additionally, former (those who may have lost elections/seats in 2017) women parliamentarians are also easy to access when they are in Nairobi County because of the centrality of the city as the political hub of the nation. However, where members are located in other geographical zones beyond Nairobi, computer assisted data collection methods was deployed.



Figure 3.1 Map of Nairobi City County

Source: Google Maps, 2020

3.3 Study Design

This was a cross-sectional exploratory study using qualitative data collection methods. It is intended that this in-depth approach brought out how women parliamentarians have leveraged on caucusing, access to affirmative funds and parliamentary committee leadership to enhance their mandates. Qualitative data was obtained through individual in-depth interviews and key informant interviews with purposively selected informants. Qualitative data was analysed thematically and verbatim quotes used alongside the main presentation to project the voices of the informants.

3.4 Study Population and Unit of Analysis

The structure of the National Assembly of Kenya is such that it has a total of 349 seats. Out of this number, 290 members are elected directly from the single-member constituencies thus representing the country's 290 constituencies, 47 are women representative members elected directly from each of the 47 counties and the rest 12 are representatives of special interest groups nominated by political parties based on the number of seats each party controls in the assembly (Parliament of Kenya, 2020).

The study population in this research was women parliamentarians (members of the National Assembly) from the 11th and 12th parliaments. In the current parliamentary session, the National Assembly has 23 elected and 6 nominated women members. Adding that to the 47 county women representatives, the total number of women members in the lower house of the parliament is 76. The 11th parliamentary session had a total of 68 women in the National Assembly; 16 elected, 5 nominated and the remaining 47 were the elected women representatives (IEBC, 2018). Cumulatively, 144 women members of the National Assembly from the 11th and 12th Parliaments formed the population of interest from whom the sample was obtained. The unit of analysis was the individual woman parliamentarian from either the 11th or 12th parliaments. The population breakdown is shown in Table 3.1

Table 3.1 Study Population

Parliamentary Session	Membership to the House	Number of Members
11 th Parliamentary Session	Women representatives	47
	Elected	16
	Nominated	5
12 th Parliamentary Session	Women representatives	47
	Elected	23
	Nominated	6
Total		144

Source: IEBC, 2018; IEBC, 2020

3.5 Sample Size and Sampling Procedures

This study conveniently and purposively sampled 30 women parliamentarians from a possible 144 drawn from the 11th and 12th parliamentary sessions. The sample of thirty (30) is considered demographically representative and inclusive (Collis and Hussey, 2003). The sampled informants were then subjected to in-depth interviews (IDI) while a select group of five professionals formed the category for key informant interviews. These included the current chair of KEWOPA, one of the three founding members of KEWOPA, Clerk of the National Assembly, Speakers of the National Assembly and a programme manager at the SUNY programme that is responsible for assisting women parliamentarians in legislative agenda.

3.6 Data Collection Methods

3.6.1 In-depth interviews

This was conducted with 30 women parliamentarians. IDIs collected data across the demographic characteristics of the informants, the contribution of parliamentary caucusing to enhanced performance and delivery of mandates, the role of access to affirmative funds as well as membership and leadership of various parliamentary committees in enhancing the mandate

delivery. The researcher conducted the interviews in person, however, in circumstances where the study informants expressed reservations to physical meetings, virtual platforms was deployed. An in-depth interview guide (annex1) was used to collect data.

3.6.2 Key Informant Interviews

These was conducted with purposely selected informants. The current chairperson of Kenya Women Parliamentary Association (KEWOPA), one of the three founding members of KEWOPA, Clerk of the National Assembly, Speaker of the National Assembly and a representative from SUNY, the body that has been supporting women's legislative agenda. The interviews covered how affirmative funds, the presence of women in parliamentary committees and the women parliamentary caucusing have enhanced the performance of women's mandate. A key informant interview guide (Appendix 2) was used to collect data.

3.7 Data Processing and Analysis

The qualitative data obtained was transcribed and sections captured in Kiswahili translated into English. Processed data was then coded and analysed thematically, where, the specific objectives was used as primary nodes to categorise the data. Using this technique, the researcher demarcated the data into segments. Each segment was labelled with a code that suggests how the associated data segments inform the research objectives. After coding, reports was prepared accordingly by summarizing the prevalence of codes, discussing similarities and differences in related codes across distinct original contexts, and comparing the relationship between one or more codes. The verbatim quotes was used alongside the presentation and discussions to vocalize the informants' opinions in the findings.

3.8 Ethical Considerations

The necessary ethical considerations was followed throughout this study. Participation in the study was voluntary. In seeking informed consent, the duration of the interview, the potential use of the data was explained to the informants so that their participation is duly informed. Informants who expressed the need to be anonymous have pseudonyms used to identify them in the report hence the observation of anonymity. Confidentiality of the data obtained was ensured through storage in password protected computers. In circumstances where the informants do not wish to be identified, synonyms was used to anonymize their identity. The study results will be available to wider audience as grey literature in the university library and through possible publications in select academic journals for wider scientific community. All sources of information have been adequately and appropriately acknowledged as part of academic integrity.

Chapter 4.0: RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

The data collected has been analysed, interpreted, and presented in this chapter. The overarching objective of this study was to assess coping strategies adopted by Kenyan women parliamentarians in performance of their legislative mandate. Specifically, the study sought to examine the role of women parliamentary caucuses in enhancing their participation and delivery of their mandate; to establish the influence of access to affirmative action funds in performance of women parliamentarians' duties and to examine the role of women's leadership in parliamentary committees in performance of women parliamentarians' duties.

4.2 Response Rate

The response rate table below shows that out of a total of 30 women selected for in-depth interviews, all of them were reached. The five key informants were equally reached and they shared their views on the subject matter. The response rate is shown in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Response Rate

Response Rate	Frequency	Percentage
IDIs	30	100
Key Informants	5	100
Total		100

Source: Research Findings (2023)

4.3 Demographic Characteristics

The researcher sought to analyse the distribution of informants based on fundamental characteristics such as the Age of the informant, marital status, highest level of education, first-time parliamentarian, terms served in the parliament, mode of obtaining seat, political party/coalition and special measures to promote the presence and performance of women parliamentarians.

In this research, 13 parliamentarians were aged between 35 and 45 years, while 9 parliamentarians were aged between 18 and 34 years. Those women aged 46 years and above were 8 parliamentarians, as illustrated in Table 4.1 below. Consequently, a significant majority of the women parliamentarians from the 11th and 12th parliament of Kenya were above the defined youthful age bracket (18-34 years).

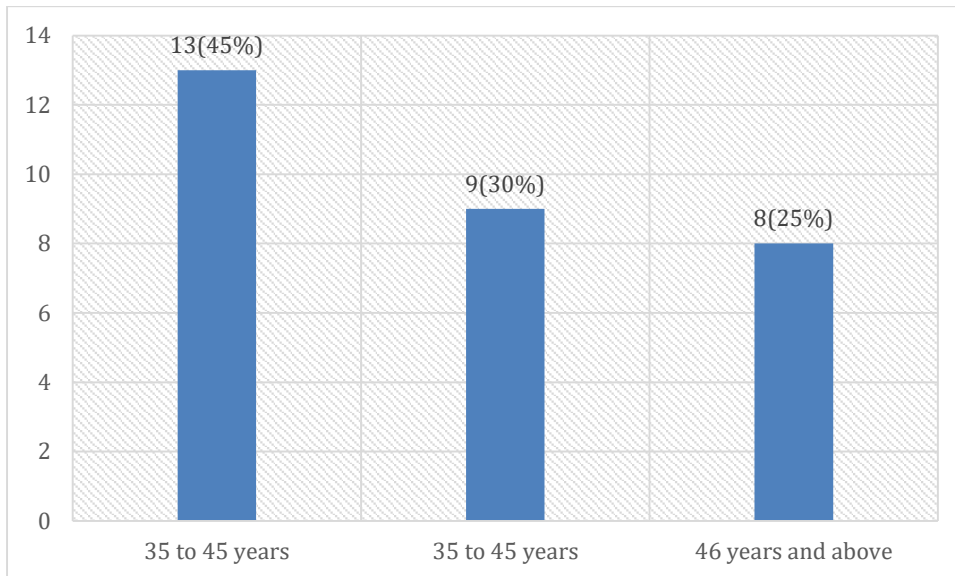


Figure 4.1: Age of the Respondents

The research notes that age is an important determinant of legislative performance. The KEWOPA secretariat noted that women in the 40s tend to have the necessary experience of both motherhood and life circumstances that enable them to see issues in a wider spectrum. The young representatives tend to take long to acclimatise and at times fear speaking their minds either for fear of the retributions from their political parties and nominating authorities or as part of the extension of patriarchy.

“We have noted over the years that the young members of Parliament tend to take longer to acclimatise and in some instances, fear speaking out on matters that affect women as well as their youthful constituencies. We however, always try our best to make them feel comfortable and have the confidence to legislate and debate issues that concern the women” (KEWOPA Representative).

The study sought to analyse the marital status of the women parliamentarians from the 11th and 12th parliaments. The findings indicate that 21 of the 30 women parliamentarians were

married, five were either divorced or separated, two were single who have never been married at all and one noted that she has been widowed. One respondent fell in the 'Other' category. Marital status was considered a pivotal variable in this investigation, given that the presence or absence of a spouse significantly influences a woman's political journey amidst the predominantly patriarchal socio-political landscape of Kenya. The entrenched patriarchal values and norms significantly shape the 'male-politics' paradigm characteristic of the country's electoral processes and political competitions. The findings are summarized in Table 4.2 below.

Table 4.2: Marital Status

Marital Status	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Married	21	70%
Divorced/Separated	5	16.7%
Single	2	6.7%
Widowed	1	3.3%
Other	1	3.3%
Total	30	100.0%

Source: Research Findings (2023)

The findings indicate that marriage either enhances or at times deters women's proper presentation. The following two voices elaborates on the two extreme ends:

“My husband has been a key pillar in my legislative mandate in that he assists in coming up with issues that affect the family, the girl child, the boy child as well as familial relations. He has assisted me in formulating issues that requires legislation and I must say that without him, things would have been different” (46-year-old Parliamentarian).

“Sometimes, whenever I come up with issues that I think are pertinent to the women's constituency and I share the same with my husband, he always say that those are feminist views that have no place in modern Kenya. He believes that legislation must not only be about women and should concern everyone. I try to argue with him in vain and twice, I have had to drop my line of thinking just because of his opposition. I nolonger share with him what I think” (37-year-old Parliamentarian).

With regard to educational attainment, the results show that none of the women parliamentarians had only primary or secondary school education. Instead, a considerable majority, accounting for approximately 86.7% (or 26 parliamentarians), held a

University/College degree with four of them having attained a postgraduate qualifications. The level of education has been a long-standing barrier to women's access to political leadership in Kenya, and the introduction of the Elections Act of 2011 brought further challenges by pegging competitions for various political seats to certain minimum academic achievements.

The findings are summarized in Table 4.3 below:

Table 4.3: Highest Level of Education

Education Level	Frequency	Percentage (%)
University/College	26	86.7
Post-Graduate University Degree	4	13.3
Total	30	100.0

Source: Research Findings (2023)

As is the case in many jurisdictions, the more educated someone is the higher the probability of the confidence and ability to participate in legislation. KEWOPA leadership observed thus:

“Education has proven as a fundamental pillar in enhancing women’s capacity and ability to legislate. We have had robust contributions from the women lawyers who have also been a key cog in legislations that protect the rights of women. A critical example has been the entrenchment of the affirmative action principles in the constitution and the enactment of the Sexual Offences Act 2006” (KEWOPA Executive Officer).

The study revealed that a close majority of the women parliamentarians, constituting 53.3% (or 16 parliamentarians), were serving their first term in parliament. Conversely, 46.7% (or 14 parliamentarians) of the respondents indicated that they were not first-time parliamentarians.

The findings are shown in Table 4.4 below.

Table 4.4: First-Time Parliamentarian

Question	Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Are you a first-time parliamentarian?	Yes	16	53.3
	No	14	46.7
Total		30	100.0

Source: Research Findings (2023)

In terms of the number of terms served in parliament, again a similar proportion of 53.3% (or 16 parliamentarians) were serving their first term. A considerable 26.7% (or 8 parliamentarians) were in their second term, while a smaller segment of 20% (or 6 parliamentarians) reported having served more than two terms in parliament. Table 4.5 below shows the findings. The findings are shown in Table 4.5 below.

Table 4.5: Terms Have You Served in the Parliament

Question	Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
How many terms have you served in the parliament?	One	16	53.3
	Two	8	26.7
	More than Two	6	20.0
Total		30	100.0

Source: Research Findings (2023)

The number of times someone has served is closely related to the confidence, experience and the ability to comprehend the dynamics of power. Women who have been in Parliament for two or more terms were reportedly confident and were the pillars upon which the new colleagues relied on. They provided the anchorage and tutored the newcomers. They also noted that the mastery of Parliamentary procedures enabled most of them to be included in crucial committees in Parliament.

“Being a second or third times has its own advantages in that you understand the Parliamentary procedures, the lobbying processes and the ability to act in bipartisan way so as to get your issues passed in Parliament. This also enabled one to be included in crucial parliamentary committees compared to the new members” (Third term member of Parliament).

When examining the manner in which women parliamentarians obtained their seats, the results showed that 13 parliamentarians were elected as county women representatives, 10 of them were elected from a single constituency position while six of them were nominated. Those elected from a single constituency had competed with men and emerged victorious hence boosting the number of women in the National Assembly.

Table 4.6 below shows the results.

Table 4.5: Terms Have You Served in the Parliament

Method	Frequency	Percent
Elected as County Women Representatives	13	43.3%
Elected as Constituency MPs	10	33.3%
Nominated as Constituency MPs	6	20.0%
Total	30	100.0%

Source: Research Findings (2023)

As for the political party or coalition affiliation of the women parliamentarians, the largest proportion, amounting to 26.7% (or 8 parliamentarians), were affiliated with Jubilee. NASA followed with 20.0% (or 6 parliamentarians). Amani and ANC each accounted for 13.3% (or 4 parliamentarians each). KANU and Maendeleo Chap Chap each represented 10.0% (or 3 parliamentarians each) of the respondents. Independent candidates made up a smaller 3.3% (or 1 parliamentarian), with an additional 6.7% (or 2 parliamentarians) associated with other specified parties. Table 4.6 shows the findings.

Table 4.6: Political Party/Coalition Affiliation

Political Party/Coalition	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Jubilee	8	26.7%
NASA	6	20.0%
Amani	4	13.3%
ANC	4	13.3%
KANU	3	10.0%
Maendeleo Chap Chap	3	10.0%
Independent Candidate	1	3.3%
Other	2	6.7%
Total	30	100.0

Source: Research Findings (2023)

In terms of support from political parties or coalitions to promote the presence and performance

of women parliamentarians, a majority of 63.3% (or 19 parliamentarians) affirmed that their respective party or coalition had implemented such measures. Nevertheless, a significant 36.7% (or 11 parliamentarians) reported that their political affiliation lacked specific initiatives aimed at enhancing the role of women parliamentarians. The findings are shown in Table 4.7.

Table 4.7: Party/Coalition Measures to Promote Women

Special Measures to Promote Women Parliamentarians	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	19	63.3
No	11	36.7
Total	30	100.0

Source: Research Findings (2023)

During Kenya's 11th and 12th Parliaments, significant measures were undertaken to enhance the presence and performance of women parliamentarians. The Constitution's two-thirds gender principle, which mandated greater female representation, spurred political parties to nominate more women. Additionally, capacity building and training programs, often in partnership with civil society and international donors, were designed to equip women with essential political and leadership skills. Legislative reforms, such as amendments to the Elections Act and the Political Parties Act, reinforced these efforts by cementing the importance of gender equality within the political framework. These combined efforts have been instrumental in empowering women in Kenya's parliamentary landscape.

4.4 Women Parliamentary Caucuses

This section discusses women parliamentary caucuses and how they influence performance of women parliamentarians' duties. The study discussed the Kenyan Women Parliamentary Association (KEWOPA) as an important vehicle for women parliamentarians in Kenya.

4.4.1 Why Women Parliamentarians in Caucus under KEWOPA

KEWOPA offers a strategic platform for women parliamentarians to collectively advance their

interests and navigate the challenges of political leadership in Kenya. By working together, these women can push for gender-responsive legislation and policies, thereby promoting the well-being of women across the country. Further, KEWOPA provides a non-partisan platform where women can collectively advocate for gender-responsive legislation and policies. Women parliamentarians choose to caucus under KEWOPA for various reasons as discussed in this section.

KEWOPA serves as a vital platform for enabling women parliamentarians to collectively articulate their standpoints on issues related to gender and equality. The strength of this collective voice is far greater than the sum of its individual parts. It signifies a unified will that amplifies the calls for gender-responsive legislation, bringing a greater focus on the needs and rights of women within parliamentary discussions. The unity demonstrated through KEWOPA helps break down traditional barriers, fostering an environment where gender equality can be openly and passionately championed. This unity transcends party lines, bringing together parliamentarians with divergent political allegiances but a shared goal of enhancing women's rights and gender equality. The combined advocacy and influence exerted through KEWOPA play an instrumental role in shaping policies as illustrated by the below responses:

"With KEWOPA, we're able to leverage our collective influence. It's no longer about individual voices but a chorus demanding gender equality and the advancement of women's rights." (Women Representative – National Assembly).

"Being part of KEWOPA has amplified our voices and demands for gender equity. It's a platform that collectively empowers us to lobby for change." (Member of Parliament – National Assembly).

"Our collective advocacy through KEWOPA is an engine that drives policy change, ensuring women's concerns are not side-lined but form part of the legislative agenda." (KEWOPA – Chairperson).

Beyond its unifying role, KEWOPA serves as a hub for capacity building, aimed at empowering women parliamentarians with the knowledge and skills necessary to excel in their roles. It provides training on a range of crucial areas, including leadership, policy formulation, legislative processes, and public speaking. Such training enables the parliamentarians to better

understand the complexities of the political landscape, craft effective strategies to address gender issues, and articulate their positions with confidence and eloquence. By bolstering their skills and knowledge, KEWOPA empowers women parliamentarians to be more effective advocates for their constituents and the cause of gender equality as evidenced by the below responses:

"Through KEWOPA's capacity-building programs, women parliamentarians hone their leadership skills, learn how to craft compelling policy proposals, and ultimately become a more effective parliamentarian." (Clerk – National Assembly).

"KEWOPA has been instrumental in my development as a parliamentarian. The workshops and training have equipped me with the knowledge and skills to effectively represent my constituents and advocate for women's rights." (Women Representative – National Assembly).

"Thanks to KEWOPA, I'm not just a parliamentarian but an informed and confident advocate for my people, especially women. Their capacity building programs have been a game changer." (Nominated Member of Parliament National Assembly).

In KEWOPA, an environment conducive to mentorship and peer support thrives. Seasoned parliamentarians offer their wisdom and guidance to new members, helping them navigate the often-tumultuous waters of political leadership. This mentorship is not just about sharing knowledge and experience; it's about fostering an environment where women can express their challenges and learn from each other's experiences. This support structure is invaluable in a political arena often dominated by men, providing a sense of solidarity and shared purpose that can help overcome the unique challenges faced by women parliamentarians. The below responses illustrate the crucial mentorship and peer support provided by KEWOPA:

"The mentorship I received through KEWOPA has been transformative. The guidance and support from seasoned parliamentarians have equipped me to thrive in this challenging political landscape." (Women Representative – National Assembly).

"The support system in KEWOPA is inspiring. More experienced members willingly share their knowledge and experiences, making the political journey less daunting for newcomers like me." (Speaker - National Assembly).

"KEWOPA provides a space where women parliamentarians can lean on each other, learn from each other, and navigate the political landscape together. The mentorship they get is invaluable." (SUNY Representative).

Participation in KEWOPA also provides women parliamentarians with a platform for visibility and recognition. It helps them stand out within the parliamentary setting and beyond, gaining the attention and support of their fellow lawmakers, constituents, and potential allies. This visibility often translates into broader support for their initiatives and campaigns, increasing their ability to effect change. The recognition that comes with being part of KEWOPA also strengthens their political standing, reinforcing their legitimacy and influence as policymakers. This can help them secure support for their initiatives and strengthen their political standing as evidenced by the below responses:

"Being a part of KEWOPA has significantly elevated my political profile. The visibility has not only boosted support for my initiatives but has also empowered me in my political career." (Nominated Female Member of Parliament – National Assembly).

"My affiliation with KEWOPA has increased my visibility, both within the parliament and in public. This visibility has led to increased support for my work and initiatives." (Women Representative – National Assembly).

"KEWOPA has not only given me a platform to make a difference but also the recognition as a leader fighting for gender equality." (Female Senator – Senate).

KEWOPA also acts as a vital networking platform. It connects women parliamentarians with a broad spectrum of actors, including civil society organizations, international donors, and other influential figures in the political and socio-economic realms. These connections can open doors to resources, partnerships, and opportunities that can significantly enhance their ability to drive their policy agendas and advance their political careers. By forging these strategic alliances, KEWOPA helps women parliamentarians to maximize their influence and effectiveness in championing women's rights and gender equality. The crucial role of KEWOPA as a vital networking platform is illustrated by the below responses:

"The networks I've formed through KEWOPA have been invaluable. The alliances and partnerships have significantly advanced my policy agenda and expanded my influence." (Women Representative – National Assembly).

"Through KEWOPA, I've built relationships that have been instrumental in advancing my political career. The networking opportunities it provides are unparalleled." (Elected Member of Parliament – National Assembly).

"KEWOPA has connected me with a network of diverse, influential figures from civil society organizations to international donors. These connections have greatly benefited my work and advocacy efforts." (Women Representative – National Assembly).

4.4.2 Role of KEWOPA in Realising Parliamentary Mandate

KEWOPA has been instrumental in helping women parliamentarians realize their mandate. It provides a rich pool of resources and targeted training sessions that significantly enhance their legislative acumen and policy-making capabilities. By focusing on key areas such as leadership, policy formulation, and public speaking, KEWOPA ensures that these women are well equipped to champion their constituents' needs and address gender-related issues head-on.

"KEWOPA's training sessions have transformed my understanding of legislative processes and policy formulation. They've given me the tools to navigate through complex policy issues and effectively represent my constituents." (Women Representative – National Assembly).

Furthermore, KEWOPA is not just an association; it's a robust networking platform. It facilitates connections between women parliamentarians and a broad spectrum of actors in the political and socio-economic realms, including civil society organizations and international donors. These connections can foster strategic alliances and partnerships that not only enhance their political influence but also enable them to drive significant policy agendas effectively.

"The networking opportunities provided by KEWOPA have been invaluable. The strategic alliances I've forged through this platform have given my policy agendas a significant boost and expanded my sphere of influence." (Women Representative – National Assembly).

Moreover, the culture of mentorship and support that is fostered within KEWOPA is crucial. The wisdom and guidance shared by more seasoned members help newer parliamentarians to traverse the often-challenging terrain of political leadership with confidence and grace.

"The mentorship I received within KEWOPA has been a game-changer for me. The advice and support from more experienced members have helped me navigate numerous challenges and become a more effective leader." (Women Representative – National Assembly).

4.4.3 Nature of issues Female Parliamentary Caucuses Focus on

The study sought to establish the nature of issues that the women parliamentary caucuses in Kenya, such as KEWOPA, focus on. The study established that the issues span a wide spectrum, touching on all aspects of social, economic, and political life that are primarily centred around the promotion of gender equality and women's rights.

Women parliamentary caucuses in Kenya play a significant role in the legislative process, advocating for the enactment of gender-responsive laws and policies. They work diligently to scrutinize existing legislation, identifying areas where gender biases may exist and proposing amendments to rectify such biases. They actively participate in the legislative process, introducing bills that aim to protect and advance the rights and interests of women. Additionally, they push for the enforcement of existing gender laws, promoting compliance with international commitments related to gender equality, such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). Recognizing that legislative advocacy must be complemented by resource allocation, these caucuses also advocate for increased budgetary provisions for gender-related issues.

The caucuses strive to break down barriers that hinder women's participation in political and decision-making spaces. They campaign for the full implementation of the two-thirds gender rule, as stipulated in the Kenyan Constitution that seeks to ensure balanced gender representation in elective and appointive bodies. This involves lobbying for legislative reforms and engaging in legal battles to enforce compliance with the rule. Besides, these caucuses take on a mentorship role, offering guidance and support to aspiring women leaders. They organize training programs to equip women with the necessary skills to navigate the political landscape.

Recognizing that socio-economic independence is a key driver of gender equality, the caucuses work towards policies that empower women economically. They push for legislative reforms that ensure women's access to key resources, such as land and credit, recognizing the significant role that these resources play in empowering women economically. They also advocate for gender equality in the workplace, pushing for equal opportunities in employment and business, fair remuneration, and the eradication of discriminatory practices.

Gender Based Violence (GBV) remains a pervasive issue in Kenya, and fighting against it is a priority for these caucuses. They are at the forefront of advocating for stronger laws and policies to tackle all forms of GBV, including domestic violence, sexual harassment, and harmful cultural practices such as female genital mutilation. Beyond legislative advocacy, they work to ensure that survivors of GBV have access to justice and support services. This includes advocating for the strengthening of the justice system's response to GBV and pushing for increased funding for shelters, counselling services, and other support services for survivors.

Access to quality education and healthcare is a fundamental human right, and the women parliamentary caucuses champion these rights for women and girls. They advocate for policies that eliminate barriers to girls' education, such as school fees and harmful cultural practices, and promote girl-friendly learning environments. On health, they are vocal advocates for women's reproductive health rights, pushing for legislation that ensures women and girls have access to comprehensive and quality reproductive and maternal healthcare services. They also advocate for increased funding for health facilities and programs that cater to women's and girls' unique health needs.

4.4.4 Effectiveness of Women Parliamentary Caucuses like KEWOPA

The study sought to establish the effectiveness of women parliamentary caucuses, like the

KEWOPA, in enhancing the performance of women parliamentarians' legislative duties. The study established that these caucuses have proven instrumental in bridging gender gaps in political representation, influencing policy and legislative changes, and advancing gender equality. Through a myriad of strategies such as capacity building, inter-parliamentary networking, advocacy, and mentorship, they have made significant strides in championing women's rights and interests. This section illustrates the effectiveness of KEWOPA in shaping the legislative landscape in Kenya, particularly concerning women's empowerment and gender equality.

KEWOPA has significantly improved the enactment and amendment of gender-sensitive legislation in Kenya. By uniting women parliamentarians across party lines, KEWOPA has increased the voice and influence of women in the parliament. One prominent example of this is the enactment of the Matrimonial Property Act of 2013, which recognizes the contributions of spouses in marriage to acquired property. This act was heavily influenced by the work of KEWOPA and its advocacy for women's rights.

KEWOPA's capacity-building initiatives have enhanced the performance of women parliamentarians in their legislative duties. The association regularly organizes workshops and seminars to equip women MPs with knowledge and skills on legislative procedures, policy formulation, public speaking, and negotiation. As a result, women MPs have become more effective in their roles, influencing policy decisions and actively participating in parliamentary debates. This has been seen in increased sponsorship and co-sponsorship of bills by women parliamentarians in the National Assembly.

KEWOPA has also been instrumental in enhancing women's political participation and representation. They have tirelessly campaigned for the implementation of the two-thirds gender principle as stipulated in the Kenyan constitution. Though not fully achieved,

significant strides have been made, evidenced by the increased number of women MPs in the 11th and 12th parliaments. KEWOPA's mentorship programs and campaigns have encouraged more women to vie for political positions.

KEWOPA's effectiveness is also evident in their relentless fight against GBV. They have advocated for stronger laws and policies to tackle GBV, with notable success. For instance, their advocacy efforts led to the enactment of the Protection against Domestic Violence Act 2015, which provides comprehensive protection to victims of domestic violence. KEWOPA's push for proper implementation of this law and similar ones indicates their effectiveness in influencing the legislative agenda to cater to the needs of women and girls.

KEWOPA has been effective in fostering inter-parliamentary relationships, not only within Kenya but also across the African continent and beyond. By participating in regional and international forums, KEWOPA members share experiences, learn from their peers, and bring back best practices to Kenya. This exposure enriches their legislative work, leading to more informed decision-making and policy advocacy. For example, through the exposure from international conferences, KEWOPA members have been able to champion bills and motions aligned with international standards on gender equality and women's rights.

KEWOPA has played a significant role in advocating for women's socio-economic empowerment, which is critical to women's active participation in politics. The caucus has successfully pushed for policies that enhance women's access to resources such as credit facilities and land. This includes the implementation of policies aimed at providing women with equal opportunities in employment and business. A notable example is the push for the implementation of public procurement policies that provide preferential treatment for women-owned enterprises. The impact of this advocacy can be seen in the increased number of women-owned businesses benefiting from government procurement opportunities. The Clerk of the

National Assembly noted thus:

“KEWOPA has been out great partner in enabling women parliamentarians to function and perform their duties effectively. They have assisted us in orienting new members and encouraging robust debates with real issues of concern to the women constituency. This has enabled parliament to have informed debates”

4.4.5 Cross-Party Women Parliamentary Caucuses

The study sought to find out if there are other cross-party women parliamentary caucuses in the Kenyan parliament besides KEWOPA and how effective they are in gaining political support across party/partisan lines. The study established that besides KEWOPA, there are no other cross-party women parliamentary caucuses in the Kenyan Parliament. KEWOPA is unique in its role as a non-partisan, inclusive caucus that brings together all women parliamentarians in Kenya, regardless of their party affiliation. The effectiveness of KEWOPA in gaining political support across party/partisan lines can be highlighted through the illustrations discussed below.

KEWOPA has been successful in building consensus across party lines on gender-related legislation. By uniting women parliamentarians from diverse political parties, KEWOPA has provided a platform for the common goal of promoting gender equality, thus bridging the often divisive party lines. As a result, numerous gender-responsive laws and amendments have successfully made their way through parliament, a testament to the effective consensus-building strategies employed by KEWOPA.

KEWOPA has shown effectiveness in lobbying for support from male parliamentarians and key political figures across different parties. They have been notably effective in winning the support of male parliamentarians and key political figures across a spectrum of parties. This is largely due to their unyielding efforts in educating and lobbying their colleagues on the significance of gender-responsive legislation and policies. As a result, numerous influential

male MPs have been swayed to champion and back their causes, broadening KEWOPA's political support base and making their legislative successes a shared victory.

KEWOPA's non-partisan nature contributes greatly to its effectiveness. It paves the way for focused, substantive discussions on women's issues, free from the typical partisan narratives that can sometimes dilute the importance of the agenda at hand. By removing the political 'colour', they allow for faster consensus-building and less politicized decision-making processes. This non-partisan approach has expedited the passage of numerous gender-responsive legislations, showcasing the effectiveness of separating women's issues from the partisan fray.

KEWOPA's strength lies in its numbers. By consolidating all women parliamentarians, they present a united front that is hard to ignore. This solidarity has given them a louder, more influential voice within parliament, facilitating the garnering of cross-party support for their legislative proposals. The unity they project creates a ripple effect, encouraging others across the political divide to lend their support to gender-centric issues.

KEWOPA transcends party lines when uniting women parliamentarians and hence plays an essential role in their professional growth, regardless of their party affiliation. They prioritize capacity building initiatives that equip these parliamentarians with critical skills in leadership, policy formulation, advocacy, and negotiation. The shared learning experiences not only foster a sense of camaraderie among the women MPs, but they also enhance their overall effectiveness as political leaders. This, in turn, bolsters their collective influence and their ability to secure political backing across partisan divides.

KEWOPA's effectiveness is further bolstered by strategic alliances with civil society organizations. These collaborations widen the support base for their initiatives, offering

resources, expertise, and grassroots connections that enhance their lobbying efforts. Such alliances also provide an essential link to the citizenry, facilitating mutual understanding and support between the public and the legislative processes. Through these partnerships, KEWOPA has gained greater influence, enabling them to effectively advance their gender-centric policy agendas across different political parties.

“KEWOPA has done more than one can imagine. It has created confidence beyond imagination and have also protected the women legislators from any form of harassment from their own political parties as well as parliamentary procedures” (Senate speaker).

4.5 Access to Affirmative Action Funds

4.5.1 Affirmative Action Funds for Women Parliamentarians

The study sought to establish if the national treasury/commission for budget allocation budget contained any affirmative action funds for women parliamentarians to access in order to facilitate performance of their official duties. The study noted the importance of the establishment of the National Government Affirmative Action Fund (NGAAF). NGAAF is a specialized financial instrument under the auspices of the Ministry of Public Service, Youth and Gender Affairs in Kenya. Established through Legal Notice No.24 of the Public Finance Management Act, 2012 and formally published on 13th February 2015, the fund operates under the governance of the Public Finance Management Act, 2012, and Public Finance Management (National Government Affirmative Action Development Fund), Regulations 2016).

The NGAAF is a key legislative outcome of the Kenyan Constitution, demonstrating the Government’s commitment to addressing historical disadvantages faced by certain segments of the population. It's integrated into Kenya's Vision 2030 development blueprint, particularly under the Social Pillar. This framework aims to alleviate the struggles of vulnerable groups by boosting their access to financial resources for socio-economic empowerment. These groups include women, youth, persons with disabilities, needy children, and elderly individuals across

the country. By promoting enterprise and value addition initiatives, the fund plays a substantial role in mitigating social disparities and fostering equitable growth.

This financial facility focuses on supporting various projects and initiatives that seek to empower women and other marginalized groups in several critical areas. Economically, the NGAAF provides grants to women's groups, aiding the start or expansion of businesses. It supports educational endeavours by offering scholarships to women for formal education or skill enhancement. Furthermore, recognizing the critical importance of health, it channels grants to health organizations dedicated to delivering necessary healthcare services to women. Infrastructure development is not overlooked as the fund commits resources to organizations striving to improve water and sanitation facilities in communities where women form a significant portion of the population. Additionally, the fund aids organizations running empowerment programs, including leadership training and skills development initiatives, contributing to the holistic development of these marginalized groups.

The impact of the NGAAF is seen in the improved lives of thousands of women, as well as other historically marginalized individuals. By providing significant financial support, it has not only enhanced their living conditions but also created an environment conducive for their personal growth and societal contribution. Thus, the NGAAF embodies Kenya's commitment to promoting social justice and economic empowerment, playing a crucial role in fostering inclusivity and equality as it strives to achieve the goals outlined in Vision 2030.

Affirmative action and gender equality is also implemented through legislations mandating representation (like the two-thirds gender rule) and funds like the Women Enterprise Fund, Uwezo Fund, and Youth Enterprise Development Fund, which are aimed at promoting entrepreneurship among women and other marginalized groups.

4.5.2 Effectiveness Affirmative Action Funds in Representation, Legislative and Oversight Mandates

Affirmative action funds, like the National Government Affirmative Action Fund (NGAAF), have significant potential to improve the effectiveness of women parliamentarians in their representation, legislative, and oversight mandates. However, the effectiveness of these funds is contingent on several factors such as the size of the funds, the transparency and integrity of the funding process, and the accountability of those administering the funds, the leadership quality of the women parliamentarians, the prevailing political environment, and the level of public awareness about the affirmative action funds also significantly affect their effectiveness.

Under representation mandates, the study established that the funds empower women parliamentarians to better represent their constituents. With increased financial independence – achieved by utilizing the funds to start or expand businesses – women parliamentarians can have a stronger voice in their communities. They can better understand and articulate the concerns and needs of their constituents, especially those pertaining to women and other marginalized groups. Further, the funds facilitate engagement in advocacy work and support women's empowerment initiatives, creating an environment conducive to increased female representation in politics and society.

Affirmative action funds are instrumental in bolstering the legislative capabilities of women parliamentarians. These funds facilitate women parliamentarians' access to training and development programs. Such initiatives significantly broaden their knowledge base and skillset, thus enabling them to better understand and navigate complex legislative issues. The ability to attend such programs, financed by affirmative action funds, directly enhances their efficacy in their legislative roles. With this augmented competence, women parliamentarians are better positioned to draft, advocate, and support policies that champion the rights and

interests of women and other marginalized groups. The availability of these resources also propels women parliamentarians to the forefront of legislative discourse. They are able to take a proactive stance in shaping legislative agendas and debates. Through this, they can highlight and bring to attention key issues that may have otherwise been neglected.

The study further affirmed the effectiveness of affirmative action funds in fortifying the oversight duties of women parliamentarians. These funds significantly boost the capacity of women parliamentarians to ensure the government and its agencies are held accountable for their actions. The financial resources provided by affirmative action funds equip these women parliamentarians with the necessary tools to conduct exhaustive investigations, carry out audits, and launch other oversight activities. These funds can, for example, be used to hire expert consultants or researchers who can provide valuable insights into government operations, or to finance extensive field visits that can provide first-hand information on government projects. A well-resourced oversight function, thus, is crucial in ensuring government transparency, accountability, and strict adherence to laws and policies. It also promotes a system of checks and balances, an essential characteristic of a healthy democracy. Therefore, through affirmative action funds, women parliamentarians are better placed to perform their oversight duties, leading to a more responsible and accountable government.

“The funds are crucial in assisting us in our legislative duties. Unfortunately, without money and programs, it becomes very difficult to be effective in any issue. We believe that funds are the grease that enables us make progress” (Female Senator).

4.6 Women’s Leadership in Parliamentary Committees

4.6.1 Leadership in Parliamentary Group Committees

In the Kenyan parliamentary setting, the question of whether women parliamentarians lead any parliamentary group committees is a significant one. The Kenyan Parliament consists of various committees that are crucial in guiding legislative affairs. These committees are

powerful platforms where major decisions, discussions, and negotiations occur. The presence of women as leaders in these committees not only amplifies their voices but also allows them to shape and influence the legislative agenda. Leadership positions within these committees further validate the roles of women parliamentarians in politics and public policy.

However, the reality may not always reflect this ideal scenario. Historically, societal norms and a predominantly patriarchal political structure have often limited the representation of women in leadership positions in Kenya. Despite legislative measures like the two-thirds gender rule proposed in the Kenyan Constitution to promote gender balance in political representation, the implementation has been challenging, including within parliamentary committees. Nonetheless, there are encouraging signs of progress. The number of women leading parliamentary committees in Kenya has been gradually increasing, suggesting a growing acceptance and recognition of women's leadership roles. This change is a testament to the relentless efforts of women's rights advocates and progressive legislative and policy reforms.

“Through caucusing and putting our efforts together, we as women parliamentarians have always demanded that we get our fair share of committee leadership in the house. Things have improved compared to what existed in the 10th parliament. The 12th parliament is even better in comparative sense and we hope that it will get better” (3rd term member of National Assembly).

4.6.2 Gender Composition of Parliamentary Committees

The gender composition of parliamentary committees in Kenya is a crucial factor in gauging the inclusivity level within the policy-making process. A balance in this composition is pivotal as it ensures a rich diversity of perspectives, thereby enhancing the quality of policy discussions and decisions. It fosters an environment conducive to giving due attention to issues concerning women and marginalized groups. However, achieving this balance has proved to be a formidable challenge. Despite Kenya's concerted efforts in advancing gender inclusivity in political domains, the representation of women in parliamentary committees continues to lag.

The root causes of this underrepresentation are complex and multifaceted, with societal and cultural norms, structural barriers, and the prevailing political environment all playing significant roles in inhibiting women's comprehensive participation in political leadership.

However, in the face of these obstacles, there have been unrelenting efforts to enhance the situation. Policies and laws, notably the two-thirds gender rule, have been put into effect with the aim of amplifying the number of women not only in parliament but also within parliamentary committees. Furthermore, the Kenyan government has received substantial support from civil society organizations and international bodies, all collectively championing the cause of augmenting women's participation in these pivotal decision-making platforms.

One Member of Parliament opined thus:

“One of the biggest obstacles to equal inclusion in crucial committees is the cultural and normative concerns. Sometimes, the men in parliament feel that certain roles cannot be fully accomplished by women. We find ourselves relegated to the peripheries and not allowed to head committees” (2nd term member of the National Assembly).

There have been collective initiatives that are slowly yet steadily chipping away at the barriers that have historically obstructed women from achieving their full potential in political leadership roles. Despite the challenges, these initiatives are vital for promoting gender inclusivity, as they not only enhance the quality of policy discussions but also ensure that the voices of women and marginalized groups are heard and their needs are adequately addressed.

4.6.3 Women's Input in Committee Work

The presence and contribution of women within the Kenyan Parliament, particularly within committee work, are vital for achieving a holistic and comprehensive policy-making process. While strides have been made in improving the representation of women in the Kenyan parliament, the numbers continue to lag behind the constitutional mandate, known as the two-thirds gender rule. It's worth noting, however, that the effectiveness of women's contributions

is not exclusively a matter of their numbers, but also hinges significantly on the quality of their inputs and the esteem in which these contributions are held. A myriad of influences come into play here, including societal attitudes, the dynamics of the political landscape, and the degree of backing women parliamentarians receive in their parliamentary environments.

On the other side of this equation, we must consider empowerment in a broader sense that goes beyond merely boosting representation numbers. It is critical that women parliamentarians are armed with the right tools, resources, and skill sets enabling them to fully engage and leave an impact on committee work. More than that, there is an urgent call for robust political will and commitment to ensure women's voices not only reverberate within the committee chambers, but that their ideas and perspectives are integrated into the decisions and recommendations that stem from these committees. The members noted that they have to ensure that they are not just there in numbers but are trained to fully engage.

“The trainings by several actors among them NDI, Civil Society as well as capacity building by KEWOPA has enabled women members of parliament to have the courage and the knowledge to participate fully in the committees in parliament as well as debate effectively. The quality of our contributions has not only improved but has enabled our male counterparts to respect our perspectives” (2nd term member of the National Assembly).

Implementing effective mechanisms to amplify women's voices and safeguarding their perspectives within the committee's decisions is essential. By doing so, we underscore the value of women's contributions to the political sphere, fostering an environment that cultivates gender inclusivity and facilitates policy-making.

4.6.4 Measures to Ensure Women's Leadership in Committees

“There have been several measures including the recent bill that opens doors for women’s participation and leadership of parliamentary committees. This is a welcome move which will hopefully enhance inclusivity” (Chair KEWOPA).

In many parliaments around the globe, measures have been enacted to encourage and secure leadership roles for women in parliamentary committees. Kenya has been actively engaged in similar endeavours, with the government instituting a number of measures - both formal and

informal - designed to amplify women's participation in political leadership roles. One notable example is the Constitution of Kenya Amendment Bill 2020, which advanced proposed amendments aimed at ensuring compliance with the two-thirds gender rule in both appointive and elective positions. If fully enacted, these provisions could significantly enhance the likelihood of women securing leadership positions within parliamentary committees.

However, the journey towards achieving gender balance in political leadership isn't entirely paved by formal measures. These legislative strides need to be complemented by a range of informal practices that support and cultivate women's leadership skills. Initiatives such as mentoring programs and capacity-building opportunities for women parliamentarians are instrumental in equipping women with the necessary knowledge and competencies to assume and excel in leadership roles. Such measures not only elevate women's participation but also contribute towards establishing an inclusive political climate where women's leadership is recognized, fostered, and celebrated.

4.6.5 Effectiveness of Women's Leadership in Oversight Mandates

“The oversight roles can only be effectively provided with training and capacity building that enables honourable members to execute their mandate. The recent development has shown that women can be better leaders in the committees given their leadership style and ability to transform conflict” (Clerk of the National Assembly).

The effectiveness of women's leadership in parliamentary committees extends beyond representation; it has a profound impact on how women parliamentarians execute their oversight mandates in Kenya. Women leaders possess the capacity to guide committees towards a greater focus on issues that bear heavily on women and other marginalized societal groups. By bringing a distinct, often overlooked perspective to these discussions, they ensure that the parliament's oversight function is applied with an all-important gender lens. Nevertheless, it's important to recognize that for women to truly excel in these leadership roles, they need considerable support from their committee colleagues as well as the broader political

community. This involves an atmosphere of respect for their leadership, the provision of adequate resources to fulfil their responsibilities, and the creation of an environment that actively works against gender-based discrimination and bias.

However, the path to effective leadership for women is not devoid of challenges. Women leaders often find themselves having to establish their competence within the context of a predominantly male political environment. To surmount this, they must be fully equipped with the knowledge and skills needed to effectively carry out their oversight duties. This accentuates the urgency for ongoing training, mentorship, and capacity-building programs for women assuming leadership roles. These programs help in fostering a resilient cadre of women leaders who can not only navigate but also reshape the political landscape, making it more conducive for future women leaders in Kenya and beyond.

Chapter 5.0 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the findings in relation to the study objectives which were to examine the role of women parliamentary caucuses in enhancing their participation and delivery of their mandate; to establish the influence of access to affirmative action funds in performance of women parliamentarians' duties and to examine the role of women's leadership in parliamentary committees in performance of women parliamentarians' duties. The chapter covers discussions, conclusions and recommendations for policy.

5.2 Discussion

5.2.1 Role of Women Parliamentary Caucuses

The Kenya Women Parliamentary Association (KEWOPA) provides a crucial, strategic platform for women parliamentarians to collectively address gender and equality matters, transcending traditional party lines. The collective strength of this platform amplifies their influence, pushing for gender-responsive legislation and policies. This finding echoes that of Panagopoulos (2019) who observed that unity enables women parliamentarians to advance issues beyond party affiliation. Moreover, KEWOPA nurtures an environment of capacity building, peer mentorship, and support, empowering these women with the skills and resilience needed to navigate a traditionally male-dominated political landscape as noted by Zaka (2012). Participation in KEWOPA boosts visibility and recognition for women parliamentarians, fostering broader support for their initiatives and campaigns. Further, KEWOPA also operates as a networking platform, connecting women parliamentarians with influential figures and organizations in the political and socio-economic realms. This vast network opens doors to resources and partnerships, enhancing their ability to champion women's rights and gender equality effectively. This enables them to handle issues affecting the women constituents as

earlier observed by Shah (2009).

KEWOPA plays an integral role in supporting women parliamentarians in Kenya to effectively fulfil their parliamentary duties. The organization offers valuable resources and training in leadership, policy development, and public speaking, empowering its members with the skills necessary to advocate for gender-related issues and represent their constituents effectively. As a networking hub, KEWOPA creates opportunities for strategic partnerships with various stakeholders, including civil society organizations and international donors. This network expansion helps women parliamentarians amplify their political influence and advocate for policy agendas more successfully. Moreover, the mentorship culture within KEWOPA allows more experienced members to guide newcomers, providing invaluable insights to navigate the often-complex political landscape.

Women parliamentary caucuses in Kenya, like KEWOPA, primarily concentrate on advocating for gender equality and women's rights. Their efforts span across a broad spectrum of issues, including legislative advocacy for gender-responsive laws and policies, fostering women's political participation through training and mentorship, promoting socio-economic empowerment by advocating for equal access to resources and opportunities, fighting against gender-based violence through policy advocacy and support services for survivors, and championing access to quality education and healthcare for women and girls. They also put a significant emphasis on economic independence as a key driver of gender equality and lobby for increased budget allocation for gender-related issues.

Women parliamentary caucuses like KEWOPA have been highly effective in enhancing the performance of women parliamentarians' legislative duties and bridging gender gaps in political representation. They have significantly influenced policy and legislative changes, notably in enacting gender-sensitive legislation such as the Matrimonial Property Act of 2013

and the Protection against Domestic Violence Act 2015. Through capacity-building initiatives, they've empowered women MPs with essential skills, resulting in more active participation in parliamentary debates and policy decisions. KEWOPA has also made strides in enhancing women's political participation, campaigning for the implementation of the two-thirds gender principle, and providing mentorship programs. They've been relentless in fighting GBV and advocating for women's socio-economic empowerment, ensuring policies enhance women's access to resources and equal opportunities. Additionally, KEWOPA's participation in international forums has enabled them to champion bills and motions aligned with international standards on gender equality and women's rights.

KEWOPA stands unique as the only cross-party women parliamentary caucus in the Kenyan Parliament, effectively bridging party lines to promote gender equality. By consolidating support from women parliamentarians of various political affiliations, KEWOPA has successfully passed numerous gender-responsive laws and amendments. Their non-partisan nature has fostered substantive discussions on women's issues, resulting in faster consensus-building and less politicized decision-making processes. KEWOPA has been adept at lobbying support from male parliamentarians and key political figures across the spectrum of parties by educating them on the importance of gender-responsive legislation. Their strength in numbers and unity has amplified their influence within parliament, facilitating cross-party support for their proposals. KEWOPA also prioritizes capacity building initiatives for women MPs, bolstering their collective influence and ability to secure political backing across partisan divides. Their effectiveness is further enhanced by strategic alliances with civil society organizations, which widens their support base, providing resources, expertise, and grassroots connections to augment their lobbying efforts. Generally, the findings agrees with IPU (2013) on the importance of women caucuses and their place in enhancing legislative agenda.

5.2.2 Influence of Access to Affirmative Action Funds

Affirmative action funds like the National Government Affirmative Action Fund (NGAAF) have the potential to significantly enhance the effectiveness of women parliamentarians in their representation, legislative, and oversight roles. However, their effectiveness hinges on several factors, including fund size, funding process transparency and integrity, leadership quality of the women parliamentarians, the prevailing political environment, and public awareness of the funds. In terms of representation, the study found that these funds empower women parliamentarians to better represent their constituents. The financial independence gained from these funds allows women parliamentarians to have a stronger community voice, enabling them to better understand and advocate for the needs of their constituents, particularly women and other marginalized groups. Additionally, these funds support women's empowerment initiatives, fostering an environment conducive to increased female political and societal representation. As noted by Casas-Zamara and Falguera (2016), the resources eliminates certain hindrances to political participation.

Affirmative action funds also enhance women parliamentarians' legislative capabilities by facilitating their access to training and development programs. This expanded knowledge base and skill set allows them to better navigate complex legislative issues, and champion the rights and interests of women and other marginalized groups. The study also confirmed the funds' effectiveness in strengthening women parliamentarians' oversight roles. The financial resources enable exhaustive investigations, audits, and other oversight activities, ensuring government transparency, accountability, and adherence to laws and policies. For example, the funds can be used to hire expert consultants or finance extensive field visits, providing firsthand information on government projects. Thus, affirmative action funds not only lead to a more responsible and accountable government, but they also promote a system of checks and balances, crucial to a healthy democracy. This is reflected in the findings by Bouka et al. (2019)

who observed that affirmative action has alleviated some risks associated with electoral campaigns.

Women parliamentary caucuses like KEWOPA have been instrumental in enhancing the performance of women parliamentarians in their legislative duties, bridging gender gaps in political representation, influencing policy and legislative changes, and advancing gender equality. These caucuses have made significant strides in championing women's rights and interests through strategies such as capacity building, inter-parliamentary networking, advocacy, and mentorship. KEWOPA, in particular, has improved the enactment and amendment of gender-sensitive legislation in Kenya, a prominent example being the enactment of the Matrimonial Property Act of 2013. Further, KEWOPA's capacity-building initiatives have bolstered the performance of women parliamentarians, equipping them with knowledge and skills on legislative procedures, policy formulation, and public speaking, resulting in increased participation and influence in parliamentary debates. The findings are in line with previous research among them NDI (2015) that noted the importance of affirmative action funds in ensuring quarters and alleviating financial precariousness as well as Sidhu and Meena (2007) who noted the support the initiatives accord to women politicians.

In addition, KEWOPA has significantly enhanced women's political participation and representation through tireless campaigning for the implementation of the two-thirds gender principle as stipulated in the Kenyan constitution. Despite not being fully achieved, notable progress is evidenced by the increased number of women MPs in recent parliaments. KEWOPA's effectiveness extends to their relentless fight against gender-based violence (GBV), advocating for stronger laws and policies, with the enactment of the Protection against Domestic Violence Act 2015 as a notable success. The caucus has also fostered inter-parliamentary relationships within Kenya and beyond, leading to more informed decision-making and policy advocacy. Lastly, KEWOPA's advocacy for women's socio-economic

empowerment, including pushing for policies enhancing women's access to resources like credit facilities and land, has resulted in increased opportunities for women in employment and business. This is exemplified in previous literature by Ballington et al. (2011) who amplified the importance of networking necessary in overcoming the gendered nature of electoral politics in Kenya as earlier observed by Kayini and Muriaas (2014) and IIDEA (2017).

5.2.3 Role of Women's Leadership in Parliamentary Committees

Leadership roles of women in parliamentary group committees are significant in the Kenyan political landscape. Taflaga and Dowding (nd) had noted that committees are important stepping stones for women's leadership. These committees are powerful platforms, where major decisions, discussions, and negotiations take place. A stronger representation of women in these committees is essential for effective legislation that protects and promotes the interests of women. However, societal norms and a historically patriarchal political structure have often been a barrier to women's representation. While implementation of legislative measures such as the two-thirds gender rule, which aims to promote gender balance, has been challenging, the gradual increase in the number of women leading parliamentary committees is an encouraging sign. This progress reflects the relentless advocacy of women's rights advocates and the effect of progressive legislative and policy reforms. The findings tally with IPU (2006) that observes that the process ensures the respect for women's rights and takes cures the underrepresentation of women in decision making process (Grillos, 2018).

A balanced gender composition in parliamentary committees is a pivotal indicator of inclusivity within the policy-making process. The representation of women in these committees is still limited, despite concerted efforts to advance gender inclusivity. The reasons behind this underrepresentation are multifaceted, encompassing societal and cultural norms, structural barriers, and the prevailing political environment. It is noted that the proportionality of crucial

parliamentary committee chairs is predicated on the number of women members of parliament (Wilson, 2017). Nevertheless, relentless efforts have been made to counter these challenges. Policies and laws, notably the two-thirds gender rule, have been implemented to increase the number of women within parliamentary committees. Furthermore, support from civil society organizations and international bodies has been crucial in the fight for greater representation of women in these decision-making platforms as observed by Xiaoxian (2010) on the importance of grassroots activism.

The effectiveness of women's participation in parliamentary committees goes beyond numerical representation. It depends significantly on the quality of their inputs and the regard accorded to these contributions within the political discourse. It is crucial that women parliamentarians are equipped with the right tools, resources, and skills to engage fully and make a substantial impact in committee work. Additionally, there needs to be a robust political commitment to ensure that women's voices are integrated into decisions and recommendations that emerge from these committees. Effective mechanisms that amplify women's voices and protect their perspectives within the committee's decisions are vital in fostering an environment that encourages gender inclusivity and truly representative policymaking. This has led to tangible gains cross ethnic party lines (Cammisar and Reingold, 2004; Rosenthal, 2001 and Chinkin, 2003).

Many measures, both formal and informal, have been implemented in Kenya to encourage women's leadership in parliamentary committees. These include legislative actions such as the Constitution of Kenya Amendment Bill 2020, which proposes amendments to ensure compliance with the two-thirds gender rule in both appointive and elective positions. Alongside these formal measures, there are several informal practices that aim to support women's leadership skills, such as mentoring programs and capacity-building opportunities for women parliamentarians. These measures are integral in establishing an inclusive political climate

where women's leadership is recognized, nurtured, and celebrated.

The effectiveness of women's leadership in parliamentary committees significantly influences how women parliamentarians execute their oversight mandates. Women leaders have the ability to steer discussions towards issues that significantly impact women and other marginalized societal groups. However, for women to effectively serve in these leadership roles, they need comprehensive support from their committee colleagues and the broader political community. This involves cultivating an atmosphere of respect for women's leadership, providing them with adequate resources, and actively fighting against gender-based discrimination and bias. Despite the challenges, ongoing training, mentorship, and capacity-building programs are helping in fostering a resilient cadre of women leaders who can reshape the political landscape to be more conducive for future women leaders.

Overall, the findings indicate that togetherness tackles political marginalization (Castillego, 2009), tackles issues of stereotypical sexist and ethnical remarks (Mzalendo, 2020) and underscores the advantages of the constitution in enhancing women's leadership (Nath, 2013). It further agrees with the findings of Beaman et al. (2007) that concludes that there will be higher standards of living and engagement if women are empowered.

5.3 Conclusion

The role of women parliamentary caucuses, represented by the Kenya Women Parliamentary Association (KEWOPA), is instrumental in enhancing the participation and mandate delivery of women parliamentarians in Kenya. KEWOPA creates a unified platform for collective action on gender and equality matters, transcending party lines and promoting gender-responsive legislation. The emphasis on capacity building and mentorship equips these women to navigate the predominantly male-dominated political landscape while improving visibility and recognition for their initiatives. Moreover, KEWOPA serves as a conduit for resource

mobilization and strategic partnerships, thereby amplifying the political influence of women parliamentarians and bolstering their advocacy efforts. Additionally, it acts as a vibrant networking hub, bridging gaps between parliamentarians and influential stakeholders. KEWOPA's success lies in its relentless advocacy for gender-sensitive legislation, its provision of robust support services, and its efforts to foster economic independence and equal access to resources for women. Notably, their non-partisan approach has facilitated substantive, less politicized discussions on women's issues, leading to swift consensus-building and successful passage of numerous gender-responsive laws and amendments. By aligning with international standards on gender equality and women's rights, KEWOPA has been able to champion bills and motions effectively, contributing to a more balanced and inclusive political environment in Kenya.

Access to affirmative action funds, such as the National Government Affirmative Action Fund (NGAAF), is a significant driver in the performance of women parliamentarians' duties, particularly in the areas of representation, legislation, and oversight. These funds create a stronger platform for representation by providing financial independence, empowering women parliamentarians to voice their constituents' needs more assertively and support initiatives for women's empowerment. Through the provision of resources for training and development, affirmative action funds boost the legislative capabilities of these parliamentarians, thereby enhancing their understanding of intricate legislative matters and advocacy for marginalized groups. Similarly, the funds significantly bolster their oversight roles by enabling more comprehensive investigations, audits, and other activities critical for government transparency, accountability, and adherence to laws. Organizations like KEWOPA have capitalized on these funds to facilitate women parliamentarians' performances and bridge gender representation gaps, exemplified by policy influences such as the Matrimonial Property Act of 2013 and the Protection against Domestic Violence Act 2015. Despite the inherent challenges, including the

need for more transparent fund management and more substantial public awareness, the access to affirmative action funds has been pivotal in promoting women's political participation and representation, pushing for gender equality, and combating gender-based violence, ultimately leading to a more balanced and inclusive political environment in Kenya.

The role of women's leadership in parliamentary committees plays a substantial part in the performance of women parliamentarians' duties in Kenya. Despite facing societal norms and entrenched patriarchal political structures, the increasing presence of women leading these committees demonstrates resilience and the effectiveness of legislative reforms, such as the two-thirds gender rule. While efforts to increase gender balance continue, representation remains below optimal levels due to persistent societal, cultural, and structural barriers. The influence of women in these committees is not merely about numbers; it lies in the quality of their contributions and the importance attached to their inputs in political discourse. It's imperative that women parliamentarians receive the necessary tools, resources, and skills for robust engagement and that there's an enduring political commitment to integrating women's perspectives in decisions. Measures, both formal and informal, such as the Constitution of Kenya Amendment Bill 2020 and mentorship programs, have been introduced to nurture women's leadership. Women's leadership in parliamentary committees plays a significant role in shaping discussions on issues affecting women and marginalized groups, enhancing their ability to fulfil their oversight roles. However, achieving effective leadership requires an environment that respects women's leadership, provides sufficient resources, and combats gender-based discrimination and bias. Thus, continued focus on mentorship and capacity-building initiatives is critical to nurturing resilient women leaders who can shape an inclusive political landscape.

5.4 Recommendations

Based on the study findings, this study wishes to make the below policy recommendations that seek to solidify the role of women in Kenya's political landscape by strengthening KEWOPA, enhancing the impact of affirmative action funds, and supporting women's leadership in parliamentary committees.

Strengthening KEWOPA's Role: There is a need for policy initiatives to strengthen KEWOPA's position and influence within the parliamentary system. This could include providing more resources for capacity-building, mentorship programs, and promoting strategic partnerships. Further, legislative reforms should aim to institutionalize KEWOPA's role, ensuring its non-partisan approach to gender issues is maintained and reinforced. Policy should also enhance KEWOPA's ability to mobilize resources and facilitate international cooperation.

Enhancing Access to Affirmative Action Funds: Policies should ensure affirmative action funds like the NGAAF are easily accessible to women parliamentarians. A transparent and accountable process for fund allocation should be established, with more robust mechanisms for fund oversight to prevent misuse. Policies should also support public awareness campaigns on the existence and purpose of these funds. These reforms would improve the overall effectiveness of these funds in promoting gender equity.

Encouraging Women's Leadership in Parliamentary Committees: There is a need for policy reforms that eliminate barriers to women's representation in parliamentary committees, such as revisiting and reinforcing the two-thirds gender rule. Policies should also aim to create a conducive environment for women's leadership, for instance, by combating gender-based discrimination and promoting respect for women's contributions. A robust system for providing resources, tools, and skills to women parliamentarians should be developed, alongside a commitment to integrate women's perspectives in committee decisions.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Research Questionnaire

Introduction and Consent

Dear Participant,

My name is Philomena Chenangat. I am a student at the Institute of Anthropology, Gender and African Studies, University of Nairobi. I am doing this research as part of my academic studies towards the attainment of Masters degree in Gender and Development. I would like to invite you to participate in the research. **The topic of study is “Coping Strategies Adopted by Kenyan Women Parliamentarians in Performance of their Parliamentary Duties”.**

You have been invited to participate given your position as a parliamentarian or a leader in Kenya. The study aims to explore how, despite the challenges that women face in the political arena in this country, women MPs have managed to perform their duties successfully, and any examples you can give of successful strategies and initiatives. The collected information was used to write a report for which is expected to be of significance to various actors including policy makers in Kenya and beyond and will also be used in published academic articles as well as in academic presentations. Your individual privacy and confidentiality of the information you provide was maintained in all publications emanating from this undertaking. Your identity will not be revealed and any information that could easily identify you was anonymized. All the information you provide was secure and no one will have access to it at all apart from the research team and the information was under lock and key in my custody.

Participation consent:

Participant signature: _____ Date: _____

Section A: Background Information

1. Age of the informant (in complete years)
2. Marital status
 - Married []
 - Single []
 - Divorced/separated []
 - Widowed []
 - Other (Please specify): _____
3. What is your highest level of education attained?
 - Primary school only []
 - Secondary school only []
 - University/college []
 - Post-graduate university degree []
4. Are you a first-time parliamentarian?
 - Yes []
 - No []
5. How many terms have you served in the parliament?
 - One []
 - Two []
 - More than two []
6. Which of the following mode of obtaining seat applies to you?
 - Elected constituency MP []
 - Elected senator []
 - Nominated constituency MP []
 - Nominated senator []
 - Elected county women representative []
7. Which political party/coalition do you belong to?
 - Jubilee []
 - NASA []
 - Amani []
 - ANC []
 - KANU []
 - Mandeleo Chap Chap []

Independent candidate []

Other (Please specify) [] _____

8. Does your political party/coalition have any special measures to promote the presence and performance of women parliamentarians?

Yes []

No []

Please explain your answer briefly.

The answer to the above question requires further explanation. This is important in the research.

Section B: Women Parliamentary Caucuses and Performance of Women

Parliamentarians' Duties

9. In your view, why do you women in caucus under KEWOPA? (Probe as per the role)
10. Would you say that KEWOPA has helped you realise your mandate as a member of parliament? (Probe across reasons stated)
11. What is the nature of issues that the women parliamentary caucuses mostly focus on?
12. How effective are women parliamentary caucuses like Kenya Women Parliamentary Association (KEWOPA) effective in enhancing performance of women parliamentarians' legislative duties?
13. How effective are women parliamentary caucuses like Kenya Women Parliamentary Association (KEWOPA) effective in enhancing performance women parliamentarians' oversight duties?
14. How effective are women parliamentary caucuses like Kenya Women Parliamentary Association (KEWOPA) effective in enhancing performance women parliamentarians' representation duties?
15. Besides KEWOPA, are there other cross-party women parliamentary caucuses in the Kenyan parliament? How effective have the other cross-party women parliamentary caucuses been in gaining political support across party/partisan lines?

Section C: Access to Affirmative Action Funds and Performance of Women

Parliamentarians' Duties

16. Does national treasury/commission for budget allocation budget contain any affirmative action funds for women parliamentarians to access in order to facilitate performance of their official duties?
17. How effective are/would such affirmative action funds be in the performance of women parliamentarians' representation mandates?
18. How effective are/would such affirmative action funds be in the performance of women parliamentarians' legislative mandates?
19. How effective are/would such affirmative action funds be in the performance of women parliamentarians' oversight mandates?

Section D: Women's Leadership in Parliamentary Committees and Performance of Women Parliamentarians' Duties

20. Do you lead any parliamentary group committee?
21. What is the gender composition of parliamentary committees?
22. Do you consider that the number of women in parliament is sufficient to ensure their input into committee work?
23. Are there any special measures instituted by parliament, whether formally or informally, to ensure women serve as chairpersons or deputy chairpersons of parliamentary committees?
24. How effective is women's leadership of committees in the performance of women parliamentarians' oversight mandates?

Appendix 2: Key Informant Interview Guide

Section A: Background Information

Dear Interviewee,

My name is Philomena Chenangat. I am a student in the Institute Of Anthropology, Gender and African Studies, at the University of Nairobi. I am doing this research study as part of my academic studies towards attainment of Masters in Gender and Development. I would like to invite you to participate in a research study about **Coping Strategies Adopted by Kenyan Women Parliamentarians in Performance of their Parliamentary Duties**. You have been invited to participate given your position as parliamentarian in Kenya. The study aims to explore how, despite the challenges that women face in the political arena in this country, women MPs manage to perform their duties successfully, and any examples you can give of successful strategies and initiatives. The collected information was used to write a report for which is expected to be of significance to various actors including policy makers in Kenya and beyond and will also be used in published academic articles as well as in academic presentations. Your individual privacy and confidentiality of the information you provide was maintained in all published and written data analysis resulting from the study. The data collected for this project was kept securely. Research records was monitored and may be audited without violating confidentiality.

Participation consent:

Participant signature: _____ Date: _____

1. Do political parties/coalitions have any special measures to promote the presence and performance of women parliamentarians?
2. Please comment on the experience of female candidate parliamentarians with regard to challenges affecting performance of their duties once they are substantially in office.
3. 'How effective would you say women parliamentary caucuses are in the performance of women parliamentarians' duties?
4. In your experience, what are the main challenges women parliamentarians encounter in accessing funds needed to successfully carry out their duties?
5. How effective and important are/would affirmative action funds for women

parliamentarians be in the performance of their duties?

6. Are there any examples of innovative ways of fundraising used by women parliamentarians in order to facilitate the performance of their official duties?
7. What measures can governments establish to financially support women parliamentarians? And how can these be effectively enforced?
8. Should the leadership of parliamentary committees be gender balanced (even to the point of appointing a man and a woman as co-chairs in each committee)? Or do you believe that this would increase men's animosity towards women's participation? How would you address this?
9. Do you agree that affirmative action measures are needed to change women's leadership roles in parliamentary committees?
10. Please describe any other good practices from parliament that's ensuring effective operations and outputs of women parliamentarians.

Appendix 3: NACOSTI Permit


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