

***Gender Relations and its Implication in Rural
Development: A Case Study of Mwingi Central
Division, Kenya. "***

By

UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI
EAST AFRICANA COLLECTION

Ezekiel Mbitha Mwenzwa

**A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the award of the degree of Master of Arts (Sociology),
University of Nairobi.**

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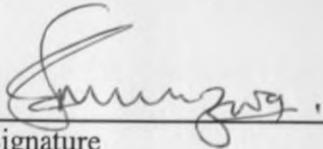


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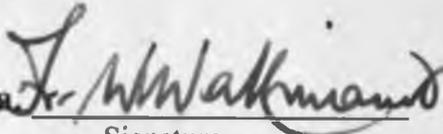
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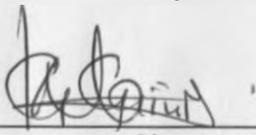
Declaration.

This thesis is my original work and has not been presented for the award of a degree in any other university.

Ezekiel Mbitha Mwenzwa.  09/09/2004.
Signature date

This thesis has been submitted for examination with our approval as university supervisors.

1.Fr. Dr. D. W. Wamugunda  9/9/2004
Signature Date

2.Dr. G. G. Wairire.  9/9/04
Signature Date

Dedication.

To my parents Mwenzwa Mbitha Mwola and Mwikali Katwei Mwaniki for their resolve not to spare the rod, for they would have spoiled their last born, Ezekiel Mbitha Mwenzwa.

To my dear wife Lydia, for her patience and prayer, during the writing of this thesis.

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The production of this work though remains the responsibility of the researcher.

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List of Acronyms.

KEPI	Kenya Expanded Programme on Immunization
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
CBO	Community-Based Organization
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
KWFT	Kenya Women Finance Trust
SACCOs	Saving And Credit Co-operative Societies
MFI	Micro-Finance Institutions
GoK	Government of the Republic of Kenya
MDDP	Mwingi District Development Plan
CD	Community Development
GTZ	Germany Technical Co-operation
UNCEDAW	United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women
ASAL	Arid and Semi-Arid Land
KPHC	Kenya Population and Housing Census
FGDs	Focused Group Discussions
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
CHRCE	Center for Human Rights and Civic Education

Abstract.

In every human society, gender relations are an integral part of everyday life. In Kenya, they are crucial in rural development particularly when it is observed from a human development perspective. Based on the foregoing, the study set out to explore the prevailing gender relations and their implication for rural development in Mwingi Central Division, Mwingi District, Kenya. The objectives of the study were: to determine the effect of an individual's decision-making capacity on personal access to community resources; to find out the nature of conjugal property ownership and its relationship to individual empowerment; and to investigate the interaction between gender-based division of labor and individual participation in development activities. Three theoretical frameworks guided the study.

In terms of methodology, the study employed triangulation method of social investigation. In particular the study used three techniques of data collection: survey, key informant interviews and focused group discussions that yielded both qualitative and quantitative data. The quantitative data was analyzed using the computer package SPSS while the qualitative was analyzed manually. Various sampling techniques were used: purposive for the administrative district, division and location; and simple random for the sub locations, villages and households. The study interviewed 130 respondents, 6 key informants and undertook 3 focused group discussions.

The study found: glaring gender disparities in favor of men with regard to literacy income, property ownership and decision-making; and various roadblocks with regard to

access to and use of productive community resources particularly for women safe for credit facilities and immunization services, the latter especially for their children. From these findings, the study concludes that: human development cannot be at par gender wise without a policy shift in the existing gender relations; low levels of income and literacy are as a result of a myriad of roadblocks with regard to accessing productive community resources; and that generally development is set to remain low in the absence of the recommended remedies.

Based on the findings and conclusions, two-fold recommendations have been put forward. With regard to policy change, it is recommended that: comprehensive civic education should be undertaken especially through community organization and action to bring about community consciousness; role of micro-credit services should be emphasized and promoted at the grass root level; and that locally available resources should be harnessed to uplift the local people's living standards. With regard to future research, studies with the following foci have been recommended: on areas of rural development other than human development; rural development determinants other than gender relations; on urban development; and those on specific social stratum.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background

Since time immemorial, there has been an imbalance in gender relations between men and women largely to the advantage of the former. The imbalances which exist in socio-cultural, economic and political spheres are especially more pronounced in terms of property ownership, decision-making and the way tasks, be it at household or community level are assigned according to individual gender identity.

Evidence shows that, women on a global scale have economically been marginalized. In this regard, Kibwana and Mute (2000) and Peet and Hartwick (1999) concur that, women represent 50% or more of the world population and put in 65% of the working hours. However, they receive less than 10% of world's salaries and own less than 1% of world's real estate. Ritzer (1992) emphasizes this scenario when he posits that, the roles of women have historically been different, less privileged and subordinate to those of men. This significantly limits their participation and thus contribution in development. Such has connotations for low levels of development in an area where imbalanced gender relations exist.

The aforementioned scenario is especially fuelled by age-old gender based stereotypes abounding in the whole world and more pronounced in African societies. This makes participation of women quite marginal in areas such as decision-making, property ownership and participation in development activities. This leaves them much more disadvantaged

economically and socially not only in terms of their own welfare but also that of their families and communities in which they live. In this regard, Njeru (1998) says such imbalances imply a relative deprivation in terms of reduced opportunities to enhance their economic empowerment and reduce their vulnerability to poverty. In property ownership, men have eclipsed women especially when ownership is defined to mean and include the right and authority to use and dispose as well. Infact, in communities where wife inheritance is practiced, women become part of the property to be inherited (Njeru, 1998).

Moreover, the nagging problem in Kenya when it comes to family property relations concerns what Kibwana (1993) sees as the legal principle that domestic work does not constitute a contribution to acquisition of family property. According to Kibwana, the law is silent in this regard. This implies that a white-collar paid husband and his farm/domestic toiling wife cannot lay claim on conjugal property on an equal footing. This leaves the woman disadvantaged economically on the onset of divorce. An example is Kibwana and Mute's (2000) report of a case in which, after a Kenyan court found no evidence of any bride price having been paid, ruled in favor of a man, to dismiss his wife and six children. This was despite the couple having lived together for 12 years during which the children were born. There was absolutely no relief for both the woman and her six children. Based on the above, there is need for legislative change to safeguard individuals from unnecessary suffering in case of such an eventuality.

On the socio-cultural sphere, men dominate women; and equality especially in Africa, is deemed culture-destructive. In this regard, Nzomo (1997) posits that only a few men in

Kenya have ever willingly foregone their privileged positions that they have historically enjoyed as authoritative decision-makers in private and public spheres. Perhaps this is why in domestic and off-farm labor participation, women do the most tedious, boring and low status tasks while the work of men remain supervisory. Boserup (1970) for example reports that, the work of men in the farm is sometimes limited to simply being in the farm to supervise the work of women. This corroborates Kabira et al (2001) who opine that men have always had, more than their fair share while women make do with leftovers of the national cake.

According to Shivastrava (1996), a marital union gives a socio-religious legal license between a man and woman so united and binds the couple with the responsibility of rearing children. However, Sticher et al (1988) found that, the rearing and daily care of psychological and physical needs of a child are left to the woman. Such denies women considerable time to engage in off-farm enterprises, and therefore significantly limiting their direct efforts towards rural development.

Politically, few women have risen to prominence at the global level. In this regard, Sivard (1985) reports that, globally women in national legislatures and executive cabinets comprised 10% and 7% respectively in 1984. In Africa, women in national legislatures and executive cabinets comprised 6% and 7% respectively in 1984. It was actually worse in Kenya where the percentages were 2% and 0% respectively in the same year.

As at 2000 in Kenya, there were 9 women legislators (4%) out of 222 and 300 female (8.1%) compared to 3392 (91.9%) male councilors. There was only one woman assistant minister and no minister as at 2000 (Daily Nation, 08/03/01). With such kind of under representation in key areas of decision-making, women are prevented from formulating both home and work friendly policies.

Among the Kamba community, men have generally been the principal decision-makers and it is only in rare occasions that women were consulted such as in childbirth and midwife related matters. Men, on the other hand, had and still have a wide range of responsibilities and key issues in which to make significant decisions. Ndeti (1972) stresses that,

Mutumia (male elder) as the head of the family and clan, was consulted on matters of morality, legalism and played an important role in deciding who should marry whom, when and how.

(ibid.1972:90).

From the foregoing, it can rightly be inferred that women have historically been kept out of decision-making process, a scenario that no doubt leaves them only with the option of approaching life from a situation of disadvantage. It is perhaps due to such state of affairs that, Gakuru (1998, 2002) says saving and credit groups have become very popular mainly among women as opposed to men. This shields them against vulnerability to poverty. This however as will be shown later, has had little impact on the lives of women. This is because; such credit groups provide income hardly enough to go beyond subsistence provisions. In addition, men as either husbands or fathers appropriate most of this income.

The above suggests that while gender relations have received attention among different scholars (Ndeti, 1972; Boserup, 1970,1989; Ndengu, 1995; Bahemuka et al, 1998; Peet, and Hartwick1999; Kibwana, 1992,1993,2000), studies on the implications of such on rural development in Kenya and Mwingi in particular are lacking. It is against this background knowledge that this study has attempted to explore the existing gender relations and their implications for development in rural areas. Specifically, men and women contributory potentials towards family and societal material welfare have been evaluated. The extent to which such potentialities have been constrained or promoted by the existing gender relations are discussed later.

1.2.Problem Statement.

The United Nations Development Programme (2002) puts it that, gender relations are an important factor in human development. This is because, gender-based discrimination, which impedes women access to property ownership, and employment opportunities stem from gender relations. These have immensely contributed to their low status and lack of empowerment. This necessarily means a lower level of human and overall development.

According to Kibwana and Mute (2000) and Peet and Hartwick (1999), women are the global majority and specifically form nearly two thirds of Third World rural populations. While amplifying the same argument the UNDP (1999) puts it that, more than three quarters of the poor live in rural Kenya and women happen to be the larger majority among them. It would therefore be impossible to talk about rural development without alluding to their role

and that of men. The latter according to Nelson (1981) are a neglected and often underutilized minority. However, despite forming a significant majority in rural areas, Arungu-Olende (1984) says, women continue to suffer material neglect and underutilization of their skills especially those to do with off-farm enterprises. They hence face problems, which are not only immediate, but also many. Such problems pose a persistent threat not only to their own survival and welfare, but also that of their families and societies in which they live. This significantly curtails their contribution to rural development initiatives and therefore alluding to a lower level of human development that necessarily translates to a lower overall development.

While women property ownership and inheritance whether conjugal or parental is almost ruled out, their male counterparts get it almost automatically, thus forming a double standard. This is reinforced by the fact that, women capacities are regarded as inferior although there is no psychological basis for regarding them thus (Fraser, 1985; Kibwana and Mute, 2000). This stereotyping has historically been reinforced because during socialization, the individual is only fed with the superior - inferior dichotomy menu as regards men and women respectively. For Hooks (1984), as women absorb sexism and willingly assume predetermined sex roles, men develop a superiority complex, which is the basis of their internalized male supremacist ideology.

Additionally, from a social psychological perspective, the downgrading of women and girls may make them develop inferiority complex. This in turn can lead them to become

dependants upon their male kin. In such a case, self-reliance, which should be the goal of human development, becomes elusive.

Additionally, Njeru (1998) opines that it is mostly in rural areas where gender-based stereotypes and discrimination abound. It was therefore deemed more important to undertake this study in a rural area like Mwingi. Related to this is the fact that, the government of Kenya has a poverty reduction plan in place, a study in a rural area like Mwingi where poverty is pervasive becomes more critical and necessary. This is because; the data collected will play a significant role towards the overall government objective not only in Mwingi but also in other similar rural areas of Kenya.

Moreover, with men dominating all areas of socio-cultural political and economic spheres, Njeru (1998) believes that, women off-farm participation, which would guard them against vulnerability to poverty, cannot flourish. Therefore, it only becomes prudent to undertake a study on gender relations to provide data, which could be used to correct such anomaly. This is because whenever society fails to arrest such a problem, the problem is driven underground from where it continues to afflict the social fabric and it should be added, often with cumulative magnitude (Kibwana, 1992). At this juncture, it should be made clear and emphasized that the current study has given more weight to rural development in terms of human development. In order to generate the intended data, this study was guided by the following research questions:

1. What is the relationship between gender relations and rural development?
2. How is an individual's decision-making capacity related to his/her access to community resources?

3. What is the relationship between the nature of conjugal property ownership and individual empowerment?
4. How does gender-based division of labor affect individual participation in development activities?

1.3. Objectives of the Study

The general objective/aim of this study was to identify the nature of existing gender relations and their implication for rural development, the latter from a human development perspective. Specifically, the study sets out:

- (a) To determine the effect of an individual's decision-making capacity on personal access to community resources.
- (b) To find out the nature of conjugal property ownership and its relationship to individual empowerment.
- (c) To investigate the interaction between gender-based division of labor and individual participation in development activities.

1.4. Rationale of the Study

The current global change in social, economic and political spheres means that, every country should strive for faster development. However this is thwarted by a myriad of setbacks, both man-made and natural. The former include corruption and war while the latter include drought floods and disease. These problems are particularly affecting Third World countries including Kenya. This is amplified by the fact that some people remain excluded from the development process and more important when the so excluded, women,

are the majority. If development has to be realized in these countries, the exclusion of such groups has to be done away with. This study is therefore important if a policy shift is to be realized in this regard.

While acknowledging the urgent need to address the pervasive gender inequalities in our society, Kibwana (1992) point out that whenever the society fails to remedy such a problem, it is often driven underground from where it continues to afflict the social fabric. To this end, the need for a study to determine the nature of gender relations and their implication for rural development cannot be overlooked. This will necessarily provide insights and hence pave the way towards harmonizing development in rural areas by way of harnessing and uplifting all available human and even natural resources for the betterment of the society.

Evidence shows that women participation outside the home remains marginal. Therefore, a study to unearth the reasons behind this and how it affects rural development was found necessary. It is hoped that the findings of this study are crucial in giving pointers towards correcting such. Moreover, since gender relations differ from rural to urban areas, then a study in rural areas and Mwingi in particular was deemed critical. Again, since development levels and needs of one place and one community differ from each other, then, this renders a study in Mwingi tenable. Besides, the downgrading of women instills in them a sense of inadequacy. In extreme cases girls and women develop an inferiority complex and become dependants upon their male relatives materially and emotionally. Dependency here becomes a problem since human development should be geared towards self-reliance.

1.5.Scope of the Study

Gender relations in this study were examined at both global and local levels. More emphasis however, was laid on the local level perspective. At the global level, the question of gender relations and how they affect rural development was looked at in the Third World and Africa in particular. Of special emphasis were the rural areas. This was examined in the context of the marginal role women play in rural development activities, even though they are the majority in rural areas of the Third World (Kibwana and Mute, 2000; Peet and Hartwick, 1999). The marginal role played by women is in spite of the proliferation of women-friendly Non-governmental Organizations, not to forget various policy frameworks, legislation and public pronouncements by the leaders of Third World states.

At the local level, the study placed emphasis on gender relations and their effects on rural development in rural areas of Kenya and Mwingi in particular. Specifically, it was a Case Study of Mwingi Central Division (see appendix 4) in which the unit of analysis was those couples in conjugal unions; simply what Njagi (2000) calls intra-household gender relations. This is due to the fact that, it is in conjugal unions where women marginalisation occurs on a large-scale (Njeru, 1998). Again, people in marital unions are mature enough to fully participate in development activities, even though this has not historically been the case.

The global level analysis involved secondary data while the local level entailed both secondary and primary data. Through review of various texts, more light was shed on the existing gender relations in other rural areas and therefore serving as a guide towards

illuminating the magnitude of the problem. This was especially so after reviewing literature on women economic activities, potentials and constraints which stand on their way at the socio-cultural, political and economic levels. An attempt was made to find out the potentialities of both men and women, and the constraints limiting them towards involvement in rural development activities. Ways of dealing with any constraints highlighted was also a concern of this study, not to forget finding out the various ways through which people potentials can be improved upon to guarantee maximum possible participation of all. This is expected to pay dividends by way of enhanced human development, that is, people's capacities in terms of decision-making, empowerment and participation, the latter especially in off-farm activities.

Due to time and finance constraints, this study was limited to two locations out of the total six in Mwingi Central Division. It is hence from the study of these two locations that generalizations have been made for both the division and the district owing to its near homogenous population and other characteristics.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK.

2.0. Literature Review

2.1. 1.Introduction.

According to Bless and Higson-Smith (1995), in order to conceive a research topic in a way permitting a clear formulation of the research problem and the hypothesis, some background information is required. This information can only be achieved through undertaking a critical reading of the relevant literature. It is actually through literature reviewing that the question at hand can be conceived well. Accordingly, the present chapter is dedicated to literature review. As an eye-opener, the chapter looks at the following minor themes:

1. The need for rural development.
2. The role of the community in rural development activities.
3. The need for community members' participation in rural development activities.

In keeping in line with the study objectives, the following broad themes are looked at which also correspond to the study questions and hypotheses.

1. The decision-making process mainly at the household level.
2. The nature of conjugal property ownership.
3. The gender-based division of labor.

2.1.2. The need for rural development.

The government of Kenya has put in place a poverty reduction strategy plan. However, development of any one country is made easier if we start at the grassroots level. Hence, for any meaningful development to be realized, the rural areas must be given the first priority. This is because, without rural development, national development cannot be achieved and so is poverty reduction. Again, rural development must of necessity have a human development component. According to Jazairy (1992), it is in rural areas of the Third World where poverty is pervasive. To this end, poverty reduction programs should be geared towards benefiting the rural areas. Again, while acknowledging the numerical strength of women in rural areas Kibwana (1992) argues that it does not make economic sense to ignore majority people in development initiatives. Development of the rural areas requires high caliber human resource, which must be enhanced through human development. Accordingly, development of the rural areas that entail empowerment of the rural people to fully and effectively utilize available resources is critical. It should be seen as development of the majority.

Moreover, rural development is a pillar on which national development is grounded. Rural development will lead to national development and will therefore be in line with the Government of Kenya (1999) aims for development of rural livelihoods, social mobilization and community development. This ensures their maturity in terms of human development.

2.1.3. Role of community in rural development activities.

Since rural development is about people's empowerment among other issues, the role of the rural community towards this end must be underlined. This is especially so since the

benefits to accrue there from will go a long way in advancing the people's living standards. However, before the community can make meaningful contribution, some advocacy to achieve what Freire (1986) calls conscientisation must be undertaken. This conscientisation enables the people to see, evaluate and meaningfully contribute in development initiatives with collective benefit as the goal. Such conscientisation will generate a community feeling and a sense of dignity that would make the people to see such development projects as their own initiatives and therefore more involvement. According to Jazairy (1992), the community can be a source of labor, contribute financially, and even in decision-making. Despite the need for people's participation in development, a considerable number especially the rural poor are left out. Thus, their human resource development potential stagnates a considerable way for they remain mostly idle, without doubt waiting for initiatives from foreigners or individuals from without the community.

2.1.4. The need for community participation in rural development activities.

Community participation in rural development initiatives is key to rural development since it instills a sense of belonging among the community members. This is more so if the society is involved in choosing, deciding, implementing and evaluating diverse development initiatives in addition to sharing benefits and costs emanating there from. In the process of participation, their human development potential is enhanced as they learn methods and ways of uplifting their community even without outside agencies-they become development conscious, creative and proactive. In African societies and Kamba community in particular where group activities are emphasized, Akong'a (1982) argues that, participation makes goal attainment easier. It is however unfortunate that the policy of many a modern

development agencies sometimes including the government is to come up with initiatives without consulting the perceived beneficiaries. According to Tucker (1999) and Randall and Theobald (1998) this top-down approach to development initiatives by the government and other development agencies has often resulted into failure. This calls for community participation. In deed, Tucker (1999) captures it in the following words,

after more than three decades of development many areas of the Third World are worse off than they were thirty years ago...it would seem that the model of development now widely pursued is part of the problem rather than the solution.

(Tucker, 1999:1).

In the same line of argument, Mulugeta (1999) opines that, the top-down approach to development in which planners assume that they can identify the people's needs is usually wrong and runs against real objectives of empowerment. It is in contrast to the bottom-up approach, in which the target population is given opportunities to participate, acquire skills, make decisions and even control resources. While arguing against the top-down approach to development, Chitere and Mutiso (1991) put it that many programmes are planned and implemented from above with little input from the field staff and the assumed beneficiaries. Top-down approach is thus not for the benefit of the target population and therefore calls for a re-examination with the intention of bringing on board the target population.

In Kenya, Kabira et al (2001) say that the government has been solely formulating, implementing and monitoring policies while primary stakeholders have been relegated to passive actors during implementation phase. In particular women continue to be excluded

from the mainstream of policy development and therefore denying them the chance to participate in policy formulation. Jazairy (1992) argues that, participation in addition to creating, directing and maintaining organizations designed to meet requirements of the rural poor, also provides services and resources for human development. To this end, participation brings the previously marginalized groups to the rest of the society, thereby bringing societal integration.

Viewed in the light of sustainability, participation instills self-reliance among community members and facilitates people's innovativeness hence minimizing dependency among the people. This is more important in areas where development initiatives are being implemented by outside agencies, in which case, the withdrawal of such agencies does not spell doom to the development initiatives. As people participate, they acquire knowledge required for project sustainability. In this way, Jazairy (1992) suggests that the training can reduce the cost of project development, implementation, promote sustainability and replicability in other areas.

Denton (2002) believes that participation from planning to implementation can lead to greater involvement of the people but much more effort is required to break through socio-cultural hurdles. This would capacitate the people to reap benefits commensurate with their input. Participation must therefore be regarded as a precursor to human and therefore overall development.

2.1.5. Gender relations and rural development.

The differential power and authority relations between men and women in favor of the former are hereby hypothesized to negatively affect rural development. To this end, it is hoped that changing these power relations by way of equitably redistributing it may perhaps be a necessary condition for a major improvement towards realization of rural development. Otherwise the people will only know how to eat fish without an iota of how to catch it. The dictates of patriarchy all over the world and Africa especially are that women remain subordinate to men. In Kenya, Chitere (1994) argues that many communities are patrilineal and hence tend to downgrade women.

Ndeti (1972) concurs with Chitere (1994) that women in the Kamba community are downgraded. Worst of all, anthropological studies have shown that, discrimination against women in the Kamba community not only occurred in real life situations but also posthumously. According to Akong'a (1982), in the Kamba community, it was only Atumia (male elders) who were buried upon death while children and women were thrown into the bush. In case of homicide a man was compensated with 1 bull and 14 cows while for a woman it was 1 bull and 7 cows. Apparently, the life of a woman was valued to be half that of a man.

Since women are discriminated not because of their physical or mental inabilities but because of cultural dictates, any intervention in terms of development may not bear fruits. In this line of argument, Lieberman (1981) posits that when peasant values prevail over rationality, development is hard to come by since such values may work against inclusion

of some people in development. Other broad facts indicating the existing gender disparities can be noticeable through the following issues:

(a). The decision-making process.

Participation in decision-making for both men and women and more so at the household level has not been on an equal footing. Key decisions remain in the domain of men and in cases where women make decisions they may need to check with their husbands before effecting them. According to Njeru (1993, 2002), African social institutions including the family are characterized by structural inequalities along gender lines in favor of men. In decision-making, Jazairy (1992) maintains that, women have a stronger voice in the household when they contribute cash income than when they do not.

Collective household decision-making, indiscriminate allocation of resources and equal sharing of domestic chores that would enhance women's role in development are largely nonexistent. Without involvement of all in decision-making at all levels of human interaction, participation in development remains minimal. Indeed research has shown that, female labor force participation could be on the decline in Africa. To this end, Jazairy (1992) reports that, female labor force participation in the Third World between 1965 and 1988 was 30% of all countries while in sub Saharan Africa, it declined from 39% to 29% during the same period. While these figures depict women generally in the Third World, it can rightly be guessed that for rural women it could be worse.

While decision-making is vested on the male in most Kenyan communities, the whole household carries out production especially in the farm. The use and disposal of farm produce however remains the domain of men as household heads. This implies that women remain mere decision implementers even in matters to do exclusively with themselves. In decisions to do with land and other crucial assets, women views remain in the background. According to Boserup (1989), in some rural areas men exercise control over women to an extent that they even prevent them from working outside the home. In the same regard, Jordan and Weedon (1995) say that definitions belong to the definer and not the defined. Flowing from this, it is upon men to define women and not women to define themselves in a patriarchal society like the Kamba community and many other African traditional societies.

The curtailment of women in terms of decision-making denies them the time to participate fully in public life. According to Suda (1999) wives as women group members, have a greater resource control and decision-making power than they have as wives in male-headed households. Since individual decision-making capacity dictates his/her access to community resources, women remain at the background as far as resource accessibility is concerned. This is viewed at in the light of the fact that, men being the major decision-makers are unlikely to make decisions that will empower women in terms of accessing resources like land. In this case, as men allocate themselves resources like land, women make do with domestic chores. Such domestic chores Njeru (1998) believes are unlikely to enhance women economic empowerment. On the other

hand, men as household heads and key decision-makers, remain household managers, tasks, which traditionally carry higher status.

From the foregoing, it can be argued that, in decision-making, women have been left out. This is despite the fact that Kenya ratified the UN Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (UNCEDAW) more than two decades ago. This is compounded by the fact that for Kibwana and Mute (2000) and Jazairy (1992) the dual recognition of customary and civil law in Africa tends to afford precedence to the former that significantly limits women property rights. In this regard, the 1987 S. M. Otieno civil suit pitting his wife and the deceased's clan is a case in point. Therefore, by women playing a marginal role in decision-making, their access to resources, which would guarantee them the required capacity to participate, remains elusive. This is without doubt underutilization of local human resource, a sure way towards a lower level of development than otherwise would be.

(b). The nature of conjugal property ownership

In considering gender relations and rural development the nature of conjugal property ownership cannot be overlooked. The UNCEDAW Article 16.1 (h) gives equal rights to both men and women in marital unions with respect to property ownership among other provisions. However, in Kenya men still hold control over land and its resources, livestock and household income. According to Kibwana (1993) existence of property rights in Kenya and more so at the social and moral standpoints is normally assumed. In civil law, Wanjala (2000) argues that, Kenyan women are yet to find an equitable place in

the country's social, economic and political affairs. While echoing the same sediments, Jordan and Weedon (1995) have argued that differences in patriarchal racist and capitalist societies always involves oppressive power relations and hence stopping short of saying that oppressive gender relations against women in all societies are highly pronounced in much of Third World and Islamic countries. In addition, Agarwal (2002) says that, in India and much of Asia, endowing a daughter with land is often seen as bringing virtually no reciprocal benefit, and any land inherited by her is seen as a loss to the family.

While it can generally be argued that customary law in Africa affords women access to land, they only have user and not owner rights, the latter being the preserve of men. It can hence be concluded that, with women having only land user rights, access to credit facilities that would see them empowered economically, is out of question. Since men in Kenya have exclusive rights to ownership and inheritance of property is patriarchal, a father's property is destined to be divided among the sons. Daughters who, Mweseli (2000) says are supposedly passersby, are entitled to nothing. In deed, in most African countries where customary law takes precedence over civil law as Kibwana and Mute (2000) point out, the law in the statutes and its practice are two worlds apart, mostly to the disadvantage of women. When such women marry, they remain submissive and in extreme cases, the Women Bureau (1993) reports that, some women have to stop working once they marry. This significantly limits them in terms of acquisition and ownership of property. According to Lipton (1985), if a person does not own property, his/her net yield from combining her/his labor and other assets is substantially curtailed.

Women are therefore not expected to contribute meaningfully to development unless they own some property.

This therefore means that women empowerment in terms of property ownership, which would enhance their social, and economic standing is quite minimal. Such being the case, Suda (1999) argues that women access to independent income and control over cash is limited. This mirrors a very wide gap between the resources women and men control in which case the former is sidelined. As women are distanced from property ownership, their empowerment that would translate into meaningful contribution in development remains inconsequential, and such are untapped resources.

(c). The gender-based division of labor.

The gender-based division of labor in African societies has been perpetuated by the existing cultural practices that afford men the power to decide on their own behalf and that of women. The basis of such division of labor is basically patriarchal authority rather than individual technological and educational training. According to Suda (1999) sex and age traditionally define household labor. However, it can be argued that, this may not necessarily be the case especially in urban households.

Since the kind of task one undertakes may determine his/her contribution to development in terms of participation, the gender division of labor in relation to individual participation cannot be overlooked. According to Suda (1999) gender-role differentiation is closely related to gender division of resources, including land and income. In the same

regard, Njeru (1998) argues that domestic tasks like washing clothes and cooking, which are unlikely to enhance anybody's economic empowerment, are assigned to women. On the other hand, the roles of managing the household and being the breadwinner, which traditionally carry higher status remains man's domain. Since high status goes with authority to make vital decisions, men are unlikely to decide and assign women duties, which would see the latter's economic empowerment. It nevertheless must be argued that the wide range of abilities in both sexes makes sex typing of occupations undesirable.

According to Monsted (1977), the pattern of division of labor in poor and rich households seem to be that women are responsible for the production of labor, with strong support from children. The produce of their labor is however controlled by men, leaving women as proletariats. This is why Agarwal (2002), an Indian women rights activist asks the question; **Are we not peasants too?** What this implies is that, women are double peasants: First by virtue of being women and second by being poor.

In the traditional Kamba community, Ndeti (1972) reports that, there were exclusive men and women duties. While men could engage in bush clearing, hunting, herding and warfare, women were confined at home as its makers. They could do midwifery, cooking, fetching water and other supposedly light chores. However such division of labor may not wholly be in place at present.

Through gender-based division of labor, women become outnumbered as we move up the bureaucratic ladder in modern institutions. For example, Kiros (1985) says that, fewer

and fewer women occupy each ascending ladder of the bureaucracy. He says that, women primary school teachers may be equal to men, but quite small as we consider university lecturers. Indeed, at the Department of Sociology of the University of Nairobi, male lecturers comprise a respectable 83% with female ones taking only 17%. This is quite interesting owing to the fact that, primary school enrolment for both boys and girls is almost at par. In addition, the Women Bureau (1993) found glaring gender differences for most professions in Kenya in favor of men. Sivard (1985) captures this scenario in the following words,

Women are 50% of the teachers in primary schools, 31% in secondary schools and 26% in institutions of higher learning.....in the global community, excluding China, there are 130 million more adult women than men who cannot read and write.

(Sivard, 1985:5).

On a general note, it has been established that gender relations play a leading role in alienating women in development activities. Accordingly, the decisions they would have made, the financial input they would have invested and the labor they would have put in development remain unused. In such a case, Kibwana (1992) cautions that by ignoring women in development the society pays by having a lower level of development.

(d). Conclusion.

Generally, gender relations have received attention among scholars. However, studies on the implications of such on rural development are inadequate. Kibwana (1992) for example studied rural women in Laikipia District, however from a legal perspective. His findings,

hence, cannot wholly be assumed to be true for all other rural areas and Mwingi specifically. This is due to the simple reason that, any two areas are unique in terms of their respective inhabitants, cultural values and development needs. This therefore means there is a knowledge gap whose bridging was the aim of this study. Due to the fact that differences exist between communities and even between different areas, questions of conjugal property ownership, individual empowerment and participation in development activities need to be looked at specifically for each region, community and even for a particular individual. It can hardly be true that, the needs of an Afghan woman are the same with those of a Nuer woman in Southern Sudan, even though the two countries have other striking similarities besides being Third World countries. The act of generalizing for all people, say rural Third World women, should not be given a chance in scholarship. Therefore a study in Mwingi Central Division whose data is lacking was seen as critical.

In addition, Kibwana (1992,1993, 2000) looks at gender relations from a legal perspective. However, the current study looks at the same from a socio-cultural, political and economic perspective in addition to investigating how it affects rural development the latter from a human development perspective.

Again, some scholars have contradicted one another in their findings. For example, Ndengu (1995) and Mweseli (2000) concur that; women have only user and not owner rights with respect to property. However, Pala et al (1978) found out that, some property was registered in the name of women, implying ownership. Such a contradiction is a major reason for this study, as it will attempt to bring up-to-date data on the same issue.

Ndengu (1995) explores the question of property ownership among women, but does not investigate what implication this has on rural development, thus leaving a knowledge gap. The current study aimed at bridging such a gap. In addition, Kibwana (1993) has put it that, the existence of property rights in Kenya especially on social and moral standpoints is normally assumed. Mweseli (2000) stresses that since property ownership in Kenya is patrilineal, daughters who are treated as passersby are entitled to nothing from their fathers' property. While the foregoing assertions have some truth in them, this study treated them tentatively as intelligent guesses, subject to investigation.

Majority scholars have concurred that, major decisions are in the domain of men. It is also known that, there are men who live far away from their wives. In view of the foregoing, does it mean that even emergency decisions like spending family income to offset hospital bill for an ailing family member must wait for the man's nod? In addition, Ndeti (1972) is of the opinion that, in the Kamba community there was exclusive men and women duties. While hunting and warfare were some of the duties for men, it was a concern of this study to find out what they do at present now that the foregoing tasks are a thing of the past. Also, it was only men who could become leaders in their clan. However, of late women are not only becoming leaders in their own communities, but also at the national level. Since this study focused on rural development from a human development perspective, it will be interesting to find out whether these women are deviants or it is a measure of empowerment.

2.2.0.Theoretical Frameworks

According to Singleton et al (1988), any empirical study should be grounded on theory. This is because, among other roles, a theory provides secure grounds on which we can come up with hypothesis to be tested in a study. Abraham (1982) and Selltiz and Johada (1959) concur that a theory is a systematic summary of interrelationships between variables in a conceptual framework. It thus explains observed events and relationships and predicts the occurrence of as yet unobserved ones on the basis of explanatory principles embodied in the theory. In this way, a theory enhances meaningfulness of research, and thereby driving it towards validity. It is therefore safe to infer that a theoretical framework is essential to the understanding of the factors that influence or are associated with an identified problem. In this study, the following theories are used.

2.2.1.Role Theory.

Role theory is one of the theories of socialization, which unlike the others focuses on role enactment. It is associated with W. Archer (1889) as expounded by Lindzey and Aronson (1968). According to Lindzey and Aronson (1968) an individual's overt conduct in a particular setting form the initial specifications of role enactment. For any role one has to play as a result of being in a certain position, there is a role expectation, which is a central concept in role theory. Lindzey and Aronson (1968) opine that role expectation comprise of rights and privileges, duties and obligations of any occupant of a social position, in relation to others occupying other positions in the social system. The occupant of a certain position is thus expected to exhibit a certain behavior, which goes along with the position. The structure of role expectation in a social system is organized so that meaningful behavioral

unit emerges to create order. According to Popper (1966), when there is order, "the ruler rules, the warrior fights and the slave slaves". (Popper, 1966:169).

This implies that roles in a social system are complimentary and role expectations facilitate social interaction by providing those who interact with means of reciprocal prediction of behavior. An occupant of a position ought hence, to behave in a way expected of his/her position by the normative group of which he/she is a member. For example a magistrate is expected to be impartial in his/her judgments. Role expectations hence define the limits of tolerated behavior and overstepping such limits is an invitation to disapproval. In extreme disapproval, the nonconforming individual may be stripped of his/her position.

Due to sensitivity of other people's feelings, a person may conform to a role even if she/he has no strong commitment to it. This perhaps explains why one may stick to an unfulfilling marriage for fear of stigmatization upon divorce. Thus role expectation induces conformity. Lindzey and Aronson (1968) point out that; role behavior does not consist of rigid following of directives. This is perhaps what brings resistance in modern institutions like the state or even the family. It ought to be mentioned that role expectation and play are acquired through the process of socialization.

According to DeFleur (1971), socialization is a process of learning whereby man the biological being becomes man the human being capable of functioning adequately as a individual and group member. Cornell (1987) says that role theory is the approach to social structure that locates its basic constraints in stereotyped interpersonal expectations. Thus the

basic idea is that being a man or a woman means enacting a general role definitive of one's sex, the sex role. Thus the process of socialization and sometimes indoctrination of the sex-specific roles produce feminine or masculine characteristics.

Through socialization, a child acquires patterns of social organization that mirrors the cultural environment in which it lives. It is through socialization and role enactment that people come to take their daily undertakings for granted, since these become institutionalized in their culture. The institutionalization is made possible by the presence of social institutions like the school and the family all that promotes their values in the individual. Through socialization, roles such as those based on age and sex are inculcated in individuals. Socialization process culturally imposes sex-specific roles and constraints that shape self-images, attitudes and ambitions. Girls are expected to be passive and obedient while boys should be active, outgoing and competitive, these in preparation for the private and public spheres respectively.

In the same line of argument, Sivard (1985) says that, given curriculum choices girls tend to select subjects that conform to their cultural images and not necessarily their abilities. Here girls opt for arts as boys take natural sciences all due to socialization. For Tischler (1983) this process starts in childhood and continues into adulthood. Therefore, at each stage of human development, an individual is expected to take and play roles expected of the stage. A parent for example, is expected to provide for the basic needs of his/her young children, while the reverse is not true.

For the purpose of this study, sex-role socialization has been underlined, in which people are socialized to play roles deemed appropriate for each gender since childhood through adulthood. In this regard, Hooks (1984) says that, as women absorb sexism and willingly assume predetermined sex roles, men develop superiority complex. Accordingly and for the purpose of this study, role theory was used to assess the peripheral position of women in African traditional societies as a result of sex-role taking. Viewed at in the light of the role played by culture on the socialization of individuals, this theory was used to answer the question: *How does gender-based division of labor affect individual participation in development activities* as a result of sex-role training/socialization?

2.2.2. Dependency Theory.

This school of thought is mostly associated with South American scholars like A. G. Frank, T. Dos Santos, R. Frensch, F. Cardoso and E. Falleto (Peet and Hartwick, 1999). The theory tries to explain underdevelopment in the Third World and development in the west, or put locally, the underdevelopment of the rural and the development of the urban areas. Thus as much as the school tries to explain underdevelopment in the Third World as opposed to development in the west, so does it indirectly explain underdevelopment in the rural as opposed to development in the urban areas.

According to Roxborough (1978:58), dependency studies reveal that there is a net outflow of capital from the Third World (satellite) to the developed world (metropolis): that for every dollar invested in the third world by the west, more than a dollar returns to the former in form of repatriated profits, royalties, services, repayment of debt, etc. This leads to

differential in terms of development between the developing and the developed countries in favor of the former. Analogically, there are differentials in terms of investment, reward for labor, and availability of job opportunities and other social services between the rural and urban areas of a country like Kenya in favor of the latter. This attracts the *village-educated* elites to the urban areas, who in turn attract good health, education, housing and other physical infrastructure here at the expense of the rural areas. This therefore means that there is a net outflow of capital, trained manpower and other resources like raw materials from the rural to the urban areas so that major investments and highly qualified labor is found in urban and not rural areas, thus underdevelopment of the former and development of the latter.

Looked at globally, the Third World exports primary agricultural raw materials to the west that manufacture them and export them back to the Third World at higher prices. This means drainage of resources from the Third World to the developed world. Thus underdevelopment of the Third World is not preordained, but a result of a historical process of imperialism (Roxborough, 1979; Peet and Hartwick, 1999; Jhingan, 1997; Feraro 1996). Thus, the same way the satellite is depleted of its resources for the development of the metropolis so does the urban on the rural areas. In this case, Mullenkei and Namusonge (2000) and SAIMAN (2003) concur that, in Kenya minority ethnic groups like the Maasai and the Sabaot (satellite) who live in rural areas have remained backward, for the central government (the metropolis) has been siphoning resources from these communities without a fair return. These resources include returns from national parks and game reserves found

within these communities' territories. The repatriation of local resources to the central government without a fair return partly accounts for rural underdevelopment.

Peet and Hartwick (1999) point out that the development of the west was predicated on the active underdevelopment of the Third World. Likewise, urban (metropolis) development is predicated on the active underdevelopment of the rural (satellite) areas. Thus, interaction between the third and the western worlds intensify the unequal relationships between the two in favor of the latter. In the same way, interaction between the urban and the rural areas tend to under develop and impoverish the latter by way of siphoning resources like raw materials, trained manpower and the denial of other facilities like better telecommunication, health, education, housing, roads, etc (Mulenkei and Namusonge, 2000; SAIMAN, 2003), and thus underdevelopment.

In terms of decision-making, particularly to do with development needs, the global experience is that the approach has been top-down, particularly development being manufactured in the west for the Third World, with the latter playing minimal role or none at all (Randall and Theobald, 1998; Peet and Hartwick, 1999; Tucker, 1999; Mulungeta, 1999)). This is also replicated locally in which local communities and field staff are left out in decision-making on matters to do with identification of local development needs, setbacks and their solution (Chitere and Mutiso, 1991; Chitere, 1994). This top-down decision-making is partly responsible for Third World underdevelopment in general and rural underdevelopment in particular. In this study dependency theory was used to explain the persistent underdevelopment and poverty in rural as a result of its relationship with the

urban areas particularly in decision-making and therefore used to answer the question: *how is an individuals' decision-making capacity related to his/her access to community resources?*

2.2.3.Socialist Feminist Theory

Borrowing from both Marxist and radical feminist frameworks, the general argument in socialist feminist school is that women subordination to men has been due to the interaction between Capitalism and Patriarchy, which oppresses and exploits women. According to Ritzer (1992) the origin of women oppression and domination lies squarely on the system of capitalism and patriarchy in which women are defined as the property of men. In an attempt to analyze the two, this theory combines them, hence capitalist patriarchy. Using this combination the theory sets out to describe and explain all forms of social oppression and domination using knowledge of class and gender as a base. It is from this base that oppression and domination of women by men, starting at the family unit running through to the global hierarchization of nations is explained. Jordan and Weedon (1995) have this in the following words,

Capitalism has an interest in maintaining gender identity relations which guarantee a low paid expendable female workforce in manufacturing and service industry, a largely feminized and low-paid public sector and an underpaid workforce to care for the children, elderly and disabled in their own homes.

(Ibid, 1995:185).

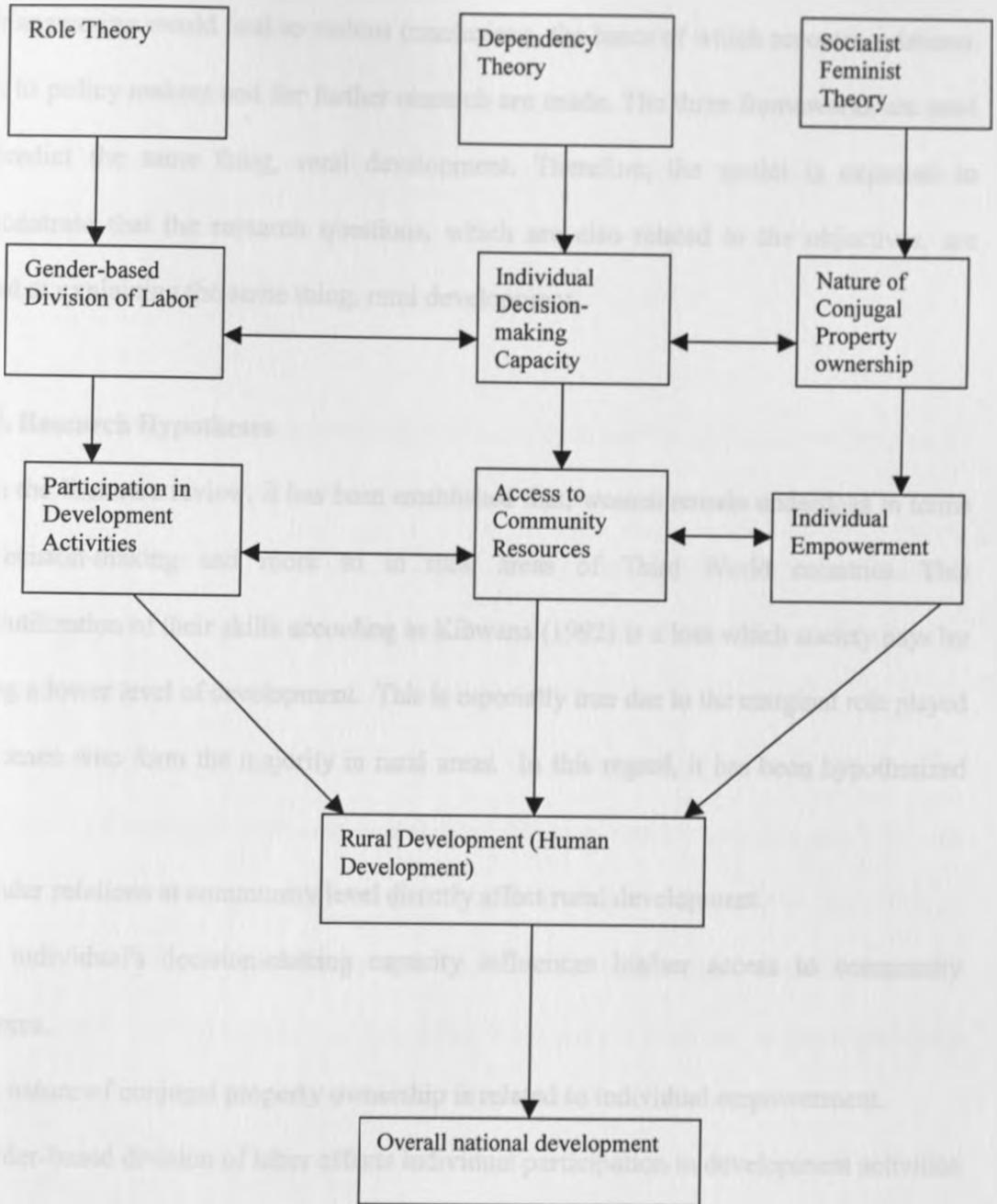
The concern of this theory is not only oppression of women by men, but also how some women participate in the systems that oppress other women. In this case, the theory helps to confront the prejudices and oppression practices within the community of women itself.

The theory remains committed to the analysis of what Ritzer (1992) calls material and social arrangements that frame particular situations of domination, capitalist patriarchy. In this commitment, the socialist feminist theorists use the strategy of the process of rediscovery in which they attempt to involve the oppressed groups so as to act together in pursuit of collective emancipation. Peet and Hartwick (1999) say that, this theory has significantly involved the retheorizing of the importance of women's work, by regarding the needs for childbearing and raising as being as important as material needs. In this approach, the theory questions the under valuation of domestic work, most of which requires female physical labor.

By emphasizing on the importance of both domestic and off-farm work, the theory demystifies and tries to destereotype the society and therefore sounds a wake up bell to all people (men and women), to appreciate one another's contribution to development. The theory also alludes to the modernization school so that there are no predetermined sex roles. For the purpose of this study, this theory was used to assess the historical origin of women subordination to men, their present level of involvement in development and predict the likely outcome of their contribution in development initiatives, given chance and resources to participate. Specifically, the theory was used to answer the question: *What is the relationship between the nature of conjugal property ownership and individual empowerment?*

2.2.4. Diagrammatic Exposition of the Theoretical Framework

Figure 2.2.4 represents a summary of the theoretical frameworks in a diagrammatic way.



Source: Researcher, 2004.

In diagram 2.2.4, it is implied that the three theoretical frameworks are not only related but also used in explaining the dependent variable in this study, rural development.

Each of the frameworks has been used to answer a specific research question raised by the study, based on the literature review. The research questions are also related in that their answering would lead to various conclusions, the bases of which recommendations, both to policy makers and for further research are made. The three frameworks are used to predict the same thing, rural development. Therefore, the model is expected to demonstrate that the research questions, which are also related to the objectives, are aimed at explaining the same thing, rural development.

2.3.0. Research Hypotheses

From the literature review, it has been established that, women remain underdogs in terms of decision-making and more so in rural areas of Third World countries. This underutilization of their skills according to Kibwana (1992) is a loss which society pays by having a lower level of development. This is especially true due to the marginal role played by women who form the majority in rural areas. In this regard, it has been hypothesized that:

1. Gender relations at community level directly affect rural development.
2. An individual's decision-making capacity influences his/her access to community resources.
3. The nature of conjugal property ownership is related to individual empowerment.
4. Gender-based division of labor affects individual participation in development activities

2.4. 0.Operational Definition Of Key Terms/Variables.

2.4.1. Independent Variable.

Gender Relations: The differential power relationships between men and women with respect to exercise of power and authority over one another in all areas of human interaction. Specifically for this study, it refers to power and authority relations between husband and wife. This is the independent variable measured by, nature of conjugal property ownership, individual decision-making capacity and the division of labor with respect to individual gender identity. The indicators of the independent variable (gender relations) are in turn hereunder defined and operationalised thus:

a). Individual decision-making capacity: The ability to initiate, influence and implement independent and constructive decisions on issues of both individual and societal concern with minimal hindrances. This was measured by ability to make independent decisions, role in leadership of key organized groups and ability to independently choose and plan the family undertakings and tasks.

b). Nature of conjugal property ownership: Whether matrimonial property (e.g. real estate) is owned jointly or divided among the spouses. In this case property can belong to either spouse or both to both husband and wife. Individual authority to use and dispose of property at will, type of property owned, value of property owned and under whose name the property is registered was used to measure this variable.

c). **Gender-based division of labor:** Assignment of duties to men and women in relation to gender identities, irrespective of individual technological and educational attainment. This means the basis of assigning such duties is patriarchal authority rather than individual ability and skills. Presence or absence of men-only tasks, women-only tasks and unisex tasks were used to measure this variable.

2.4.2. Dependent Variable.

Rural Development: Outcome of mobilization, organization and utilization of rural human and natural resources in order to enhance local people's capacities in effectively meeting their needs while solving their problems on a sustainable basis. Rural development is narrowed down to only one aspect, human development. This is the dependent variable measured by the extent of people's empowerment, accessibility to community resources and their participation in development activities. These indicators of the dependent variable (rural development) are hereunder defined and operationalised thus:

(a). **Access to community resources:** That condition, in which an individual is able to make available, choose and meaningfully utilize community resources with minimal hindrances. This variable was measured by people's ability to afford resources (e.g. labor), utilize resources meaningfully (e.g. extension service), own and control resources (e.g. land) and awareness of the existence of such resources.

(b). **Individual empowerment:** State of affairs, which facilitate an individual to gain wider control over resources without disadvantaging others in terms of accessing the same

resources. This variable was measured by people's ability to access credit regularly, make independent decisions, level of independent income and educational attainment.

(c). Individual participation: The act of community members taking an active role in uplifting their community through collective activities while at the same time sharing the benefits and costs emanating there from. This variable was measured by people's membership in organized groups and involvement in off-farm activities.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1.Introduction.

For purposes of computer analysis, data was coded using a codebook i.e. conversion of measurements and attributes of variables into numerical form. Once coded, the data was entered into a computer. Data analysis employed Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) computer package.

In order to precisely understand the question of gender relations and rural development, it was necessary to use triangulation method, that is, use both quantitative and qualitative methods of social investigation. This was assumed to provide a general view of the existing gender relations and its implication for development in rural areas of Kenya. In particular, it was used to shed light on the same in Mwingi and perhaps act as a basis for generalization especially for other Arid and Semi-Arid Lands (ASAL). The study was undertaken at two levels that of desk and field research.

3.2.Desk Research

The desk research was intended to generate secondary data and hence help to understand the question at hand at the theoretical level. This involved reviewing various research reports, books and articles on the question at hand including records of the target study area and its inhabitants. Thus it entailed visiting various libraries and resource centers in Nairobi. In particular, it involved visiting the Central Bureau of Statistics library in addition to various other libraries at the University of Nairobi. It also utilized research

findings from NGOs like Kenya-Germany Technical Co-operation (GTZ), World Neighbors and Action Aid-Kenya, which were notably active in Mwingi District, the focus of this study. The generated data was useful in identifying entry points and pointing out knowledge gaps as far as this study was concerned.

3.3.Field Research

While the role of desk research cannot be overlooked, the reality of the question at hand cannot be understood satisfactorily without doing a great deal of field research. This involved studying the target population elements in the area in which they live and therefore providing firsthand information that helped to answer research questions raised earlier. Unlike desk research, field research helped to understand the problem under investigation at the practical level, as it involved direct interaction with the people in their own area of residence. This entailed interviewing 130 respondents, six (6) key informants and undertaking three (3) focused group discussions.

3.4.Research Site Description

In order to get a clear picture of the research site, it is important to describe its physical socio-cultural, political, demographic, and economic characteristics.

3.4.1.Size and population characteristics.

Central Division covers an area of 1204 Km², has an estimated population of 83,687 people and hence a population density of 69 people/Km² (GoK, 1996). Its inhabitants are mostly the A kamba, save for the M wingi Township which due to presence of various

government departments, Non-governmental Organizations and business enterprises has some other communities like the Kikuyu, Meru, Embu, Luo and Asians of Middle East origin (Arabs). The main religions of the division are Islam and Christianity (both Catholic and Protestant).

3.4.2. Administrative units.

Central Division is one of the 8 divisions making up Mwingi District in Eastern Province. Others are Nuu, Nguni, Tseikuru, Ngomeni, Migwani, Kyuso and Muumoni (see appendix 4). It is cut right at the middle by Thika Garissa Road and hence shared by the two parliamentary constituencies of the district (North and South). Administratively, it is divided into 6 locations, which are in turn divided into 25 sub-locations. The division constitutes Mwingi Municipal Council divided into 6 wards. Mwingi Township, its divisional headquarters also houses the district headquarters.

3.4.3. Agricultural and livestock activities.

There is both crop farming and livestock keeping. Crops grown include maize, beans, green grammes, pigeon peas, sorghum, etc while tubers include cassava, sweet potatoes, etc. Horticulture is also a major agricultural activity with citrus fruits, papaws, bananas, tomatoes and kales (sukuma wiki) as the main crops. Sugarcane is also grown in a very small scale especially in Mumbuni location. Various types of livestock including cattle (indigenous and a few exotic), sheep, goats, donkeys and poultry are also kept. Bulls are usually used for ploughing and pulling carts while donkeys are used for transportation of goods, hence saving women such tedious work; who come in handy in the absence of the

beasts of burden. While a few people use the tractor for ploughing, majority uses labor-intensive methods in farming. Agricultural produce in this area is mostly for subsistence consumption. This is especially so because the weather patterns are hardly predictable. This is compounded by use of traditional methods of farming. However, during periods of high rainfall for example the El Nino rains of 1997/98, harvest is normally abundant and hence converted into cash so as to supplement other sources of income like wages and salaries.

3.4.4.Off-farm activities.

Central Division and more so Mwingi Township has a high proliferation of off-farm enterprises especially the informal sector (Jua Kali). Activities include welding, blacksmithing, brick laying, carpentry, building and construction, catering, vehicle repair, wholesaling and retailing. White-collar undertakings include teaching, nursing, community development (in NGOs), local government employment, etc. which are either done locally or in other towns in the country to supplement income from agricultural activities. This is viewed at in the light of the unpredictable and hence unreliable weather pattern.

3.4.5.Social services.

Mwingi Central Division houses the district hospital in addition to 3 dispensaries and several privately owned clinics and hospitals, some of which offer out-patient, inpatient and laboratory and mortuary services (MDDP – 1997-2001). Most people especially the low-income groups utilize the public health services. The 1997-2001 Mwingi District

Development Plan records Infant Mortality Rate (IMR) at 120 deaths per thousand for the whole district. This is attributed to low immunization and inadequate Maternal and Child Health Care Services. The HIV/AIDS pandemic has also been reported in the district with Central Division leading the pack as at 1996 in terms of prevalence (GoK, 1996).

The division has 90 primary and 6 secondary schools and several youth polytechnics. Recently, Kenya National Library Services has put up a public library in Mwingi Township, which is expected to enhance readership among the local people. As at 1996, there were 587 trained and 103 untrained primary and 71 trained and 17 untrained secondary school teachers. The teacher/pupil ratios were 1:28 and 1:3 for primary and secondary schools respectively. Enrolment at both secondary and primary schools for girls and boys was almost equal with the latter slightly registering a higher number (GoK, 1996).

The division is transversed by the Thika-Garissa Highway whose tarmacking has already been completed. Other roads are murrum and poorly maintained. Many are actually impassable during the rainy season. In telecommunication, the Standard Trunk Dialing Telephone facilities are restricted to Mwingi Township and so is electricity and piped water, the latter being made available in several market centers along the pipeline from Tana River (Kiambere Dam) to Mwingi Township. The town and its environs is also served by Kencell communications cell phone services. Most people get water from rivers, roofs, wells, dams and rock catchments. Donkeys or ox-drawn carts normally

carry water from wells, dams and streams. It is worth to note that electricity is well utilized in Mwingi Township especially by the Jua Kali industry.

The district generally has a high dependency ratio. According to the 1997-2001 Mwingi District Development Plan, for every 100 economically active persons in the age-bracket 15-59, there are 131 dependants who fell in the ages 0 – 14 and over 60 years. This is compounded by the fact that according to the 1989, Kenya Population and Housing Census (KPHC)), 45% of the district's labor force lacked basic technical skills. This implies low wages, low saving and low investment-vicious cycle of poverty (Saleemi, 1981).

From the foregoing, it can be stated that the research site is far from being developed. This is due to its poor transport infrastructure, mostly subsistence agricultural production, inadequate health facilities, low income levels, and high dependency and Infant Mortality Rates, just to name but a few. Of particular importance is that women are not in the frontline a scenario hypothesized to be aggravated by the dictates of culture of the inhabitants which, according to Ndeti (1972) accords men more power in most key areas of decision –making. In such a case, human development is not expected to flourish owing to limited opportunities for such.

3.5. Sample Size and Sampling Procedure

This study employed various sampling techniques to select each of the study units in Central Division as explained in the succeeding paragraphs. These include purposive,

simple random, and accidental sampling techniques. Besides, the study gave more emphasis to qualitative methods of social investigation, that is, focused group discussions and key informant interviews. The sample of the study consisted of 130 respondents who were interviewed using a household questionnaire.

3.5.1. Sampling the division.

Besides the constraints of finance and time, Central Division was sampled purposively for the following other reasons. While the district's population and other characteristics are more homogenous than heterogeneous, Central Division is unique. In addition to the Kamba community who inhabits this area, there are members of other communities like the Luo, Kikuyu, Meru, Tharaka, Orma and Asians of Middle East origin. This is unlike other divisions in the District. Again, as the district headquarters and therefore housing the largest administrative, market, transport and communication center, people from all over the district are represented here. Hence generalizations for the whole district are highly likely to be reliable.

3.5.2. Sampling locations.

The whole division is made up of 6 locations, which include Mwingi, Mumbuni, Kanzanzu, Waita, Enziu and Kiomo/Kyethani. It is from these locations that Mwingi and Kanzanzu locations were selected purposively. The reason for this selection is that Mwingi location represents areas of vibrant off-farm activities as it includes Mwingi Township. On the other hand, Kanzanzu location represents areas far away from Mwingi

Township and hence of predominantly farm activities. This was aimed at making the findings generalizable since the study areas are inclusive.

3.5.3. Sampling sub locations.

A sub location was selected randomly from each location. The reason for this random selection at this stage was to do away with researcher biases so as to render the findings reliable. Sub locations in each location were written in pieces of paper and folded carefully. Then they were put in two tins (a tin for a location). The researcher then drew one paper from each tin, which became the sampled sub locations. This is how Kyanika and Kalisasi sub locations of Mwingi and Kanzanzu locations respectively were sampled.

3.5.4. Sampling villages.

On average a village had 36 households. For example, Mateta village in Kalisasi sub location had 30 households while Kauswini in Kyanika sub location had 42 households. In this study a household is taken to mean any homestead with a husband and wife. For example, in a homestead where a man had 3 married sons, these were taken as 4 households. In total, there were 20 villages; 9 villages in Kalisasi and 11 in Kyanika sub location. All villages in each sub location formed the sample.

3.5.5. Sampling households.

At first, all households in each village were listed down with the help of village headmen/women. However, household lists for Kyanika sub location were incomplete because some village headmen proved difficult to work with. Some refused to provide the

lists even after being requested by the area sub chief in the presence of the researcher. Once household lists were in place for Kalisasi sub location (separately for each selected village), each household was allotted a numeral (e.g. 1,2,3 4, etc). These numerals were written in pieces of paper, put in tins (separately for each village) from where the researcher randomly drew proportionate samples. However, before drawing the sample, calculations were made to determine the proportions in which villages were to be represented in the overall sample of 130 households.

However, this proved difficult and time consuming since the researcher could visit a sampled household only to find children, farmhands or nobody at all. Again, the researcher could visit a sampled household only to be told to come back after some time or that the respondent had no time for an interview. The latter was especially a characteristic with women in Kyanika sub location where the researcher was unknown by many people. This took two weeks and the researcher had to opt for another viable sampling procedure. Faced with this kind of problem and bearing in mind that he was working on a time schedule already approved by his supervisors, the researcher opted for purposive sampling procedure. This involved interviewing an individual in one household and then proceeding to interview another in the third household, however taking great caution to interview respondents proportionately from each sampled village.

3.6.Units of Analysis and Observation.

In this study, the unit of analysis, also called unit of statistical analysis were families/households in which married couples were targeted as the units of observation.

In this case the study set out to examine the existing intra-household gender relations and how they affect rural development from a human development perspective. In order to get the required information, the unit of observation was individuals (men and women) in conjugal relationships. In this case, the researcher targeted either a man or woman in a marital relationship. However, it must be emphasized that, great care was taken to strike a balance between men and women respondents. In this regard, once a woman was interviewed in one household, a man was targeted in the next, however, subject to availability of the same. Any sampled individual was interviewed separately/individually; even though there were cases where an interviewee could invite their spouses or a close relative to listen to the interview. The study interviewed 68 men and 62 women. This was because, men were readily available in the local shopping centers, while women were at home, sometimes very busy in the farms. It should be pointed out that, this was the harvesting season (February) and extends up to early March. After harvesting, immediately came the planting season during the March-May rains.

Additionally, for the purposes of gathering adequate information some key informants like NGO executives and government officials were interviewed. Note should be taken that the questionnaires administration and key informant interviews were undertaken by the researcher single-handedly. On the other hand, focused group discussions employed the service of one research assistant.

3.7. Techniques of Data Collection

The study utilized both qualitative and quantitative techniques of data collection. It specifically employed the following methods.

3.7.1. Survey research

The survey research involved administering household questionnaires to 130 married individuals in the sample. Although the study had initially proposed to interview 150 individuals it was decided to opt for 130 owing to time and finance constraints. Additionally, owing to the homogeneity of the population, it was also decided that 130 respondents was enough. The survey research had especially been selected for the purpose of facilitating standardization of the procedure for all respondents. This was hoped to make the collected data highly reliable and therefore enhancing generalization. The technique yielded quantitative as well as qualitative data.

3.7.2. Focus group discussions

FGDs were mainly used to collect qualitative data not only from men and women in conjugal relationship, but also among other local leaders. It also yielded some quantitative data. This was particularly important in data collection due to the fact that participants “incited” others to think and meaningfully contribute to discussions, hence adding a lot of value to the data. This technique used FGD guide as a tool of data collection. Three focused group discussions were carried out with the following groups:

1. A youth group. This consisted of 4 ladies and 5 gentlemen whose ages ranged between 19 and 24 years. Issues of cultural socialization were discussed especially those to do with sex roles. It was established that parents played a leading role in sex-role socialization of their children. In addition, the school and the church were also involved in sex-role socialization. For example there was a consensus that wherever there was a function in the local church, girls would prepare and serve the food whereas boys would fetch water, using donkeys.
2. Village headmen. This consisted of 10 village headmen from Kyanika sub location whose ages ranged from 49 to 63 years. The discussion here mostly centered on property ownership and appropriation, in addition to cultural dictates as concerns man and woman in a conjugal union and even in the general society. From this focused group discussion, it was apparent that women had very little say if any in matters to do with family property and especially land and cattle. There was a general consensus that women whether as wives, daughters or sisters should be under a constant men's surveillance in all matters apart from those to do with the kitchen. It should be pointed out that only one headman had ever been to a formal school.
3. A women group. This was made up of 15 women whose ages ranged between 28 and 43 years. The discussion centered on cultural barriers to acquisition and ownership of property, and the division of duties at the household level between husband and wife. From the discussion, it was established that any property

women would seem to own was actually owned by their spouses, the latter who could appropriate it without reference to the former. In division of labor, women were said to undertake most of the domestic duties that did not require them to travel extensively and even absence from home. Interestingly there was a consensus that, this kind of arrangement ought to be the case.

3.7.3.Key informant interviews

This technique used Key Informant Interview Guide as a tool of collecting mainly qualitative data through in-depth interviewing. Most key informants were drawn from the local community and included men, women, NGO executives and government officials. Due to time and finance constraints only 6 key informants were interviewed, comprising of the following:

- 1.One village head woman.
- 2.One adult literacy teacher (woman).
- 3.An NGO official from Action Aid-Kenya (man).
- 4.A Divisional Education Officer (man).
- 5.One NGO civic educator (man)
- 6.One blacksmith (woman).

3.8. Data Analysis Techniques.

Data analysis employed the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) computer package. Both descriptive and inferential statistics were used.

3.8.1.Descriptive statistics.

These are simple statistical methods, which do not support or falsify relationships between variables but simply help in the description of data. This study used frequencies and percentages because of their ability to distribute the respondents according to the various values of the study variables. They were also used for their ability to transform raw data into numerical form, and hence paving the way for the use of inferential statistics.

3.8.2. Inferential statistics.

These are used to infer truth or falsity of a research hypothesis and therefore used for hypothesis testing. Once hypothesis are tested, it becomes easier to draw conclusions and generalizations for the population based on the sample findings. This study employed the chi-square statistic to test hypotheses. The cross tabulations makes the mass of data which is confusing to the mind to be presented in a logical sequence giving the shape of statistical tables which answer questions of the problem under investigation.

3.9. Problems encountered in the Field.

1. The field research, which kicked off in February 2002, coincided with the harvesting season. February is normally the harvesting month that also includes a considerable part of March. Respondents especially women were busy in their farms and making appointments proved quite difficult and time consuming. Additionally, as harvesting was over, the respondents started preparing their farms for the April/May rains. This made the study a little bit problematic safe for the fact that parents were not very busy especially in April because children were on holiday, and therefore assisted them. In this case, owing to the busy schedule of

the local people, many appointments were not honored and therefore necessitating rescheduling, which was highly time consuming. It was at this juncture that purposive sampling was adopted for the sake of saving time in Kyanika sub location.

2. Key informants were especially elusive and in many instances interviews had to be postponed for as much as 4 times. In some other cases interview dates were never honored and this in some way compromised the quality of data, as input from such people was not incorporated. Part of the problem was that, many people were not used to such studies and were actually wary of the sincerity of the study. Indeed, even during the administration of the household questionnaire in some of the households, some respondents either invited their spouses or close relatives to listen to the interview, in case of any eventuality.
3. In Kyanika sub location, finding up to date data on household lists for all the villages proved impossible. This was not the case for Kalisasi sub location where the area assistant chief provided the lists personally. In Kyanika sub location, 2 village headmen adamantly refused to provide the lists even after they were required by the area assistant chief to do so. Due to this, purposive sampling was adopted for purposes of saving time.
4. Some respondents requested that they keep the household questionnaire to fill in their own convenient time. This necessarily meant a call back and time

consuming. Many of these questionnaires were never returned, and some others were delayed for up to 2 months. This brought about extra costs, which had not been anticipated as more questionnaires were to be photocopied as replacements. This was in addition to the fact that, the study was poorly funded. Besides some of the returned questionnaires were incomplete and some questions wrongly answered, while the respondents were unavailable. These had to be discarded and replaced with others. This amounted to double work and hence wastage of time.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION.

4.1.Introduction.

In this chapter an attempt has been made to provide a general overview of the study findings using descriptive statistics. Such has been presented in contingency tables and correlations, while hypotheses have been tested using the chi-square statistic.

4.2.Presentation of Descriptive Data.

The sample of this study consisted of 130 respondents who happened to be adults in marital unions. In addition, spouses to the respondents had to be alive during the time of the study. This was for the simple reason that, the study aimed at looking at gender relations between people who were formally married and recognized by the society as such, what Njagi (2000) calls intra-household gender relations. The setting of the study was the two sub locations of Kalisasi and Kyanika in Kanzamzu and Mwingi locations respectively, in Mwingi Central Division.. The respondents were distributed as shown in table1. In all the tables percentages have been put in parenthesis and rounded off to the nearest one decimal place.

Table 1: Distribution of respondents by gender and place of origin.

	Kalisasi	Kyanika	Total
Male	33 (25.4)	35 (26.9)	68 (52.3)
Female	31 (23.8)	31 (23.8)	62 (47.6)
Total	64 (49.2)	66 (50.8)	130 (100)

Table 1 shows that, there were more men than women respondents represented as 68 and 62 respectively. This was contrary to expectations since there are more women than men in rural areas (Kibwana and Mute, 2000; Peet and Hartwick, 1999), the latter having migrated into towns in search of jobs (Todaro, 1976). In addition, it was not easy to interview as many women as men, the study having coincided with both the harvesting and sowing season, a time when women especially were very busy in the farms. On the other hand, most men were easily found in the local shopping centers as either small-scale businessmen or just passing time.

4.3. Description of Respondents' Biodata.

In this section, respondents' biodata has been described using contingency tables. The aim here is to gauge whether there is a relationship between gender identity and any other biodata variable. In addition, the description has provided general characteristics of the respondents and therefore, making it easier to relate the biodata variables and any variable of interest for further analysis.

The general attributes of the respondents in addition have been used to gauge whether opportunities for human development are available to the rural inhabitants of Mwingi Central Division. Such attributes include education, income and even occupation, as these are some of the avenues assumed to enhance human development.

4.3.1.Level of education

Table 2: Respondents gender versus highest level of education.

	None	Adult literacy	Primary	Secondary	Post high school college	University	Total
Male	18 (13.8)	0 (0)	25 (19.2)	14 (10.8)	5 (3.8)	6 (4.6)	68 (52.4)
Female	12 (9.2)	2 (1.5)	26 (20)	11 (8.5)	7 (5.4)	4 (3.1)	62 (47.6)
Total	30 (23.1)	2 (1.5)	51 (39.2)	25 (19.2)	12 (9.2)	10 (7.7)	130 (100)

Table 2 shows that majority people had a level of education below secondary school, which constituted 63.8% of all respondents. The implication here is that, majority of the respondents had low levels of education, with 23% of all respondents having had no education at all. Education develops the human potential and influences a peoples' participation and earnings as well as purchasing power. Therefore education must be seen as a vital factor for a fully productive role in life for both men and women.

Unfortunately however, at all levels of education, boys still present a majority of the students. In the world enrolment totals, Sivard (1985) reports that boys and girls were 55% and 45% respectively in primary and secondary schools while higher up the education ladder, the ratios change to 57% and 43% respectively with men outnumbering women almost 2:1 at university level. Indeed the ratio in Kenya is much higher. According to the GoK (1996), from 1992 to 1995 primary and secondary school enrolment for boys has been higher than that of girls. The boys significantly outnumber

girls as we move up the education ladder, with the figures being 26.4% and 73.6% respectively for girls and boys with regard to university admissions in the academic year 1995/96.

Due to low levels of literacy particularly among women as compared to men, and limited opportunities for its enhancement, it means that, the former sell their labor at market conditions subordinate to those of the former. In this regard, Wallace and Myles (1994) say that, such work patterns negatively affect women's earnings, their accumulation of labor-market experience and prospects for job promotion.

According to the Mwingi District Development Plan 1997/2001 in Mwingi District, out of all primary school going children, 95% were enrolled in primary schools in 1996. Enrolment for girls at pre-primary school was higher than for boys while at the primary school and subsequent levels of education, boys start outnumbering girls. At secondary school level of education, the percentage participation was 11% and 16% for girls and boys respectively in the same year. This means that, 73% of primary school graduates never went to the next level of education. Such has important implications for the girls' human development and future undertakings such as securing a good job.

From the foregoing, it can be argued that, gender equality in education has not and is far from being achieved. It has suffered mainly from restrictive gender-based stereotypes originating out of school. Such stereotypes create barriers to the full development of intellectual abilities especially for girls even when access to education is unlimited (Sivard, 1985). Several factors account for the low level of participation in education

especially among girls. These include early marriages, teenage pregnancies, parent preference for boys' education, lack of role models, etc. GoK (2002) puts it that,

The fact that the decision on who goes to school and when is predominantly that of the father also impacts on the likelihood that a girl will be withdrawn first.

(GoK, 2002:14)

Since education is an important indicator of human development, this reflects a low level of development when it is looked at from the vantage point of education, drawing from the findings in table 2. This is because low levels of education imply low levels of manpower, low levels of production and therefore saving-a vicious cycle of poverty (Saleemi, 1981). The low levels of education especially among women implies low purchasing power, and this brings to the fore the fact that, women are under represented in key areas of decision-making. In such a state of affairs their ability to influence policies that are gender sensitive remain substantially curtailed. Their human development potential is therefore negatively affected to a great extent.

However, the low levels of education must not necessarily be taken as the true reflection of the facts on the ground for the reason that, according to Todaro (1976), majority urbanites especially the educated migrate into towns from rural areas in search of jobs. Central Division cannot be an exception to this important finding especially due to the acute job scarcity in Kenya. It is therefore probable that, most educated people have migrated to Nairobi and other major urban centers in the country in search of jobs and

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therefore necessitating their under representation in the current study. Nevertheless, there are low levels of education in the study area.

According to the Mwingi District Development Plan 1997/2001, the largest labor force as at 1996 was employed in the agricultural and livestock sectors. True to this, this study found that 54.6% of the respondents were peasant farmers. Worse, in 1989, 45% of the labor force in the district lacked both basic and technical training. With such a percentage of labor force being unskilled, earnings accruing to such people are necessarily low and so are savings. In this case, their human development potential is highly compromised, thanks to inadequate opportunities occasioned by low levels of education, inadequate employment opportunities, etc.

In the two sub locations, only 7.7% of the sampled individuals had university level of education with men slightly outnumbering women. Interestingly, no man had attended adult literacy classes despite more men than women in the sample having had no education. This is corroborated by GoK (1996), which puts it, that; adult literacy classes remain, dominated by women. In a key informant interview with a local adult literacy teacher a Mrs. Lydia Kilonzi, it was established that it was not easy to convince men to attend adult literacy classes. In her words,

Men think going to school at old age may lower their dignity and authority and make them be ridiculed by their wives. They believe this is a sign of individual weakness and inadequacy.

This is perhaps reinforced by the fact that, most adult literacy teachers in the study area are middle-aged women. Therefore old men would feel ashamed to be shown how to read and write by women young enough to be their daughters or grandchildren. This finding is somehow corroborated by GoK (1996), which found out that the ratio of men to women enrolled for adult literacy classes in Kenya in 1995 was 1:3. From this, it concludes that women continue to dominate adult literacy classes.

Overall, the findings indicate low levels of development. Since education remains an important indicator of development, women are depicted as having a lower level of education than men a thing, also registered by McMichael (2000) when he says that, presently, almost as twice as many women as men are illiterate and the difference is growing. With women representing a lower percentage in educational achievements than men, the latter's human development will as well be higher than the former.

4.3.2. Level of income.

Table 3: Gender of respondent versus monthly income (in Kshs.).

	None	< 5000	5001-10000	10001-15000	> 15001	Total
Male	2 (1.5)	31 (23.8)	14 (10.8)	13 (10)	8 (6.2)	68 (52.4)
Female	12 (9.2)	27 (20.8)	8 (6.2)	8 (6.2)	7 (5.4)	62 (47.6)
Total	14(10.8)	58 (44.6)	22 (17)	21 (16.2)	15 (11.5)	130(100)

Table 3 show that, majority of the respondents can rightly be described as income-poor with 55.3% having monthly incomes below Kshs.5000 and only 27.7% getting over Kshs.10000 per month. This is understandable the setting of the study being a rural area where unpredictable and therefore unreliable natural weather is the mainstay of the

majority people (table 4). 10.7 % of the people had no income at all and indicated as having depended on their spouses, children and other close relatives. According to the Mwingi District Development Plan 1997/2001 in 1989, 45% of the district's labor force lacked both basic and technical education. In this case earnings are bound to be low and hence necessarily meaning high dependency ratio.

High dependency ratio, limits savings due to high consumption. In this case, development generally and human development in particular is hard to come by since almost all earnings are geared towards subsistence. Due to low incomes there has been numerous fundraisers in Kalisasi sub location with four of them having been conducted in the area during the month of August 2002 alone. (Source: Assistant Chief's office).

Table 3 also shows glaring income disparities between men and women. In this regard, of all respondents without any income at all, women comprised 85.7%. This is a reflection of high dependency ratio. According to the Mwingi District Development Plan 1997/2001, for every 100 economically active individuals, there were 130 dependants in Mwingi District in 1996. In addition, with low incomes and at times no income at all (table 3), women are rendered less productive especially outside the household. Even in households, their purchasing power and even bargaining for a fair share of the domestic duties are grossly compromised.

Women as depicted in table 3 are poorer than men and so long as income remains not only an indicator of human development but also empowerment, it follows that men are

more empowered than women. This latter case is especially in terms of purchasing power. If the traditional beliefs and practices in the superiority of men over women are added onto this, it only helps to make the already ugly women situation uglier.

Women area of operation remains largely the household, thanks to low levels of education, income and the prevailing traditional beliefs and practices. The latter are particularly entrenched in age-old gender-based stereotypes to the disadvantage of women. This is especially due to the dichotomisation of the society into the private and public spheres with women taking the former, leaving the latter for men. Such dichotomisation has worked to isolate women from the off-farm environment and thus negatively affecting to a great extent their human development potential. Ritzer (1992) sums up the scenario thus,

The system that restricts women to the public sphere of social life-money, power, status, freedom...burdens them with the private sphere responsibilities, isolates them in individual households and excuses their mates from sharing private sphere drudgeries, is the system that produces gender inequality.

(Ritzer, 1992:463)

4.3.3. Principle occupation

Table 4: Gender of respondent versus principle occupation.

	Public sector	Private sector (White collar)	Casual/temporary employment	Business/trading	Peasant farmer	Total
Male	15 (11.5)	1 (0.8)	10 (7.7)	8 (6.2)	34(26.2)	68(52.4)
Female	15 (11.5)	2 (1.5)	0 (0)	8 (6.2)	37(28.5)	62 (47.6)
Total	30 (23)	3 (2.3)	10 (7.7)	16 (12.4)	71(54.6)	130(100)

Table 4 show that, 54.6% of all respondents were peasant farmers. Peasant farming in Mwingi is largely for subsistence consumption owing to unpredictable and therefore unreliable weather patterns. This in turn leads to poor and at times no crop yields at all. Whenever there are good crop yields, for example after the El Nino rains of 1997/98, there is almost always a guaranteed farmer apathy and glut, leading to disposing of the surplus produce at very low prices (GoK, 1996).

The lack of a farmer-controlled marketing channel leaves the farmers at the mercy of uncompromising middlemen who remain the de jure price determinants. Besides, choice of crops is very poor among the farmers as they avoid drought resistant crops like cotton and millet. Moreover, farming patterns remain poor and application of fertilizers, construction of terraces and use of pesticides is quite minimal as pointed out by an NGO executive involved in community development in the following words,

“people here believe in natural soil fertility. Even application of farm yard manure which would cost them nothing is almost non-existent. Many farmers are skeptical about pesticides and other agricultural production chemicals. Besides, change of

government policy on agriculture in which services are demand driven seem not to go down well with the farmers. They still believe extension officers should visit them in the field without the farmers requesting for the services”.

(Source: NGO executive, 2002).

The foregoing implies low crop yields and by extension low levels of income in the study areas. Low-income levels necessarily mean low human development and the end product is poverty. It must also be pointed out that due to low incomes, prices of farm inputs like fertilizers and pesticides may as well keep farmers away from using them and not necessarily scepticism as pointed out in the foregoing quotation.

Since the majority is employed in the agricultural sector (GoK 1996), taking into account the weather patterns and the poor choice of crops among the farmers, low incomes are expected. Low incomes are direct ticket to low savings and hence investments, what Saleemi (1981) calls a vicious cycle of poverty. In a state of vicious cycle of poverty, human development is hard to come by owing to the subsistence nature of production and hence low saving. According to the Mwingi District Development Plan 1997/2001, the climate and soils of the district are quite conducive for growing both castor oil and cotton. Interestingly though, these cash crops fetched the lowest income for the farmers in 1995 (GoK, 1996).

Even though there is a gender balance in business undertaking, there was however glaring disparities between the businesses men and women ran, with the former running the lucrative ones in terms of capital investment and even returns. Men engaged in

wholesaling and retailing, owned hardware stores, petrol stations, motor garages, and bookshops and were the butchers and even in other lucrative businesses. Women on the other hand mainly engaged in sale of secondhand goods, vegetables and other low-income earning activities. Mneney (2000) puts it this way,

Women formal labor force participation is still much less than that of men. Consequently, the majority women are forced into informal sector where incomes are usually unreliable.

(Mneney, 2000:122).

Due to high capital investment by men, larger profits accrued to them. On the other hand, women earned meager profits hardly enough to support their families and leave anything as savings, thanks to low levels of capital investment in their businesses. True to this assertion is the fact that, even though generally majority people in the study area are income-poor, women are poorer than men. In a deductive argument, such state of affairs emanates from the prevailing socio-economic circumstances, which are mostly unfavorable to the poor generally, and women in particular. Mitullah et al (2001) have captured this scenario in the words,

Women businesses in comparison to men in the informal sector start small, grow slowly and end up smaller than men's businesses. This is because, women have limited access to resources, own less productive assets, have limited commodities and also spend less hours of trading compared to men.

(Mitullah et al 2001:20)

Not surprising then that, some women businesses stagnate and die out as men expand theirs. During the rainy season, women businesses have to remain closed most of the

time, as they have to tend their farms. This is compounded by the fact that women businesses are also small in terms of capital investment. In this regard and as will be shown later, women take the bulk of farm work. Above all, it was evident from both key informant interviews and focus group discussions that, whatever income accrued to women, they could not budget it single-handedly. In a focus group discussion, one participant Mrs. Mary Muthui while acknowledging the superiority of men over women in the traditional Akamba household used the age-old adage, *Ngingo ndikilaa mutwe* (the neck cannot bypass the head). This was in reference to the fact that, women should not do anything without informing their husbands save for cooking and other domestic chores.

4.4. Gender Relations and Rural Development.

The UNDP (1999) puts it that gender relations in Kenya have been molded by a combination of factors that include cultural practices, awareness, education, economic conditions, traditional and modern laws and emerging patterns of social organization. These conditions, shape the kind of socio-cultural, economic and political environment in which men and women operate on a daily basis. In order to understand this context, an assessment of the existing gender relations and human development is important.

4.4.1. Individual Decision-Making Capacity and Personal Access to Community Resources.

(a). Individual Decision-Making Capacity.

Individual decision-making capacity is herein defined as the ability of an individual to initiate, influence and implement constructive decisions of both individual and societal

concern with minimal hindrances. With regard to making independent decisions, the study came up with the results in table 5 that depict women as being at a lower level of decision-making than men. In this case, women are prevented from formulating policies that would see their human development potential enhanced. This apparently means that, gender relations affect human development not only on the part of women, but also men. Since those around us remain constantly our teachers, then it means that, men fail to learn from women. This in a way affects men's human development although comparatively to a lesser degree than what women undergo.

Table 5: Gender of respondent verses making independent decisions.

		Making independent decisions		Total
		Yes	No	
Sex of respondent	Male	39 (30)	29 (22.3)	68 (52.4)
	Female	30 (23.1)	32 (24.6)	62 (47.6)
	Total	69 (53.1)	61 (47.6)	130 (100)

Table 5 shows that, when it comes to making independent decisions, men had an upper hand. In this regard, 69 (53.1%) respondents made independent decisions out of which 39 were men. This meant that more men than women made independent decisions.

Even though the findings show that a large number of women made independent decisions, there were however glaring disparities between the decisions men and women made. Most men did not only make decisions of individual as well as household nature, but also those of societal concern. These included disposal of family property, budgeting family income and such other supposedly male duties. Women on the other hand made

mainly household decisions like cooking, fetching water and firewood and in some cases community development matters, the latter however with a lot of influence from men. There was no case of women making decisions single-handedly on family finances. For example, and as will be illustrated later, budgeting family income was either the prerogative of men or both men and women, but not women alone, even when the latter had earned it.

Table 5 also shows that, 22.3% of men and 24.6% of women could not make independent decisions. The implication here is that with such a percentage of men allowing their spouses to influence the decision making process, more important in a rural area, the fight for gender equality should not be regarded as lost. However it needs to be appreciated that since a people's way of life (culture) cannot be changed overnight, the realization of gender equality and therefore the phasing out of unfavorable gender relations must take sometime. Important though is the fact that, generally there is visible role reorganization with men and women taking, albeit grudgingly, roles previously supposed to be traditionally for the opposite sex.

Table 6: Gender of respondent versus limitation to making independent decisions.

		Blockade to making independent decisions				Total
		Nothing	Spouse	Self	Family unity	
Sex of respondent	Male	39 (30)	3 (2.3)	0 (0)	26 (20)	68 (52.4)
	Female	30 (23.1)	6 (4.6)	1 (0.8)	25 (19.2)	62 (47.6)
	Total	69 (53.1)	9 (6.9)	1 (0.8)	51 (39.2)	130 (100)

When prompted to give the reasons as to why they could not make independent decisions, 9 respondents said their spouses were the problem in which case women

outnumbered men. One woman gave personal choice as her reason while a large number of respondents (39.2%) said they feared for family unity in case they did it alone, hence the need to consult. Family unity here was seen as a situation in which the spouses would want to consult one another so that as they go about any family matters there was a consensus between them. In a focused group discussion Mr. Mulandi Nzoka 54, invoked the Akamba adage *ilii yi nyomba yiyuaa kya kwova* (a string in the house cannot be useless). This adage recognized the fact that anyone in a household has a role to play and therefore the act of men consulting their wives was in order. With regard to consulting, women outnumbered men apparently implying that men were becoming more open and gender sensitive especially towards their wives, even in traditional rural households.

Table 7: Gender of respondent versus community-based organization affiliation.

		Community based organization affiliation				Total
		None	1-2 groups	3-4 groups	>5 groups	
Sex of respondent	Male	24 (18.4)	28 (21.6)	15 (11.5)	1 (0.8)	68 (52.4)
	Female	20 (15.4)	14 (10.8)	25 (19.2)	3 (2.3)	62 (47.6)
	Total	44 (34)	42 (32.4)	40 (30.8)	4 (3.1)	130 (100)

Table 7 shows that a considerable number of people were affiliated to CBOs with 33.8% of the sampled individuals being non-members. Gender wise, more men than women were non-members. Most respondents were however members to 1 or 2 CBOs. Even though the findings in table 7 indicate that many people were affiliated to CBOs, in terms of output women run CBOs stood out. In key informant interviews and focus group discussions, it was established that, men and youth groups had done very little to their

members. In the words of one key informant, a Mr. Collins Mulwa a NGO executive in the study area,

Men groups remain dormant most of the time only to be revived during an electioneering year when they use such groups as stepping stones to solicit money from aspiring politicians.

With regard to youth groups,

They remain inactive most of the year only to come alive during Christmas and New Year eves when they slaughter goats.

Women groups on the other hand remain active throughout the year and as such have been used by civic education personnel to gain access to local communities. In this regard, more women than men have been able to benefit a lot from NGOs particularly those involved in civic education. In terms of involvement in development activities, women groups involve themselves in working for members, contributing money to members, buying household utensils for one another, all these activities on a merry-go-round basis so that each member benefits. Of late, Kalusini Women Group in Kalisasi sub location is buying a goat each for two members every month.

(b). Role Played by Individuals In CBOs.

Table 8: Gender of respondent versus role in CBOs.

	Chairperson	Sec-general	Treasurer	Ordinary member	Others
Male	4 (3.1)	7 (5.4)	6 (4.6)	38 (29.2)	6 (4.6)
Female	10 (7.7)	7 (5.4)	15 (11.5)	39 (30)	9 (6.9)
Total	14 (10.8)	14 (10.8)	21 (16.2)	77 (59.2)	15 (11.5)

Leadership is not inborn and hence not a preserve of any individual. For this reason, since leadership traits are acquired rather than genetically inherited from one's parents, it follows that each individual irrespective of gender identity has the potential of becoming a leader if proper socialization is put in place early in life. Unfortunately, the kind of exposure and socialization differs with each gender. While boys are socialized to be leaders and hence authoritative, girls are on the other hand socialized to be led and hence submission to men either as husbands, fathers or even as brothers. It is this kind of exposure and socialization that is responsible for the under representation of women in key areas of decision-making.

As shown in table 8, there were more women than men chairpersons, treasurers and ordinary members and an equal gender representation in the post of secretary-general. Also, more women than men held other posts such as patron, vice chair, etc. With more women as CBO officials, it implies that either women CBOs are more democratic in terms of giving each member a chance to lead or there are more women than men CBOs. The latter is particularly true for Kalisasi sub location where there were 27 women compared to 4 men and 2 youth groups. Most of these groups however are informal and therefore unknown by the Ministry of Culture and Social Services. It is also instructive to point out that, the high number of women CBO officials was due to the fact that some women held posts in more than one group.

(c). Making Decisions at Household Level.

In this section, only four decisions have been considered. These include assigning duties in the family, marketing farm produce, budgeting family income and signing family documents like cheques as well as receiving money on behalf of the family.

Table 9: Making decisions at the household level.

	Man	Woman	Both man and woman
Assigning duties	83 (63.8)	3 (2.3)	44 (33.8)
Marketing farm produce	24 (18.5)	65 (50)	41(31.5)
Budgeting family income	39 (30)	0 (0)	91(70)
Signing family documents	119 (91.5)	1 (0.8)	10 (7.7)

In terms of assigning duties in the family, table 9 shows that, men had an upper hand. In 63.8 % of all sampled households, men assigned duties in the family single-handedly. This compares unfavorably to only 2.3% of the households where women could do the same. In 33.8% of the households however, assigning duties was unisex.

Overall, therefore table 9 shows that it was only in 36.1% of the households where women played a role in assigning duties. The implication here is that with men being the principal decision makers, women remain implementers. In this way, since human being are born selfish, it is unlikely that men would assign themselves tedious and time consuming duties. No wonder the study found out that, in 93.8% and 93.1% of all households, milking and washing respectively was strictly the work of women (table 25). This finding contradicted the age-old A kamba adage, *kala kamwe kayuwaa ndaa* (one

finger does not kill a louse). If one finger cannot kill a louse, then how comes in 93.8% of the households it is killing the louse?

Table 9 again show that, more women than men do the marketing of farm produce, with 50% of all households sampled women being the marketers. It was only in 18.5% of the households where men could do the marketing of farm produce single-handedly. In 31.5% of households this task was unisex. The fact that there were more women than men doing the marketing was in line with the fact that more women than men were involved in sowing and harvesting (table 25) and that there were more women than men who were peasant farmers in the study area (table 4).

However, the income that accrued to women in most households was budgeted by men and there was no case where women could do it single-handedly even when they had earned it. Whereas this may be the case in many or all the Africans communities, it is not a different story in the west. As Clement and Myles (1994) opine, in North America men have more say in major financial decisions while women have a major say in family budget implementation. In Nordic countries though, equality in the foregoing regard prevails. With majority residents having indicated peasant farming as their principal occupation (table 4), it is hereby argued that, most income accruing to such households was from peasant farming. Since peasant farming involves sowing and harvesting much of which is done by women it is expected that women play a leading role in budgeting family income in such households. Surprisingly however, the study found out that it was men who instead played a leading role in budgeting family income in peasant households

irrespective of who had earned it. Table 9 shows that in 30% of the sampled households men did the budgeting of family income single-handedly, while in 70% of others it was unisex.

If men were not seen in the farms directly sowing and harvesting, how comes they were so much involved in budgeting for what they had not directly worked for? Doesn't this amount to reaping where one had not sown? Mneney (2000) uses the following words to capture this,

Women in rural areas are often confronted with serious constraints including lack of access to land, and other resources and lack of control over income from income generating activities they engage in.

(Mneney, 2000:120).

Family documents in this case mean and include cheques, land title deeds, agreements and wills. This also includes receiving money on behalf of the family. In this regard, table 9 shows that, 91.5% of the sampled households, it was only men who could sign family documents and receive payments on behalf of the family. This compares unfavorably to only 0.8% of the households where women could do the same. In 7.7% of the households, this task was unisex. The larger percentage of men signing family documents on behalf of the family means that, women access to family property is grossly curtailed. Overall, table 9 shows women as a disadvantaged lot with regard to accessing family property and by extension society resources like credit. In this case, women lack the

resources to enhance their human development even when the opportunities are open since men control resources such as money. Such a scenario requires an upturn.

Acknowledging the immense role played by women in the household, Sivard (1985) says that if the value of women's work in the household were to be given an economic measure, it would add an estimated one-third to the global Gross Domestic Product. This is especially so because, their multiple domestic roles tend to obscure their economic activity and this is more likely to happen where there are strong cultural preconceptions about the roles men and women should play. This is more pronounced in much of Africa and in Islamic countries.

(b). Access to Community Resources.

The limits put on women's freedom and access to resources, services and opportunities hamper not only their advancement, but also the country's development (UNDP, 1999). This section aims to highlight this assertion and thereafter suggest ways of arresting the same. Having looked at the decisions made by individuals and the role they play in CBOs, then what bearing does this have on personal access to community resources needed for human development? Just to name but a few, community resources here include credit, land, safe drinking water, good health facilities, labor, education, etc.

Table 10: Gender of respondent versus regularity of credit access.

		Regularity of loan access					Total
		No access	Very rarely	Rarely	Often	Very often	
Sex of respondent	Male	52 (40)	2 (1.5)	2 (1.5)	5 (3.8)	7 (5.4)	68(52.4)
	Female	38(29.2)	0 (0)	3 (2.3)	6 (4.6)	15 (11.5)	62(47.6)
	Total	90(69.2)	2 (1.5)	5 (3.8)	11 (8.5)	22 (17)	130(100)

Of all the sampled individuals, 69.2% had no access to credit, with men outnumbering women. This is mostly for the reason that, credit organizations like Kenya Women Finance Trust advances credit to women. It should also be noted here that, there were more women than both men and youth groups in the study area. In addition, women groups are more proactive and therefore more women accessing credit was expected. Again, since land title deeds against which men would use to access credit have not been issued, they had very few options left. This was in addition to the fact that, KWFT loan was strictly for women and hence discriminatory in nature, which led one Justus Muia to wonder, “ Where did men’s credit go?”

Table 11: Gender of respondent versus limitation to credit access.

		Blockade to credit access					Total
		Nothing	Collateral security	Unaware of them	Don't know process	Don't need them	
Sex of respondent	Male	17 (13.1)	36 (27.6)	2 (1.5)	6 (4.6)	7 (5.4)	68 (52.4)
	Female	25 (19.2)	28 (21.6)	0 (0)	3 (2.3)	6(4.6)	62 (47.6)
	Total	42 (32.3)	64 (49.2)	2 (1.5)	9 (6.9)	13 (10)	130 (100)

A considerable number of individuals had no access to credit and men outnumbered women for reasons outlined earlier. When asked why they did not access credit even with

the presence of two banks in Mwingi Town (Kenya Commercial Bank and Postbank), respondents gave various reasons. These ranged from lack of collateral security to unawareness of the existence of such facilities. 49.2% of the respondents indicated lack of collateral security as the impediment to credit access in which men outnumbered women. Lack of collateral security is expected for the reason that even though land adjudication in the study area was finalized in the late 1980s title deeds against the land which one would use to get credit have not been issued. This has particularly been an impediment to credit access especially to those who do not belong to saving and credit co-operative societies e.g. Mwingi Mwalimu and Jamii SACCOs.

Nevertheless, a key informant who then worked with Action-Aid Kenya, Mr. Collins Mulwa explained that, there are places within Migwani Division where land title deeds have been issued. He further opined with regard to title deeds that,

Asu no mathangu ma mana. Maitonya kutumwa mundu ukwata Mukovo

(those are useless papers, which cannot make one get a loan).

Table 12: Gender of respondent versus value of labor employed monthly.

		Value of labor employed monthly in Kshs.					Total
		No access	<1000	1001-2000	2001-3000	>3000	
Sex of respondent	Male	19 (14.6)	19 (14.6)	15 (11.5)	3 (2.3)	12 (9.2)	68 (52.4)
	Female	11 (8.5)	16 (12.4)	18 (13.8)	5 (3.8)	12 (9.2)	62 (47.6)
	Total	30 (23.1)	35 (26.9)	33 (25.4)	8 (6.2)	24 (18.4)	130 (100)

Table 12 shows that, majority of the respondents were able to employ labor. In this regard, 77% of the respondents had access to labor with just 23% having no access. However, majority of the people were limited to accessing labor valued at less than

Ksh.2000 per month. This is in line with the low-income levels of the local people. Only 24.6% of the individuals were able to purchase labor worth more than Ksh.2000 monthly.

Gender wise, more men than women accessed labor, simply because they had higher levels of income than women (table 3) meaning they had a higher purchasing power. In addition, they appropriated not only the money that accrued to themselves, but also that of their wives’.

Table 13: Gender of respondent versus awareness and access to first aid training.

	First aid training awareness			Fist aid training access		
	Yes	No	Total	Yes	No	Total
Male	26 (20)	42 (32.4)	68 (52.4)	9 (6.9)	59 (45.4)	68 (52.4)
Female	17(13.1)	45 (34.6)	62 (47.6)	6 (4.6)	56 (43.2)	62 (47.6)
Total	43 (33.1)	87(67)	130 (100)	15 (11.5)	115 (88.6)	130 (100)

Table 13 shows that majority of the people were neither aware nor had access to first aid training. In this regard, men outnumbered women with regard to both issues. As the table shows, the gap between those unable to access and unaware of these services was so huge that there was a clear reflection on low levels of human development. Here, 69.9% of the individuals were not aware and 84.5% had no access to first aid training. This was expected owing to low levels of education among the local people (table 2), which made access to information of this kind problematic. Such figures depict a low level of human development which to some extent could be attributed to socio-cultural practices which favor men especially with access to formal education. In this case, it is likely that, lack of information in this regard could be due to low levels of education. On the part of women

low levels of education could be due to the parents' preference for boys' at the expense of girls' education (GoK, 2002). This obviously has a negative impact on human development on the part of women in the study area.

Table 14: Gender of respondent versus awareness and access to immunization services.

	Awareness of Immunization services			Access to immunization services		
	Yes	No	Total	Yes	No	Total
Male	64 (49.2)	4 (3.1)	68 (52.3)	60 (46.2)	8 (6.2)	68 (2.4)
Female	60 (46.2)	2 (1.5)	62 (47.6)	58 (44.6)	4 (3.1)	62(47.7)
Total	124 (95.4)	6 (4.6)	130 (100)	118 (90.8)	12 (9.2)	130(100)

Table 14 shows that, a considerable majority of the respondents were not only aware, but also accessed these services. It was actually 95.4% and 90.7% for awareness and access respectively. If looked at gender wise, of all women, 96.8% were aware of the immunization services. On the other hand, 94.1% of men were aware of the services. This slight disparity may be due to the fact that, it is mostly women who take children to the hospital for immunization during the postnatal care. Since these services are free and mobile clinics are available up to and including visits to households by health personnel for purposes of immunization, this was expected. This has been made possible by the donor funded Kenya Expanded Programme on Immunization (KEPI). This is an indication of the success of immunization programme in the study area and perhaps for the whole district.

Gender wise, more men than women were aware and could as well access immunization services, perhaps due to the low representation of the latter in the sample. Despite the

availability of free immunization services 9.2% of the individuals could not access these services. On probing, it was established that these belonged to a Christian religious sect called *Kavonokya* (the saviour). This sect, it was established did not believe in medicine whether modern or traditional. Njagi (2000) also found the same sect in Tharaka North District that incidentally borders Mwingi District.

Table 15: Gender of respondent versus awareness and access to civic education.

	Civic education awareness			Civic education access		
	Yes	No	Total	Yes	No	Total
Male	41 (31.5)	26 (20)	68 (52.4)	17 (13.1)	51 (39.2)	68 (52.4)
Female	40 (30.8)	22 (17)	62 (47.6)	23 (17.7)	39 (30)	62 (47.6)
Total	81 (62.3)	48 (37)	130 (100)	40 (30.8)	90 (69.2)	130 (100)

Most people were aware of civic education services with men slightly outnumbering women in this regard. However, in terms of access to civic education, a considerable majority (69.2%) had no access to civic education. This reflects badly on the level of human development since apparently, majority did not know their basic human rights.

Gender wise, more women than men had access to civic education. This is for the reason as explained earlier that there were more women than men CBOs and that the civic education personnel used to interact with the local community through CBOs. In this regard, Denton (2002) says that such solidarity groups have become an entry point to address community issues ranging from health, education and childcare to women rights. One civic education NGO that does this is the Center for Human Rights and Civic Education (CHRCE), Mwingi.

Table 16: Gender of the respondent versus access to good health services.

	Access to good health facilities			Total
		Yes	No	
Sex of respondent	Male	22(17)	46(35.4)	68(52.4)
	Female	14(10.8)	48(36.9)	62(47.6)
	Total	36(27.6)	94(72.4)	130(100)

Access to good health facilities does not only mean the availability of qualified medical personnel and medicine but also the ability to afford the services by the patient. In addition, it also means nearness to the health facilities. Table 16 shows that, only 27.7% of all respondents had access to good health facilities, leaving a considerable majority with no access. This is actually expected since with the run-down of government hospitals, local residents were left with the option of private hospitals and clinics. The latter, charge exorbitant prices for their services. This is compounded by the fact that, most people are income-poor and hence can ill-afford the private medical services, hence had to make do with the poor public health facilities.

Gender wise, more men than women get access to good health services for the reason that men having higher levels of income they necessarily have a higher purchasing power. With regard to health, Denton (2002) asserts that, often women are the recipients of unhygienic and polluted environment and vulnerable to water-borne diseases that significantly affect all groups with women and children getting a major beating. Sivard (1985) opines that, in much of the world, more women than men are more likely to be malnourished, poor, and have less access to good medical care. The adverse effects of these conditions on the health of women are likely to have a cumulative impact on their

children especially in poor households. Generally, the findings reflect negatively for development since health is an important indicator of development. In the event that the health of a people is compromised, development is negatively affected to a great extent, as resources earlier earmarked for investment in development for example in education, are re-channeled to the provision of medical care.

Generally, access to community resources differ by gender due to mainly socio-cultural biases and perhaps lack of a comprehensive policy for addressing gender disparities which would ensure equal opportunities for both men and women.

Chi-Square Test of the Hypothesis.

H1: That individual decision-making capacity (CBO affiliation) affects personal access to community resources (credit/loan).

Table 17: CBO affiliation versus credit access cross tabulation.

		Loan/credit access		Total
		Yes	No	
Community based organization affiliation	None	12 (9.2)	32(24.6)	44(33.8)
	1-2 groups	9(6.9)	33(25.4)	42(32.3)
	3-4 groups	19(14.6)	21(16.2)	40(30.8)
	5 and above	3(2.3)	1 (0.8)	4(3.1)
Total		43(33.1)	87 (66.9)	130(100)

Chi-square =10.8 with 3df significant at 98.3% confidence level.

P>0.05, hence relationship highly significant at P>0.05.

In this hypothesis, individual decision-making capacity (CBO affiliation) is taken as the independent variable, while access to community resources (loan/credit access) is the

dependent variable. The relationship was found to be highly significant at 98.3% confidence level. It was hence concluded that for this particular study individual decision-making capacity affects personal access to community resources. This was in line with an earlier tentative conclusion that CBO affiliation as a measure of individual decision-making capacity influences his access to community resources such as loan. It is hence reaffirmed that the more an individual is able to make decisions the more likely he/she is to get access to community resources.

It can therefore be inferred that, in so far as people are in positions of decision-making, their access to community resources is highly enhanced. This is perhaps why high-class residential neighborhoods in the City of Nairobi like Karen and Muthaiga, where the affluent and the political decision-makers reside, have always had essential services like water, sanitation and security just to name but a few. This contrasts with slum areas like Mathare, Kibera and Mukuru kwa Njenga where the reverse is true.

Looked at gender wise, more women than men were in positions of decision-making (as CBO members) and that's why they could access credit facilities (table 11). Nevertheless, other factors may come into play with respect to credit access especially for women. One of these is the fact that MFIs from which women got credit were biased against men.

4.4.2. Nature of Conjugal Property Ownership and Individual Empowerment.

(a). Nature of Conjugal Property Ownership

In this section conjugal property, means any family belonging ranging from permanent assets such as land to liquid cash. These are presented in contingency tables against sex of the respondents. The aim is to investigate and by contingency tables describe who among the spouses possesses (owns) which family property. Later, it is shown as to whether the nature of conjugal property ownership is in anyway related to individual empowerment as per the data collected.

Table18: Gender of respondent versus property ownership.

		Property ownership		Total
		Yes	No	
Sex of respondent	Male	64 (49.2)	4 (3.1)	68 (52.4)
	Female	50 (38.5)	12 (9.2)	62 (47.6)
	Total	114 (87.7)	16 (12.3)	130 (100)

Table 18 Shows that there were more men than women who owned property and therefore implying that women were a disadvantaged lot in this regard. Interestingly though, the property women indicated as owned, more so land, was actually family property which in almost all instances was registered in the name of their husbands as household heads. An interviewee, Martha Kimanzi opined that,

Mundu muka nde kindu kyake kya kwathia. Mali yonze; indo, muunda, syana ona iveti no sya munduume (a woman has nothing that she controls. All property; cattle, farm, children and even wives themselves belong to the man).

This goes along way in corroborating Wanjala (2000) sentiments that Kenyan women are yet to find an equitable place in the country's social, economic and political affairs. In the same line of argument, Lipton (1985) argues that if a person does not own property, his/her net yield from combining his/her labor and other assets is substantially curtailed. As a consequence, such an individual is quite disempowered. According to Wanjala (2000), a woman who is empowered in property matters, even within the strictures of matrimony, is certain to make a stronger contribution to the growth of the economy and the development of the society. This is not the case with those individuals who do not own any property in Central Division of Mwingi District and elsewhere in the country.

Table 19: Gender of respondent versus type of property owned.

	Male	Female	Total
No property owned	4 (3.1)	12 (9.2)	16 (12.4)
Land/real estate	60 (46.2)	50 (38.5)	110 (84.6)
Livestock	48 (36.9)	32 (24.6)	80 (61.5)
Farm produce	52 (40)	43 (33.1)	95 (73.1)
Kitchenware	40 (30.8)	45 (34.6)	85 (64)
Bank account	20 (15.4)	16 (12.4)	36 (27.6)
Vehicle/heavy machines	2 (1.5)	1 (0.8)	3 (2.3)

Table 19 shows that more men than women owned all categories of property except kitchenware. Even farm produce whose physical production was largely the work of women (table 25) became the property of men when it came to disposal and especially converting it to cash.

Having established that it was only in 0.8% of the sampled households where men did cook (table 25), it was interesting to find out that in such households, men could claim

ownership to kitchenware such as pots, spoons and plates. This highly corroborates the words of an interviewee, Martha Kimanzi captured earlier. Owing to low levels of income among women, the finding that more men than women had bank accounts was expected. Lower levels of education among women, which would, make them unable to secure good jobs and hence open bank accounts and enjoy other banking services, also reinforce this.

That more men than women owned land/real estate was expected since property inheritance in all Kenyan communities, the Kamba included is patriarchal. Mubuu et al (2001) emphasize that women largely own and control movable assets like farm products and household goods whereas men own and control immovable assets like land and real estate. Hence sons have almost an automatic right to inheritance of their fathers' land and other property. Daughters, Mweseli (2000) says are regarded as passersby and therefore entitled to nothing from their fathers' property. Even when they marry, daughters do not own property as such, but remain only with user rights especially with regard to land and other permanent assets (tables 20 & 21). Although table 19 shows that a considerable number of women owned property. However, such women did not have the authority to use and dispose of such property at will (tables 20 and 21). Hence, they actually did not own it if we define property ownership to include authority to use and dispose of it at will.

Table 20: Gender of respondent versus name registered on property.

		Name registered on property					Total
		No property owned	Husband	Wife	Both husband and wife	Children	
Sex of respondent	Male	4 (3.1)	61 (46.9)	0 (0)	2 (1.5)	1 (0.8)	68 (52.4)
	Female	12 (9.2)	49 (37.7)	1 (0.8)	0 (0)	0 (0)	62 (47.6)
	Total	16 (12.4)	110 (84.6)	1 (0.8)	2 (1.5)	1 (0.8)	130 (100)

Table 20 shows that in 84.6% of the sampled households, family property more so land, was registered in the name of men, who were regarded as household heads. They (men) hence remained de jure owners of property by virtue of being the ones whose names the property was registered. This compares unfavorably to only 0.8% of the households where property was registered in the name of women. The implication here is that, in terms of property ownership in 84.6% of sampled household, women empowerment was non-existent this being only for men. They (women) for example could not access loan from bank against family property land they did not own it.

In this line of argument, Benschop (2002) says that, in Kenya, neither the Trust Land Act nor the other laws applicable to land mention women. Registration usually occurred and still occurs in men's names and whenever a woman's name is used it is usually because she's a widow, or that her sons are too young to be registered. All in all, even though it was only land and vehicles which could be registered, in focused group discussions and key informant interviews, it was apparent that whether property was registered or not, it belonged to the man as the household head.

Since a considerable 54.6% (table 4) indicated peasant farming as their principal occupation, this shows the importance of land as a productive asset for the rural poor. Its inaccessibility by some segments of the population has therefore an indisputable bearing on their income and by extension empowerment. This is the case with women in Central Division of Mwingi District where there was only one instance in which property was registered in the name of women (table 20).

Accordingly it is hereby argued that the property women indicated as owning (table 19) was actually owned by their husbands. They (women) hence regarded their husband's property, as their own by virtue of being the latter's wives. However, this is not the case since women could not use the property as they wished, for example disposing some of it to offset family bills. It was only in 1.5% of the households, where property was registered jointly between the spouses. In one household, property was registered in the name of children. However, after probing it was established that the property was registered in the name of an only son and not any of his four sisters, all older than him. No wonder then that Mweseli (2000) opines daughters are regarded as passersby and hence entitled to nothing from their father's property.

Table 21: Gender of respondent versus entitlement to use and disposal of property.

		Entitlement to use and disposal of property					
		No property owned	Husband	Wife	Both husband and wife	Children	Total
Sex of respondent	Male	4 (3.1)	35 (26.9)	0 (0)	24 (18.4)	1 (0.8)	68 (52.4)
	Female	12 (9.2)	27 (20.8)	0 (0)	27 (20.8)	0 (0)	62 (47.6)
	Total	16 (12.4)	62 (47.6)	0 (0)	51 (39.2)	1 (0.8)	130 (100)

The study found no case where women could use and dispose of property at will single-handedly. This compares unfavorably with the fact that, in 47.7% of the sampled households, men had the authority to do so single-handedly.

Interestingly, even in a case where property especially land was registered in the name of a wife, she could not use and dispose of it at will; she had to consult her husband. In 39.2% of the households use and disposal of property was unisex, while in only 0.8% of the households, other people apart from the wife and husband could do it. These latter could be parents or children. Even in cases where use and disposal of property was unisex, women in most cases came as rubberstamps as was evident in FGDs. Men could decide and call in women to endorse their decisions without any questions. When property ownership is defined to include not only authority to use and dispose but also the name registered on the same property, women in Central Division remain in the far background.

In such a case where people do not own property such as land, wealth accumulation is elusive, and as such these people become unlikely customers of financial institutions such as banks. In addition, women domestic burden lowers their mobility and income, as they significantly limit not only their entry into off-farm activities but also the range of choices and opportunities available to them. In this case, their human development cannot flourish.

(b). Individual Empowerment

Individual empowerment has been defined as state of affairs, which facilitates an individual to gain wider control over resources without disadvantaging others in terms of accessing the same resources. Having established the extent of conjugal property ownership, it is important to investigate what bearing this has on individual empowerment. If property ownership is defined to include the authority to use and dispose of property and the name registered on property, then it can be argued that women property ownership is insignificant (table 20 & 21). This is expected to have a bearing on the empowerment of the individual.

However, when it comes to accessing loan (table 10), it was found that even though more men than women owned property, more women than men had access to loan/credit. This may apparently seem to refute the hypothesis that the “nature of conjugal property ownership affects individual empowerment”. Nevertheless, it is maintained that this hypothesis still holds despite more women than men having access to credit against expectation. This can be explained by the fact that, women accessed credit from Micro-Finance Institutions instead of banks. The former unlike the latter required no collateral security except saving some amount of money with a MFI after which an organized and legally registered group could apply for a loan. A key informant Mrs. Monica Katuku narrated it in the following words,

Once we are a registered group, we contribute some money and safe it with our creditors (KWFT) until we have an amount depending on how much we want to borrow. For example if we want to borrow Kshs. 40,000, we have to safe Kshs.20,000 with KWFT first and this is how they assess our creditworthiness in addition to the fact that we are registered with the government. At the same time, as a group

we have to know one another in terms of creditworthiness.

In acknowledging the role of micro-credit to rural poor, Denton (2002) says such have become a staple component of development paradigm and is increasingly being recognized as a pertinent poverty reduction strategy. It has opportunities to reduce gender disparities in wealth creation and involve more women in decision-making whether at the family level or outside it. Again, these Micro-Finance Institutions advance loans to organized and active groups. In this case, women groups were very handy since they were more active and aggressive than were both men and youth groups. Such institutions that advance loans to women in Central Division include Jamii Bora Trust and Kenya Women Finance Trust. However it must be emphasized that, some of the loanees end up being poorer than before. In focused group discussions, it was established that some women, partly due to inadequate managerial skills in finances end up misusing their loans only to sell livestock later to repay them.

In other cases, people in white collar jobs like teachers got credit occasionally from their respective Saving and Credit Co-operative Societies in the name of Mwalimu and Jamii SACCOs for mainstream and adult literally teachers respectively.

Table 22: Gender of respondent versus credit accessed per annum in Kshs.

		Loan access per annum in Kshs				Total
		No access	5000-10000	10001-15000	>15001	
Sex of respondent	Male	52 (40)	2 (1.5)	0 (0)	14 (10.8)	68 (52.4)
	Female	38 (29.2)	4 (3.1)	4 (3.1)	16 (12.4)	62 (47.6)
	Total	90 (69.2)	6 (4.6)	4 (3.1)	30 (23.1)	130 (100)

In terms of the amount of loan accessed by individuals more women than men accessed more credit per annum. This is again for the reasons outlined earlier. Generally, majority people got a loan worth more than Kshs. 15,000 per annum. Overall, and as shown in table 21, only 23.1% of all respondents got loans exceeding Kshs. 15000 annually. The findings that at no one household was family income budgeted by a woman single-handedly, and that in 30% of others this was the sole prerogative of men (tables 9 & 25), it is hereby argued that, the loans which women got never helped them as individuals. Instead, their husbands appropriated such, if we go by the words of one interviewee, Martha Kimanzi captured earlier and those of Mubuu et al (2001).

Majority of those who did not access loan indicated lack of collateral security as the problem (table 11). Generally, 69.2% of the interviewed individuals did not access loan and out of which 71.1% indicated lack of collateral security and a further 25.5% giving various reasons for non-access to credit (table 11). Such reasons ranged from unaware of the process (1), no need for them (13) and failure to know the process (9). Lack of collateral security was expected since land title deeds in the study area have not been issued despite land adjudication having been completed in the late 1980s. Thus, people could not access credit against the land they owned. This is also reinforced by the fact

that in areas where land has been adjudicated, it was more or less useless especially in terms of enabling one get a bank loan as opined by one key informant whose word were captured earlier. On a general note more men than women did not access credit despite land being registered in their names. This was because, credit facilities available especially micro-credit firms were targeting organized groups in which case women came in handy.

Table 23: Gender of respondent versus limitation to making independent decisions.

		Makes independent decisions		Total
		Yes	No	
Sex of respondent	Male	39 (30)	29 (22.3)	68 (52.4)
	Female	30 (23.1)	32 (24.6)	62 (47.6)
	Total	69 (51.5)	61 (46.9)	130 (100)

Table 23 shows that 51.5% of the sampled individuals made independent decisions in which case men had an upper hand. This necessarily implies that when it comes to making independent decisions, men were more independent than women and therefore meaning disempowerment on the part of the latter. 6.9% of respondents indicated their spouses as the impediment in which case women as expected outnumbered men, with 40.8% of others saying they feared for family unity incase they went ahead to make decisions single-handedly, hence the need to consult their spouses. However, as it turned out to be, in most cases, women were only 'informed' of the decisions made by their spouses and not necessarily consulted. Mubuu et al (2001) put it thus,

They have little or no say over the manner in which such property is harnessed for creation of wealth and improvement of the economy. Further, they cannot effectively influence how and what conditions property can be converted

or disposed off.

(Mubuu et al 2001:2)

Since educational achievement opens other avenues for individual human development, it is seen by this study as a measure of individual empowerment. With reference to table 2 the majority had a level of education below secondary school. This constituted 63.8% of the sampled respondents. The implication here is that majority had low levels of education hence low levels of literacy and by extension low levels of income and productivity. Indeed 23% of the respondents had no education at all. Since education is an important indicator of empowerment and by extension human development the central theme of this study, this scenario depicts low levels of human development. In addition, education is also an indicator of empowerment in terms of securing one a job and as a means of accessing vital information from the media and other related means. There were only 10 university graduates, with men outnumbering women as expected and as found out by GoK (1993,1996).

With men outnumbering women especially in secondary, post-high school colleges and the university levels of education, it follows that, in terms of securing jobs the latter are at a disadvantage, thanks to low levels of education. True to this, Nzioka (1986) found that, in Machakos District, 77% of all male youth polytechnic graduates were in gainful employment. On the other hand, only 29% of female graduates from the same training institutions were employed.

According to UNDP (2002), female participation in employment is crucial in poverty reduction because of their over representation among the poor. Female labor force participation in Kenya accounts for only 30% while they are over 50% in the general population (Kibwana and Mute, 2000; Peet and Hartwick, 1999; UNDP, 2002). UNDP estimates that in Kenyan rural areas women form a strong 70% in agriculture. This means, fewer women than men work for pay as more women than men work in farms. In trying to show the gender disparities in occupations, Mulugeta (1999) reports that out of 317,000 employees in the Republic of Ethiopia, women form just a paltry 92,152 (29%) employees.

This study also treats individual income level as a vital indicator of his/her empowerment. Drawing from table 3, 55.4% of the respondents had monthly incomes below Kshs. 5000, out of which 14 had no income at all. A further 22 had incomes ranging between Kshs. 10,000 and 15,000. This implies that the majority can well be described as income-poor and therefore not empowered especially in terms of purchasing power. Only a minority (11.5%) had monthly incomes above Kshs. 15,000 in which regard men outnumbered women albeit slightly. In all the income categories men outnumbered women, save for the “no income” category. Generally majority people were income-poor with women being the hardest hit, thus meaning, they were much disempowered than men.

Chi-Square Test of the Hypothesis.

H2: Nature of conjugal property ownership affects individual empowerment.

Table 24:Property ownership versus monthly income cross tabulation.

		Monthly income in Kshs.					Total
		No income	<5000	5001-10000	10001-15000	15001>	
Property ownership	Yes	12(9.2)	56(43.1)	20(15.4)	21(16.2)	15(11.5)	124(95.4)
	No	2(1.5)	2(1.5)	2(1.5)	0(0)	0(0)	6(4.6)
Total		14(10.8)	58(44.6)	22(16.9)	21(16.2)	15(11.5)	130(100)

Chi-square = 5.9 with 4df significant at 79.3% confidence level.

$P < 0.05$, hence relationship not significant at $P < 0.05$.

In this hypothesis, *nature of conjugal property ownership* (land ownership) is the independent variable while *individual empowerment* (monthly income) is the dependent variable. When subjected to the chi-square test, the relationship was found to be significant at 79.3% confidence level. Hence evidence from table 24 shows that the statistical relationship between property ownership and individual level of monthly income was significant at 79.3% confidence level which was way below the study's set decision criterion of 95% confidence level. Accordingly and in so far as this study is concerned it was concluded that, property ownership does not significantly influence individual level of monthly income in Central Division.

This finding differs from an earlier tentative conclusion that men are more empowered than women by virtue of being the ones whose names property (land) was registered on (table 21). It is hence inferred that, property ownership especially land according to this study has an insignificant bearing on the level of monthly income of the individual and hence his/her empowerment. Of course it is appreciated that there is a statistical relationship between property ownership and individual monthly income in Central

Division. However, the level at which the relationship is significant is not acceptable in this study, for it falls below the set decision criterion, hence the conclusion that property ownership does not influence the level of monthly income of an individual in Central Division. It is probable that other factors like education and occupation influences the level of individual income but not property ownership.

4.4.3. Division of Labor and Participation in Development Activities.

(a). Gender – Based Division Of Labor

Mubuu et al (2001) say that, among the Maasai, and indeed all Kenyan communities, gender and age defines duties and rights in production. This study focused on 13 domestic duties/tasks and compared men and women involvement in them. This was particularly intended to gauge people's involvement in those activities, in terms of the amounts of time such duties/tasks are likely to take. Here, the amount of time, even though measured qualitatively has an important bearing on the amount of time set aside for off-farm activities such as trading and therefore development.

This in turn has an important bearing on individual participation in development activities especially outside the household. Involvement in activities outside the household can significantly enhance one's human development by way of exposure. However if one's area of operation remains the household and the farm it is unlikely that his/her human development potential could be enhanced. In such a case, opportunities for human resource development are limited and so are the means. Data has been presented thus:

Table 25: Gender-based division of labor.

Activity	Man	Woman	Both man and woman
Cooking	1 (0.8)	120 (92.4)	9 (6.9)
Washing	2 (1.5)	121 (93.1)	7 (5.4)
Herding	76 (58.5)	6 (4.6)	48 (36.9)
Sowing/harvesting	6 (4.6)	32 (24.6)	92 (70.8)
Milking	3 (2.3)	122 (93.8)	5 (3.8)
Assigning duties	83 (63.8)	3 (2.3)	44 (34)
Bread winning	73 (56.2)	2 (1.5)	55 (42.3)
Marketing farm produce	24 (18.4)	65 (50)	41 (31.5)
Naming children	8 (6.2)	34 (26.2)	88 (67.7)
Budgeting family income	39 (30)	0 (0)	91 (70)
Deciding children schooling	52 (40)	0 (0)	78 (60)
Signing family documents	119 (91.5)	1 (0.8)	10 (7.7)
Deciding children circumscion	27 (20.8)	0 (0)	103 (79.2)

Table 25 shows that women take the bulk of the cooking in 92.3% of all sampled households. In 6.9% of all the sampled households, cooking was unisex. Interestingly but highly expected, it was only in one household (0.8%) where cooking was the duty of men. Drawing from such findings and bearing in mind that cooking is a full-time-all-day pre-occupation, it can rightly be inferred that, much of women's time is occupied by cooking and other domestic chores since early in the morning through very late in the evening. Their participation in off-farm activities, say business and white-collar jobs is considerably curtailed. It is hence important to note that since participation in off-farm activities has an important bearing on an individual's empowerment, women in Central Division are grossly disempowered and such a scenario requires an upturn. This will not only be for the benefit of the women themselves but also for the family and the society at large, since they are an integral part of it.

Again, women take an important role when it comes to washing clothes and dishes in the household. In 93.1% of all sampled households, women did the washing, with just 1.5% of households where men did it alone. It was interesting to find that it was only in 5.4% of the households that washing dishes/clothes was unisex. The implication of this finding is that since washing clothes and dishes is a demanding task in all households and especially washing dishes after every meal, women physical presence, more so in 93.1% of the household was a must. Clothes especially for young children need to be washed on a daily basis and should this task be added to cooking, the woman become tethered around the house and household, with little, if any, off-farm involvement. In a focused group discussion, one woman 33 year old Grace Mutia had this to say of the demanding women duties and subsequent restriction on mobility,

We are like tethered cows. Even going to the market or church must be pre-planned four days in advance. getting "fresh air" may be impossible without this prior planning.

The findings revealed an interesting paradigm shift when it comes to herding. Ndeti (1972) opine that herding was a preserve of men in the traditional Akamba household. However, the study found out that even though herding was a masculine task in 58.5% of the sampled household, there was high involvement of women in this task. This is despite, the task being deemed masculine. In this regard, in 4.6% of households, herding was strictly for women. It was in 36.9% of the households where herding was unisex. It

therefore implies that in 41.5% of the sampled households, women were involved in herding.

Even though many households practice tethering their animals nevertheless, there are others who practice free range, which require traveling for over four kilometers everyday to look after cattle, sheep and goats. For a woman, this is so taxing bearing in mind that she has to wake up early in the morning to prepare breakfast for the family, wash dishes and clothes, go herding and come back home early enough to prepare lunch.

It was interesting to find that even in sowing and harvesting, supposedly unisex tasks, women had a leading role to play. In 70.8% of sampled households, this was a unisex task while in 24.6% of others, it was left to women alone. With reference to farm work, Boserup (1970) found out that, men's presence in the farm was simply supervisory. It is likely that in the 92 (70.8%) households, a large number of men made technical appearances in the farms. A key informant, Mrs. Martha Kilonzo opined that men in most cases went to the farms to inspect work progress only to leave the actual working to their wives and children. There are even cases where men apportioned women and children pieces of land each to till and go away to the local shopping centers to idle time out. A spot check found many men idling in the local shopping centers engaging in local politics, as they played draught*.

* Draught is a board game for two players using twenty-four pieces called draughts.

It should be emphasized that this was in February 2002, a month when harvesting was at its peak. Even though there are families without cattle goats and sheep, it was found out

that in 93.8% of the sampled households, milking was preserve of women. This is unlike in other communities like the Embu and Kikuyu where milking is done by men. In Central Division, it was only in 2.3% of the households where milking was done by men, while in 3.8% of households, milking was unisex.

In most cases, milking has to be done early in the morning so that breakfast (tea) is prepared using the day's milk, it means that, a woman's day unlike that of a man starts around 5.00 a.m. with milking and preparation of breakfast. Table 25 hence depicts women as an overworked lot in Central Division. From the five duties already discussed it can be argued that, women direct economic activities such as trading are sacrificed for domestic duties and needs. Therefore, women vulnerability to poverty is increased as their economic independence becomes more and more limited. In this regard, Denton (2002) says that, gendered roles tend to mean that women are placed in less than favorable positions and this is often translated into a greater share of household activities. The implication of this is that, time is wasted and therefore resources, which all translate into a lower level of development.

In majority households (63.8%) it was men who called the shots when it came to assigning duties, with women and children remaining in the background. In 2.3% of the households women did the duty assigning in the family while this was unisex in 33.8% of others. With men assigning duties in most families, it is very unlikely that they would assign themselves demanding jobs (in terms of time and concentration) leaving these to women and children while taking the easy but supposedly hard ones like "assigning

duties in the family”. It is apparent that women daily schedules are sort of programmed to suit the whims of men and perhaps self-expression on the part of women may be taken as rebellious.

In 56.2% of the sampled households men were the breadwinners while in 1.5% it was the work of women. In 42.3% of others, breadwinning was a unisex undertaking. This was contrary to expectations since breadwinning should be a collective undertaking between the spouses. With men talking the bulk in breadwinning they are likely to intimidate women using threats of desertion and even divorce and other related consequences. Looked at from a socio-psychological standpoint, the foregoing may make women timid with respect to their spouses, a condition men would most likely capitalize on to remain kingposts in their households. Related to this is the fact that women remain household slaves and their outward off-farm participation may be hard to come by – they remain to be seen and never to be heard. This goes along way to support Njeru (1993, 2002) who posits that, the structure of African traditional family arrangements are full of structural rigidities to the disadvantage of women.

Even though in 4.6% of the sampled households men did sowing and harvesting, interestingly when it came to marketing farm produce, men did this in 18.5% of the households. Wanjala (2000) says that with regard to property, when such is sold, the proceeds go to the family exchequer, which is firmly controlled by the husband. Even in cases such as holding of shares in a cooperative societies, the man’s unchallengeable position as the head of the family still militates against the woman’s full freedom in

property matters (Kibwana and Mute 2000). In 50% of the households however, women did marketing while in 31.5% of the households, marketing farm produce was unisex. However, even though in 50% of the households marketing was done by women, there was no one household in which women could budget the income alone (tables 9& 25), even after earning it.

In 67.7% of all households, naming children was unisex with 26.2% of the sampled households this being the work/duty of women. This was particularly in households where traditional midwives attended the birth of a child. In the traditional Kamba Community it was the old women who acted as midwives and therefore named children. There was however an interesting paradigm shift in that in 6.2% of the sampled households men did the naming, sometimes even before the child was born. In Muslim states, McMichael (2000) says that, women rights remain subordinated to Islamic law or the male interpretation of the Koran. In Morocco for example, he says that women require permission from their male relatives to name their children.

Table 25 also shows that in 70% of the sample households, budgeting family income irrespective of who had earned it was strictly the duty of both spouses. However, it was interesting to find out that, in 30% of the households, men did budgeting single-handedly irrespective of who had earned it. Wanjala (2000) says this of property rights,

Under customary family law, which still regulate the majority of Kenyans, women have no identifiable rights over the main forms of property within the family. The husband is always considered to be the manager of all family property including the wife's.

(Wanjala, 2000:108)

While data collected using the household questionnaire showed that in 70% of the sampled households spouses played a role in budgeting the family income, this may not necessarily be the case on the ground. In both key informant interviews and focus group discussions, the general impression was that when it came to budgeting men's income, women were in most cases used as rubberstamps – were there to endorse what their husbands had already pre-planned. Some of the planned for items and activities were never to be. In most cases, no explanation was given.

The other task considered by this study was making decisions on schooling of children. Deciding children's schooling includes not only choosing the school in which children should attend and paying fees, but also who should go to school and when. As suggested in table 25 in 60% of the households, deciding children's schooling was a unisex task with 40% of the households, men doing it single-handedly. Women could not make any decisions about children's schooling single-handedly, just like budgeting family income.

In this regard, GoK (2002) puts it this way,

The fact that the decision on who goes to school and when is predominantly that of the father, also impacts on the likelihood that a girl will be withdrawn first.

(GoK, 2002:14)

It was therefore not a coincidence that men had a higher level of education than women in the study area.

Family documents referred to in this work include cheques, title deeds, agreements for purchase or sale of land, etc. It also includes receiving or giving out money or any

payment on behalf of the family. In 91.5% of the households, this was strictly the preserve of men and unisex in 7.7% of others. It was only in one household (0.8%) where signing family documents was the duty of women. In this particular household the wife was as well the breadwinner.

Circumscion especially for the male is an important rite of passage in the traditional as well as the modern Akamba household. An uncircumcised man is frowned upon and called derogatory names. Mr. Mwasya, a sage informed the researcher that such a person whether a child or an adult could not for example be allowed to share a swimming pod with the circumcised. This underlines the importance of this practice in the community. With regard to the time of the circumcision for the children, in 79.2% of the sampled households, this task was unisex while men did it in 20.8% of others single-handedly. No woman was allowed to do it alone in any of the sampled households.

Generally, there is a distinct sex division of labor in Mwingi Central Division with women taking the less prestigious duties and men having the most prestigious ones. Women who are more pronounced and over represented in housework play a relatively smaller role in major family undertakings especially those to do with finances and acquisition of prestige. Sanderson (1988) has amplified this state of affairs in the following words,

those activities that are consistently assigned to men tend to be ones requiring greater physical strength, higher levels of risk and danger, more frequent travel from home...consistently feminine occupations involve relatively less danger, tend to be more repetitive, do not require intense concentration and are more

easily interruptible, and require less training.

(Sanderson, 1988:295)

(b). Individual Participation in Development Activities.

In terms of CBO affiliation as shown in table 7, 33.8% of the respondents were not affiliated to any, while 63.1% of others belonged to between 2 and 4 groups. On the other hand, only 30.7% of the respondents belonged to a minimum of 5 CBOs. With a considerable majority being unaffiliated to CBOs, it reflects badly on development since unity of a people is paramount to any meaningful community action. According to Akong'a (1982), participation makes goal attainment easier. Participation should therefore be on a united front among the people and this calls for their unity in CD work through CBOs. In giving more weight to this assertion, an assistant chief in one of the study areas invoked the age-old Kamba adage, *makuli malikiaa ni ngo nundu wa kuvalaana* (monkeys are normally killed by the cheetah because whenever the cheetah charges they run in different directions). He pointed out that people could only confront a common problem successfully if they have a unity of purpose. Like the monkeys who are killed by the cheetah for lack of unity, people cannot solve any problem in their midst if they are not united against it.

Gender wise, more men than women were affiliated to CBOs. This can be explained by the fact that, there was a low representation of women in the sample. Generally, there was just a slight gender disparity in terms of membership with more men (44) than women (43) being members of CBOs. With respect to the number of CBOs an individual was

affiliated to, table 7 shows that, women were members in more CBOs than men. This is partly because there were more women than men CBOs in the study area.

Table 8 Shows that, there were more men than women CBO officials in all the categories save for secretary-general where there was a gender balance. This is perhaps because secretary-generalship involves a lot of writing and keeping of CBO records. Related to this is the fact that, there were lower levels of education among women (table 2) and therefore meaning that one woman could hold this post in more than one CBO. Otherwise, were it not for low levels of education, it was expected that women would outnumber men in this regard, just like in the other positions.

Bearing in mind that 33.8% of the respondents were unaffiliated to CBOs, it was deemed necessary to investigate why such a large number remained thus. When probed on this, of the 44 individuals, 9 of them indicated their spouses as the problem, with 16 saying they were too poor to afford the money required for membership in CBOs. The question of poverty was expected especially after 14 people indicated that they had no income at all (table 3) and a considerable number of others having monthly incomes below Kshs.5000. This would let one to rightfully call such people as income-poor. Advanced age and family commitments were also pointed out as setbacks to CBO membership.

Table 26: Gender of respondent versus regularity of participation.

		Regularity of participation				Total
		None	Rarely	Often	Very often	
Sex of respondent	Male	6 (4.6)	2 (1.5)	9 (6.9)	51 (39.2)	68 (52.4)
	Female	10 (7.7)	2 (1.5)	13 (10)	37 (28.5)	62 (47.6)
	Total	16 (12.3)	4 (3.0)	22 (17)	88 (67.7)	130 (100)

Table 26 shows that, there were more men than women who participated in off-farm activities in the study area. This was expected since more women than men engaged in domestic duties and therefore meaning their off-farm activities were destined to be minimal. What this necessarily implies is that, the input women would have invested in development especially by engaging in off-farm activities like trade goes to waste. In such a case Kibwana (1992) cautions that, the society pays by having a lower level of development than otherwise would be were the reverse to be the case. In addition, human development potential of those so limited is destined to stagnate and therefore leading to a lower level of overall development.

Table 26 also shows that, there was a positive relationship between the number of participants in an activity and the regularity of participation in the activity. In this case, more people participated “very oftenly” than those who participated “very rarely”. This shows the seriousness and commitment of the people in whatever they did, with 77.2% and 4.4% of participants doing it “very oftenly” and “rarely” respectively.

Table 27: Gender of respondent versus limitation to participation.

		Blockade to participation						Total
		None	Other Com- mitments	Spouse	Poor skills	Cultural sanctions	Old age	
Sex of respondent	Male	62 (47.6)	3 (2.3)	1 (0.8)	0 (0)	1 (0.8)	1(0.8)	68(52.4)
	Female	52 (40)	4 (3.1)	2 (1.5)	1(1.5)	0 (0)	3 (2.3)	62(47.6)
	Total	114 (87.6)	7 (5.4)	3 (2.3)	1(0.8)	1 (0.8)	4 (3.1)	130 (100)

The study found that 12.3% of the respondents did not participate in activities outside the household. It would not suffice to fail to investigate the reasons behind such. Table 27 shows that, 7 people were too committed in other family matters to engage in activities outside the household in which case women outnumbered men. This is in line with the fact that, more women than men engaged in domestic activities like cooking, fetching water and firewood, harvesting and sowing, washing clothes and dishes most of which require the physical presence of the former. In this way women were sort of prevented from engaging in activities outside the household. Wallace and Myles (1994) sum it this way,

Households make demands on their members and do so in ways that are highly gendered in their impacts. Most often women are the dependent laborers, whose mother work and housework have a negative bearing upon their relationship to paid labor.

(Ibid, 1994:175)

Three people indicated their spouses as the drawback to participation, with more women (2) than men (1) having this as the reason. Two people, a man and a woman each said they had inadequate skills to apply in such activities, while six others shared equally gender wise, had advanced age as their impediment to participation in off-farm activities.

Chi-Square Test of the Hypothesis.

H3: Gender-based division of labor affects individual participation in development activities. In this hypothesis two independent and one dependent variables have been examined. In the first instance, it is hypothesized that gender-based division of labor (herding) affects individual participation in development activities (off-farm).

Table 28: Herding versus regularity of participation in off-farm activities.

		Regularity of participation				Total
		Does not	Rarely	Often	Very often	
Herding	Man	15(11.5)	3(2.3)	8(6.2)	50(38.5)	76(58.5)
	Woman	0(0)	1(0.8)	0(0)	5(3.8)	6(4.6)
	Man& woman	1(0.8)	1(0.8)	14(10.8)	32(24.6)	48(36.9)
Total		16(12.3)	5(3.8)	22(16.9)	87(66.9)	130(100)

Chi-square = 18.5 with 6df significant at 99.5% confidence level.

$P > 0.05$, hence relationship highly significant at $P > 0.05$

Evidence from table 28 shows that the relationship was highly significant at 99.5% confidence level which was way above the set decision criterion of 95% confidence level for this study. This means that, there was a strong statistical relationship between the two variables. This finding supports an earlier tentative conclusion that gender-based division of labor affects individual participation in development activities. In addition, it also corroborates Njeru (1998) who says that, such division of labor and especially where men dominate all areas of socio-cultural, political and economic spheres, women off-farm participation cannot flourish.

In the second pair of variables, cooking and participation in development activities were taken as the independent and dependent variables respectively.

Table 29: Cooking versus regularity of participation cross tabulation.

		Regularity of participation in off-farm activities				Total
		Does not	Rarely	Often	Very often	
Cooking	Man	0 (0)	0 (0)	1(0.8)	0 (0)	1(0.8)
	Woman	16 (12.3)	5 (3.8)	19 (14.6)	80 (61.5)	120 (92.3)
	Man & woman	0 (0)	0 (0)	2 (1.5)	7 (5.4)	9 (6.9)
Total		16 (12.3)	5 (3.8)	22 (16.9)	87 (66.9)	130 (100)

Chi-square = 6.9 with 6df significant at 66.9% confidence level.

$P < 0.05$, hence relationship not significant at $P < 0.05$

The relationship was found to be significant at 66.9% confidence level. Hence the statistical relationship between cooking and participation in development activities was significant at a level much lower than the set decision criterion of 95% confidence level. Accordingly, it was concluded that, cooking did not significantly influence the participation of individuals in development activities in Central Division of Mwingi District. This finding refutes the earlier conclusion (table 25) that, since in 92.3% of the sampled households women did cooking, their participation in development activities was highly curtailed. This is for the simple reason that, women off-farm participation was mostly in CD work which did not entail continued absence from home. The CD activities included road, school and hospital construction that were normally done at a walking distance from their homes. In addition, these activities as it emerged in FGDs were not full day engagement. These are mostly undertaken twice a week from around 8 o'clock

till noon. This therefore meant that cooking was not a setback to participation in other off-farm development activities.

From tables 28 and 29, it can be inferred that not all domestic duties were hindrances to participation in Central Division. This is because, evidence from these tables shows that, whereas herding did affect participation, cooking did not. Hence it can be concluded that gender-based division of labor per se does not affect individual's participation in development activities but some particular domestic duties do.

4.5. Ways of Encouraging Participation among Rural Communities.

Tucker (1999) and Randall and Theobald (1998) concur that, top-down approach to development has been a let down to development initiatives especially in the Third World countries. In this regard, one of the aims of this study was to gather information on what could be done to make sure that local communities get to involve themselves better in development activities. This is hoped to instill a sense of community and cultivate self-reliance among these people. To this end, respondents were asked to give suggestions as to what should be done. This yielded various answers, which have been presented in a table 30.

Table 30: Ways of encouraging participation.

Strategy/way	Yes	No	Total
Giving people handouts	122 (93.8)	8 (6.2)	130 (100)
Civic education	76 (58.5)	54 (41.5)	130(100)
Sideling non-participants	61 (46.9)	69 (53.1)	130 (100)
Good leadership	51 (39.2)	79 (60.8)	130 (100)
Use of force by central government	7 (5.4)	123 (94.6)	130 (100)
Praying	6 (4.6)	124 (95.4)	130 (100)

Table 30 shows that, 93.8% of the respondents saw handouts as an inducement to involvement in development. Handouts here include relief food (food-for-work), fertilizers, insecticides, working tools like mattocks, seeds, etc. German Technical Co-operation (GTZ) in the study area has successfully used the food-for-work strategy, producing commendable results. Such activities in which food-for-work programme has particularly succeeded are digging of earth dams, building local dispensaries, road construction, etc.

This finding comes close to depicting the Kamba community as relief-food dependent as has been informally argued. However, this proved not to be true when respondents were asked to name whom they depended on. In this regard it was found that, 89.2% of the respondents either depended on themselves or their spouses. The rest indicated their parents, in-laws and other close relatives. None indicated as having depended on either NGO or government relief food. This went along away in refuting the popular but unsubstantiated notion that the Kamba community are relief-food dependent. Perhaps, the results of the 2002 General Elections in Kenya more so in Ukambani region as a whole and Mwingi District in particular should reinforce this finding.

Majority people were of the opinion that, the local people lacked the knowledge concerning benefits accruing from communal projects. Accordingly 58.5% of the sampled individuals indicated “teaching” the people the benefits of communal projects as the most appropriate and noble thing to do. This was interpreted to mean carrying out civic education. The finding that very few people had access to civic education (table 16) and bearing in mind that, formal education levels are also low, civic education comes in very handy.

There happens to be a popular saying in the Kamba community that, *those who do not work, should not eat*. Pursuance to this saying, when asked what should be done to encourage the people to involve themselves in CD work better, 46.9% said sidelining non-participants would do. Here sidelining means denying those who don't participate from enjoying the benefits of CD work or sharing the benefits as per individual effort/input. It also includes fining the non-participants. The respondents opined this would make non-participants get to know the disservice they do to themselves when they refuse to work alongside others in communal project. The researcher was informed of cases where non-participants were punished post-humously. In this case, when a non-participant died, many people would choose to contribute only small tokens towards the funeral expenses and may only go to “console” the family on the burial day. They even attend the burial grudgingly. This strategy has particularly worked very well and has forced many people in Kalisasi sub-location to join Kalisasi Burial and Benevolent Association. This association acts as insurance upon death of a member.

Alluding to the importance of the role played by leaders in community development activities, 39.2% of the respondents indicated this as an inspiration towards peoples' involvement in these activities. They pointed out that, good leadership in form of having transparent, accountable, trustworthy, straightforward and informed leaders would prove very fruitful. They also pointed out that leaders should be aggressive in pursuing community goals with the authorities and even the donor/NGO community. It was a cry for good leadership not only at the local level, but also nationwide. Many people said they would like leaders who fight for the people and not for themselves.

The old guard, especially those who had experience of the colonial government, believed that if the government were to force, people to do CD work output would be tremendous. In this regard, 5.4% of the respondents said force especially by the government was apt in encouraging people to be more development conscious and proactive. However, this may bear little fruit especially since civic education has already started making people and more so women conscious of their rights.

Despite all people being religious albeit religiously differentiated by affiliation, only a paltry 4.6% indicated that praying could do. This was unexpected since majority were Christians and Muslim who are deemed highly religious.

CHAPTER FIVE.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS.

5.1.Introduction.

This chapter provides an overview of the major findings, conclusions drawn and the recommendations of the study. The findings are summarized under four thematic areas that correspond to the respondents' attributes, study hypotheses, questions and objectives. It provides an assessment of each of the study hypotheses and ends with a highlight of the main conclusions and recommendations from the study based on the study findings.

The principal aim of this study was to examine the implications of gender relations on rural development in Central Division, Mwingi District. In this study, rural development was narrowed down to human development

5.2. Person-centered Factors and their Implication on Rural Development.

The study area had low levels of literacy with a substantial majority of respondents having had a level of education below secondary school and about a quarter of others having had no education at all. Low levels of education means unfulfilling occupations in terms of pay and therefore low earnings. In such a case, people live from hand to mouth. Of particular importance is that gender equality in education has not been achieved in Central Division. Hence men stand a better chance of securing jobs due to their high literacy levels than those registered among women. At policy level, the ability of women to negotiate and influence decisions on gender sensitive policies remains almost non-existent. In Kenya, a case in point is the legislature, the most important policy making

institution of the government where women have remained grossly under represented since independence.

Another aspect of respondent's characteristic is that concerning earnings in which regard, majority of the people can rightly be described as income-poor. This therefore reinforces the fact that since the area has been found to register low levels of literacy, incomes are bound to be low due to low level of manpower development. Generally, incomes in the study area are low. This depicts a high dependency ratio even within segments of the population who are supposed to be economically productive. With such a dependency ratio, production is quite low and saving may be non-existent.

In terms of occupation, a considerable number were found to be peasant farmers. In most cases, yields are never realized due to continued dry spells sometimes throughout the year. This is reinforced by poor crop choices among local farmers who avoid drought resistant crops like cotton, millet and sorghum, which would do better. The implication here is that people's incomes remain low due to low crop yields and at times none at all. This implies that supplementary income to peasant farming is minimal and hence an indication of poverty, thanks to limited opportunities for income diversification.

In business undertakings, glaring disparities by gender in terms of type and capital investment were noted. Men on the one hand were proprietors of the most lucrative businesses and hence high capital investment, with the implication of higher returns. This was contrary to women enterprises, which, were small in terms of capital investment and

mostly made of highly perishable goods like vegetables and fruits. In focus group discussions and key informant interviews, it was established that, men mainly as either husbands or fathers appropriated most or all the money that accrued to women leaving the latter as proletariats in their own households.

Flowing from this, it can be argued that, in all the three aspects of earning, literacy and occupation, men are more advantaged than women. It can hence be concluded that with men having an upper hand when it comes to education, income and occupation, the human development potential on the part of women remains lower especially due to unfavorable intrahousehold gender relations. Hence people's human development potential and growth remain blocked. This is more pronounced among women who have more hurdles over which to jump to reach the finish line.

It had been hypothesized that an individual decision-making capacity influences his/her access to community resources. In this regard, it was found that in terms of making independent decisions, men had an upper hand, even though women in some instances could do the same. However glaring disparities between the decisions men and women made were noted. On the one hand, men made both public and private sphere decisions especially those to do with family finances. On the other hand, women primarily made private sphere decisions such as cooking, washing and other supposedly feminine decisions.

Community based organization membership seen as an avenue where individuals can make and influence decisions was also used to measure the decisions-making capacity of the respondents. It was found that, more women than men were affiliated to CBOs. However, when it comes to the number of CBOs a single individual was affiliated to, more women than men were affiliated to more than one. Indeed, the number of CBOs men were affiliated to, was inversely proportional to the number of affiliates: the more the number of groups, the lesser the number of affiliates with regard to men. The implication here is that with more women than men being affiliated to more CBOs, the former had more avenues in which to make decisions and hence implying their access to community resources in this regard was higher than those of the former. In addition, and in line with the fact that women were affiliated to more CBOs than men, it was found that there were more women than men CBO officials. In this case, it is concluded that, individual decision-making capacity influences personal access to community resources in Central Division.

In property ownership, more men than women owned property and hence depicting the latter as a disadvantaged lot. Such has been echoed by Kibwana and Mute (2000), Peet and Hartwick (1999) and Mweseli (2000). Indeed among all the categories of property considered, it was only with regard to kitchenware that women were found to outstrip men in terms of ownership. This implies that, women remain the lieutenants of the private sphere, leaving the public one for men. This exposure to the public sphere hence, remains limited to men and therefore significantly limiting the women human development potential.

Interestingly, even though some women were found to own some property, in terms of use and disposal of the same property, it was men instead who called the shots. To crown it all, there was only one instance found where property was registered in the name of women. In the study area, over half of the respondents were peasant farmers. Tellingly, this shows the importance of land in the study area. The implication here is that, inaccessibility of the same by some segments of the population has an important bearing on income levels of the people and by extension their empowerment. However, evidence from table 23 refutes this and hence it is concluded that as far as this study is concerned, property ownership does not significantly influence an individual's monthly income in Central Division.

With regard to use and disposal of property, there was found no case at all where women could do this single-handedly, while over 90% of all men could do the same. Even in a case where property was registered in the name of women, they could still not use and dispose of it at will. In a case where people do not have the authority to dispose of the property available to them at will, wealth accumulation is hard to come by. Such people become unlikely customers of financial institutions such as banks. This way their human development potential is highly compromised, thanks to the limitation in terms of entry into off-farm activities. This in essence limits the range of choices and opportunities available to them and therefore their level of income.

Empowerment measured from the vantage point of access to credit, more women than men can be described as empowered. This refutes the hypothesis that, the nature of

conjugal property ownership affects individual empowerment. The finding can also be explained by other factors; one being that credit access by women was from Micro-Finance Institutions (MFIs), which unlike banks required no collateral security. Besides, these institutions advance credit to organized and active groups in which case women CBOs came in handy. Moreover, some micro-finance organizations like KWFT are biased towards women. However in a situation where land title deeds have been issued, men would definitely stand a good chance of getting credit from financial institutions especially banks. This is for the reason that, in most cases, land was registered in the name of men. Unfortunately, land title deeds have not been issued in the study area leaving many men with few options to loan access.

The study revealed that, women take the bulk of domestic work like cooking, washing, sowing and harvesting and milking, all which belong to the private sphere. In most cases such activities do not permit one to engage in other activities especially outside the home, as they are full time all day occupations. In such a case these people's human resource potential remain under developed as they are burdened by the domestic chores that limits the number of opportunities and choices available to them. On the other hand, men came in forcibly in matters to do with prestige and high status. Such activities are those of the public sphere such as assigning duties in the family, breadwinning, signing family documents and transacting on behalf of the family, budgeting family income, etc. In this regard men get a fair chance to develop their human potentials to the full due to the many opportunities and choices available to them in the public sphere.

With regard to participation in all development activities ranging from white collar, informal sector, casual employment and CD work, men outnumbered women in all of them except the latter. This was expected since women having been highly burdened by domestic chores were not expected to be involved in activities outside the household in large numbers. This therefore goes along way in confirming the hypothesis that gender-based division of labor affects individual participation in development activities. Here the input women would have invested in development especially outside the household goes to waste and Kibwana (1992) cautions that this is a price paid by the society by having a lower level of development. Nevertheless, evidence from the study suggests that, gender-based division of labor *per se* does not significantly affect individual participation in development activities, but particular tasks do.

5.3. Conclusions.

1. Men are the major decision makers in and outside the household, are better trained and educated, have higher incomes and less burdened by domestic duties than women. Men are hence likely to draw more benefits from the extra-domestic exposure. In this regard, it can be concluded that, without a policy shift especially on legal matters, human development on the part of women remain lower than that of men. In this state of affairs, poverty reduction, which is the essence of human development and a priority in this country, cannot be realized. This is for the reason that, since women command a considerable majority in this country, development is hard to be realized while ignoring majority stakeholders.

2. Gender inequalities continue to exist in terms of access to resources such as land, good health services, education, ability to command and access to paid labor and capacity and strategies for income diversification. In addition, such continue to exist in time spend on agriculture and other domestic chores. In this case, women off-farm participation, which would see their social, economic and political empowerment remains substantially curtailed. Flowing from the above, it can be concluded that, so long as women remain a marginalized majority, development generally remains low as the society struggles to strangle them at its own risk.
3. There is a myriad of roadblocks with regard to access and control of productive resources, more so for women. Such include lack of ownership with regard to property and under representation and sometimes absence in areas of decision-making even at the household level. Such is the reason behind the low levels of income, literacy and technical skill in the study area. This in effect leads to lower human development and by extension overall development.
4. Policy makers should look at intra-household as well as community and even national division of labor in terms of: the resources and opportunities available and who controls them; who is likely to benefit from which resources; and what socio-economic and cultural barriers impede access to the resources. This should be done to ensure gender equality with regard to accessing community resources and their utilization. In this regard, it can be concluded that policy makers have a great challenge in identifying and recommending for implementation, viable strategies that

would ensure adequate access to community resources by all people. Such strategies should be geared towards meeting community needs and triggering development.

5.4. Recommendations.

5.4.1. Recommendations to Policy Makers.

1. There is an urgent need for a comprehensive civic education in the study area, particularly targeting on community participation in the identification of felt needs and their solution. Such should not only focus on the benefits of communal projects but also on self-reliance, health, education, human rights and gender issues. Civic education is expected to pay dividends through instilling a sense of consciousness and ownership among the people with respect to community projects. In the end, homegrown initiatives will come up, leading to self-reliance. Such is a milestone towards human development.
2. Denton (2002) has put it that, micro-credit has and must be seen as a staple diet for development. Flowing from this, expansion of micro-credit institutions to the rural areas so that more people can benefit is highly recommended. This is intended to empower the local people, more so women thereby reducing economic poverty. Reduction of economic poverty must be seen as a big step towards self-reliance and therefore local and national development.
3. Locally, there are various resources, both human and natural which lie underutilized. Such include sand, ballast, cheap labor and viable soil for brick

making. In particular, sand and bricks could utilize the large market locally and even other neighboring areas like Garissa and Nairobi. This is especially due to good road network serving both Garissa and Nairobi from Mwingi Township. Should these resources be harnessed and utilized to the full, this is likely to create employment opportunities locally and even open other opportunities like education and raise the levels of income among the people. Once these are achieved, it is expected that development would be triggered.

4. It has also been argued that, farmer apathy and glut immediately after harvest is partly responsible for poverty in the study area. This is because marketing of farm produce is individual and hence uncoordinated. Farmers end up disposing off the produce at incredibly low, only to buy it later at very high prices during the sowing season. This is largely due to the lack of a viable farmers marketing channel, which would buy the produce at fair prices. Middlemen have always exploited this situation to impoverish the farmers through offering of low prices. It is therefore recommended that the Kenya Farmers Association should build stores in the area, buy surplus grains at fair prices and sell them back at fair prices when needed. This is expected to do away with middlemen and therefore save the farmers the losses they've been incurring through sale of their produce to the former. In turn this will increase income levels for the farmers and in essence increase not only their purchasing power, but also savings. Should savings be increased, development is assured. In line with this, drought resistant crops like millet and sorghum should be given the first priority in the study area.

5.4.2. Recommendations for further Research.

1. The study was limited to only one aspect of rural development (human development). It is recommended that, a similar study should be undertaken focusing on other areas of rural development such as physical facilities. Such would provide additional trends on rural development and thus help illuminate this phenomenon further.
2. The determinant factor for rural development in this study is hypothesized to be intra-household gender relations between man and woman who are legally married. In this way, the study was limited to married individuals only and therefore ignoring other people like single parents. Accordingly, it is recommended that a study should be undertaken on gender relations between single mothers or even widows in relation to close relatives. This should be in addition to investigating how this affects rural development from the vantage point of human development.
3. The study was rural area-specific and hence biased against urban areas. It is accordingly recommended that, a study should be undertaken to determine gender relations in urban areas and how and or whether they affect urban development.
4. The study was not class-specific and hence lumped all the classes whether social, economic, intellectual or political together. Accordingly it is recommended that, a similar study should be undertaken on specific classes for example the rich/poor, educated/uneducated, young/old, etc. This would provide data on specific classes and hence do away with generalizations based on the study of one or a few classes, which may not have well reflected other classes of individuals.

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- (a) Permanent employment (public sector)
- (b) Permanent employment (private sector)
- (c) Casual/temporary employment
- (d) Business/trading
- (e) Peasant farmer
- (f) Others specify) _____

10. Average monthly income (in Kshs.) _____

Rural Development Perception

11. Would you consider the following to be indicators of development in rural areas?

Indicator	Yes	No
(a) High number of schools		
(b) High per capita income		
(c) High literacy		
(d) High participation of people in electioneering		
(e) Safe drinking water		
(f) Adequate supply of food		
(g) Good health facilities		
(h) Good road network		
(i) When majority people own property		
(j) High participation of people in development activities		

12. Using the indicator(s) you have identified (in 11) as a reference point, describe the level of rural development in this area.

- (a) Very high
- (b) High
- (c) Low
- (d) Very low

13. What in your opinion can the local community do to enhance rural development as measured by the indicator(s) you have identified (in 11)? Give three roles.

(a) _____

(b) _____

(c) _____

14. Who do you think is responsible for bringing about development in rural areas like Central Division?

(a) Local community

(b) Central government

(c) Non-governmental organizations

(d) Politicians

(e) Others (specify) _____

15. Who among the following is likely to reap most benefits of rural development?

(a) Local community

(b) Non-governmental organizations

(c) Central government

(d) Politicians

(e) Others (specify) _____

Interaction of Gender Relations and Rural Development

(a) Decision making process and access to community resources.

16. Do you make any decisions without consulting/checking with your spouse? (a) Yes

(b) No (go to 18)

17. If you make decisions in any or all of the following level(s), give at least two decisions that you make at either level.

(a) Household level _____

(b) Community level _____

(c) National level _____

(d) Others (specify) _____

18. What blocks you from making independent decisions? Explain in each case.

(a) Spouse _____

(b) Self _____

(c) Cultural demands/practices _____

(d) Others (specify) _____

(e) Don't know _____

19. Are you a member of any community-based group?

(a) Yes

(b) No (go to 21)

If yes, which groups and at what capacity?

Name of group	Capacity				
	Chairpers on	Secretary- general	Treasurer	Ordinary member	Specify others
1.					
2.					
3.					
4.					
5.					
6.					
7.					
8.					
9.					
10.					

21. If no (in 19), what keeps you away from community-based group membership?

- (a) Spouse
- (b) Individual choice
- (c) Family commitments
- (d) Absence of community-based groups
- (e) Others (specify) _____

22. As a resident of this area, are you aware of the following community resources?

Community resource	Yes	No
(a) Labor		
(b) Bank/co-operative loan/credit		
(c) Extension services		
(d) Land		
(e) Civic education		
(f) Piped water		
(g) Study tours /field demonstrations		
(h) Education		
(i) Good health facilities		

20.If yes, which groups and at what capacity?

Name of group	Capacity				
	Chairpers on	Secretary- general	Treasurer	Ordinary member	Specify others
1.					
2.					
3.					
4.					
5.					
6.					
7.					
8.					
9.					
10.					

21.If no (in 19), what keeps you away from community-based group membership?

- (a) Spouse
- (b) Individual choice
- (c) Family commitments
- (d) Absence of community-based groups
- (e) Others (specify) _____

22. As a resident of this area, are you aware of the following community resources?

Community resource	Yes	No
(a) Labor		
(b) Bank/co-operative loan/credit		
(c) Extension services		
(d) Land		
(e) Civic education		
(f) Piped water		
(g) Study tours /field demonstrations		
(h) Education		
(i) Good health facilities		

(j) Good road network		
(k) Communication facilities (e.g. e-mail, telephone, etc.)		
(l) Others (specify)		

23. Indicate whether you **have** or you **do not have** access to the following community resources by ticking the appropriate box as indicated alongside.

Community resource	Have access to	No access to
(a) Labor		
(b) Bank/co-operative loan/credit		
(c) Extension services		
(d) Land		
(e) Civic education		
(f) Piped water		
(g) Study tours/field demonstrations		
(h) Education		
(i) Good health facilities		
(j) Good road network		
(k) Communication facilities (e.g. e-mail, telephone, etc)		
(l) Others (specify)		

24. Do you access loan/credit? (a) Yes (b) No (go to 27)

25. If yes, how often? (a) Very often
(b) Often
(c) Rarely
(d) Very rarely

26. On average, how much loan/ credit (in Kshs.) do you access per year?

- (a) Below 5000
- (b) 5000-10000
- (c) 10001-15000
- (d) 15001 and above

27. What blocks you from accessing credit?

- (a) Lack of collateral security
- (b) Unaware of their existence
- (c) Don't know the process
- (d) High repayment rates
- (e) Don't need it
- (f) Others (specify) _____

28. Do you employ any casual/permanent employees?

- (a) Yes
- (b) No (go to 31)

29. If yes, how often? (a) Very often

- (b) Often
- (c) Rarely
- (d) Very rarely

30. On average, how much (in Kshs.) do you pay for labor per month?

- (a) Below 3000
- (b) 3001-6000
- (c) 6001-9000
- (d) 9001 and above

31. If no (in 28), why don't you employ laborers?

- (a) No need for it/use of family labor
- (b) Lack of means to pay for it
- (c) Labor is unavailable
- (d) Others (specify) _____

32. Which of the following extension services are you aware of?

Extension service	Aware of	Not aware of
(a) Agricultural extension services		
(b) Community mobilization services		
(c) First aid training		
(d) Immunization services		

(e) Study tours/field demonstrations		
(f) Civic education		
(g) Midwifery		
(h) Environmental management training		
(i) Others (specify)		

33. For each of the extension services (in 32), say whether you have access to it or not by indicating numerals 1 and 2 against each for accessible to and not accessible respectively.

34. Why don't you access extension services?

- (a) Not available
- (b) Unaware of them
- (c) Not affordable
- (d) Don't need them
- (e) Others (specify) _____

(b) Conjugal property ownership and individual empowerment.

35. Do you own any conjugal property? (a) Yes (b) No (go to 41).

36. If yes, what type of property do you own?

- (a) Land/ real estate
- (b) Livestock
- (c) Farm produce
- (d) Kitchenware
- (e) Bank account
- (f) Others (specify) _____

37. In your approximation, what is the value of the property you own (in Kshs.)?

- (a) Below 10000
- (b) 10000-19999
- (c) 20000-29999
- (d) 30000-39999

(e) 40000 and above

38. Under whose name is the property you own registered?

- (a) Husband
- (b) Wife
- (c) Both husband and wife
- (d) Not registered
- (e) Others (specify) _____

39. With reference to the property you own do you have the sole authority to use and dispose off it at will? (a) Yes (go to 41) (b) no

40. If no, who has the right of use and disposal of the property at will?

- (a) Husband
- (b) Wife
- (c) Both husband and wife
- (d) Parents
- (e) Clan
- (f) Others (specify) _____

41. Do you have an independent income?

- (a) Yes
- (b) No (go to 44)

42. Does your spouse play any role in budgeting your independent income?

- (a) Yes
- (b) No (go to 45)

43. If yes, explain briefly _____

44. If you don't have an independent income, then whom do you depend on?

- (a) Spouse

- (b) Parents
- (c) In-laws
- (d) Government/NGO relief
- (e) Children
- (f) Others (specify) _____

(c) Gender-based division of labor and individual participation in development activities.

45. How are duties/tasks allocated in your community?

- (a) By individual gender identity
- (b) By individual educational/technical training/attainment.
- (c) By age
- (d) Randomly
- (e) Others (specify) _____

46. For each of the following duties/tasks indicate who is responsible for undertaking it at the household level by ticking against either man or woman as appropriate.

Activity/duty	Man	Woman
(a) Cooking		
(b) Washing clothes/dishes		
(c) Herding livestock		
(d) Sowing seeds/weeding		
(e) Harvesting crops		
(f) Milking cattle		
(g) Assigning duties to family members		
(h) Breadwinning/providing for the family		
(i) Planning spacing of children		
(j) Marketing farm produce		
(k) Naming children		
(l) Budgeting family income		
(m) Paying children's school fees		
(n) Signing family documents (e.g. cheques)		

(o) Deciding when children are to undergo circumscion		
(p) Deciding when/where children are to start schooling		

47. Do you take part in any activities (paid or unpaid) outside the home?

- (a) Yes (b) No (go to 51)

48. If yes, which activities do you take part in?

- (a) White collar (specify) _____
 (b) Informal sector/Jua Kali (specify) _____
 (c) Casual employment (specify) _____
 (d) Others (specify) _____

49. How often do you take part in these activities?

- (a) Very often
 (b) Often
 (c) Rarely
 (d) Very rarely

50. At what level/stage do you take part in these activities?

- (a) Decision-making about the activity
 (b) Implementing the activity
 (c) Evaluating the progress of the activity
 (d) Others (specify) _____

51. If no (in 47), then what prevents you from doing so? Explain briefly in each case.

- (a) Family commitments _____

- (b) Spouse _____

- (c) Lack/inadequate skills _____

- (d) Community/cultural sanctions _____

52. What in your opinion can be done to encourage people to get more involved in large numbers in development activities (e.g. road construction, school building, etc) _____

UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI
EAST AFRICANA COLLECTION

Appendix 2: Informal interview guide.

Gender Relations and Rural Development Survey

(For key informants and focus group discussions)

NB: Items 1 to 6 are meant for key informants only!

1. Name of respondent _____ optional
2. Gender _____
3. Age in calendar years _____
4. Position in society _____
5. Level of education _____
6. Address (a) Location _____
 (b) Sub location _____
 (c) Village _____

In-depth Interview Questions for Key Informants and Focus Group Discussants

7. In your opinion, what do you regard as indicators of rural development?
8. In your opinion, who do you think is responsible for bringing about the indicator(s) you have identified?
9. In your view, what role should the local community play in the development of any one area?
10. Which community resources are available in this area?
11. Which of the resources you have identified above are accessible to the local community?
12. What blocks the local community from accessing locally available resources?
13. What role do local cultural practices/values play in terms of local peoples'?

- (a) Access to available resources
- (b) Empowerment and
- (c) Participation in development activities?

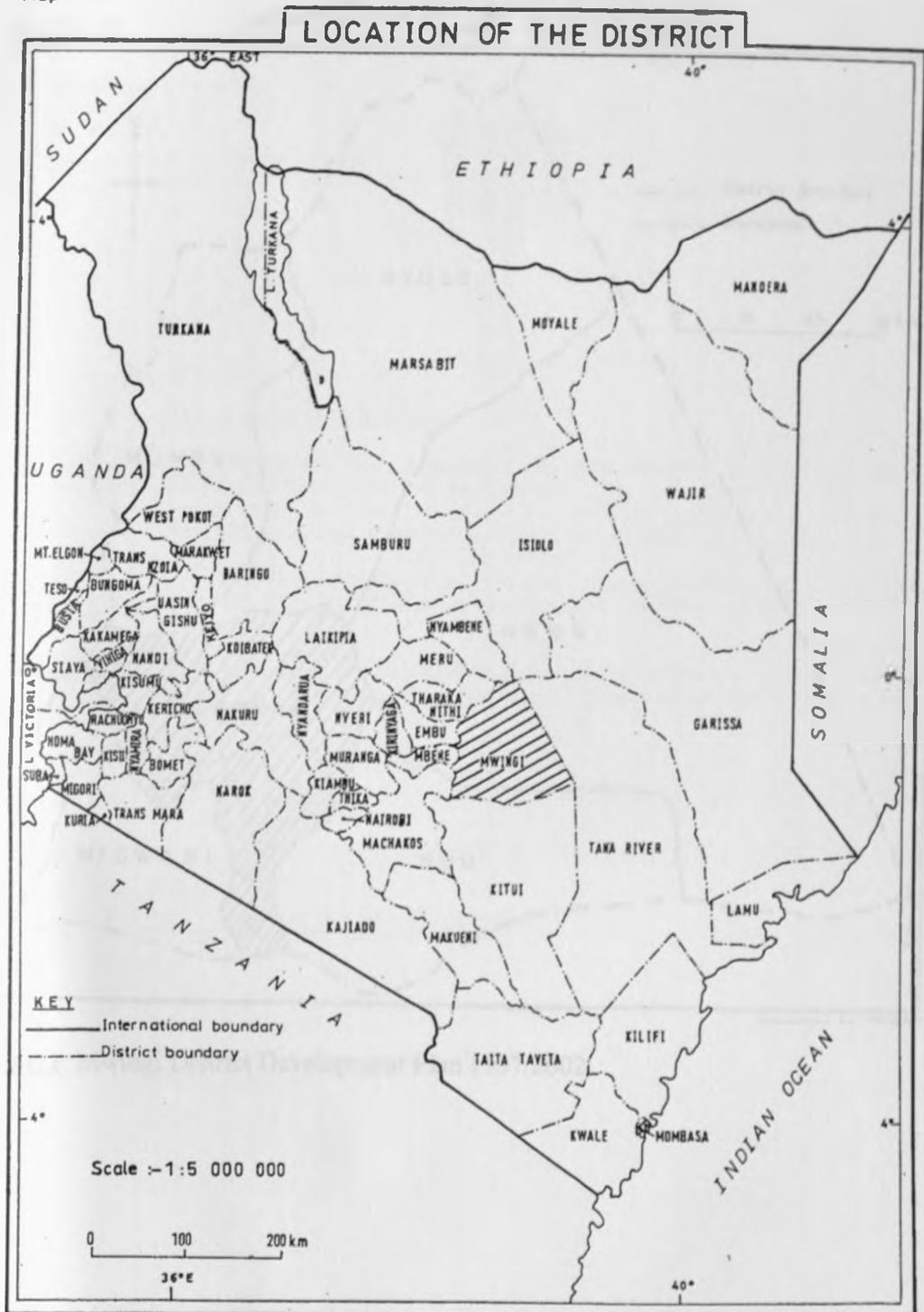
14. How are duties/tasks allocated at the following levels:

- (a) Household level
- (b) Church level
- (c) School level
- (d) General community level
- (e) National level

15. In your own opinion, what do you think can be done to encourage the people to **get more** involved in any community development activity (e.g. road construction, school building, etc)?

Appendix 3: Map of Kenya showing location of Mwingi District

Map No. 1

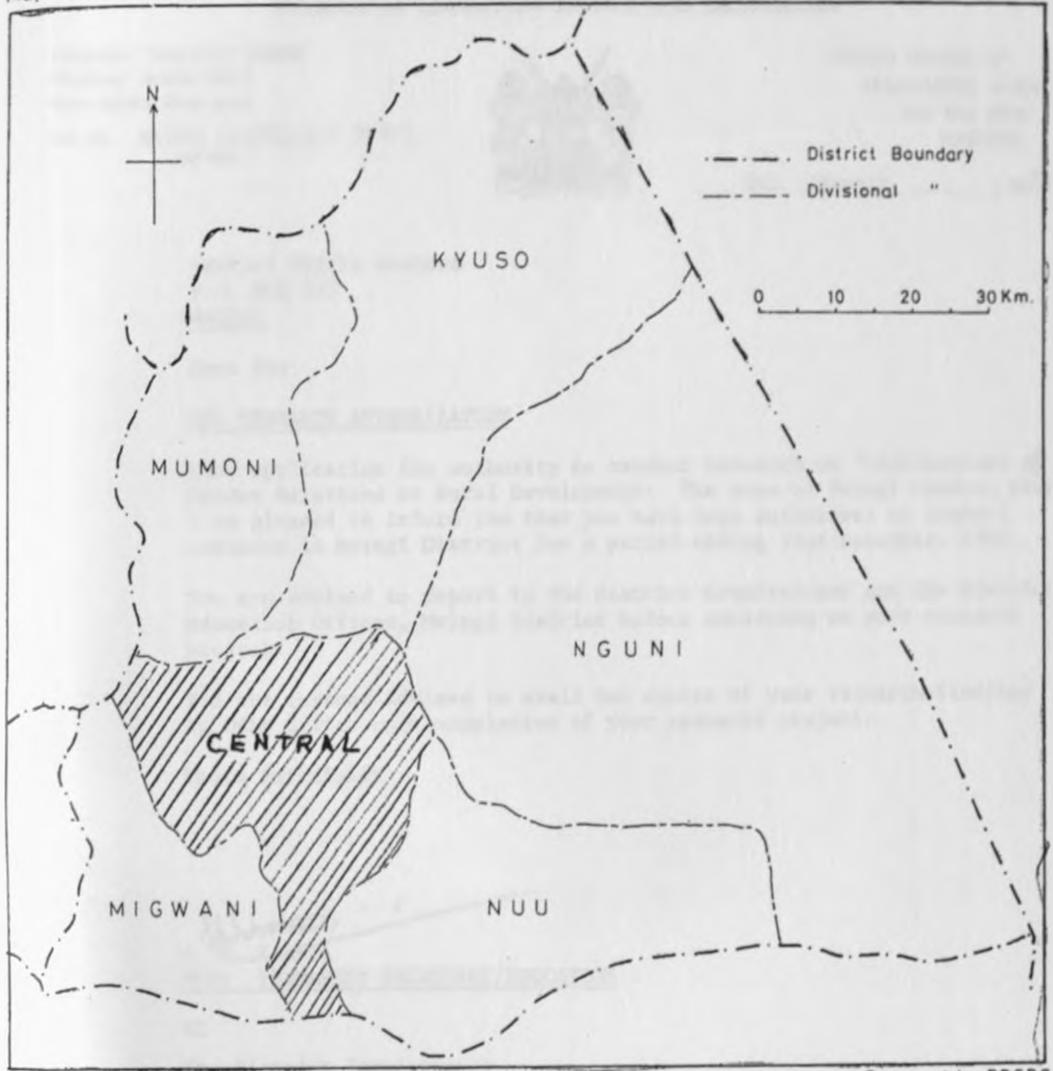


Source: Mwingi District Development Plan 1997/2002.

Appendix 4: Map of Mwingi District showing location of Central Division.

**MWINGI DISTRICT
ADMINISTRATIVE BOUNDARIES**

Map No. 2



Source: Mwingi District Development Plan 1997/2002.

Appendix 5: Research authorization letter.

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Telegrams: "EDUCATION", Nairobi

Telephone: Nairobi 334411

When replying please quote

Ref. No. MOEST.13/001/31C 269/2
and date



10000 HOUSE "D"
HARAMBEE AVENUE
P.O. Box 30040
NAIROBI

.....8th January....., 2002..

Ezekiel Mbitha Mwendwa
P.O. BOX 132
MWINGI

Dear Sir

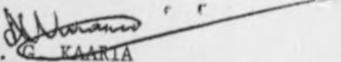
RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

Your application for authority to conduct research on 'Implications of Gender Relations on Rural Development: The case of Mwingi central Division I am pleased to inform you that you have been authorised to conduct research in Mwingi District for a period ending 31st December, 2002.

You are advised to report to the District Commissioner and the District Education Officer, Mwingi District before embarking on your research project.

You are further advised to avail two copies of your research findings to this Office upon completion of your research project.

Yours faithfully


A. G. KAARIA
FOR: PERMANENT SECRETARY/EDUCATION

CC

The District Commissioner
Mwingi District

The District Education Officer
Mwingi District