

UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY

RESEARCH PROJECT TITLE:

**PATRIARCHAL CULTURE AND THE ISSUE OF OPPRESSION
AMONG MEN - VIEWS FROM MARRIED MEN IN NAIROBI** *g*

**A project paper submitted in partial fulfillment for the
masters of Arts degree in sociology - Rural sociology and
community development**

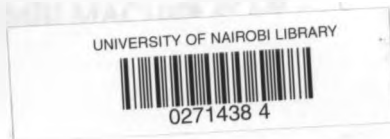
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DECLARATION

This project paper is my original work and has not been submitted for examination for a degree award in any other university.

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

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DEDICATION

To SOS, Nicole and Crystal.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to record my heart felt gratitude to my supervisors Prof. Chitere and Ms. Mumbi Machere for the encouragement and guidance they gave me from the start to the final completion of this project paper.

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LIST OF TABLES

- 1 DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY RESIDENCE
- 2 DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY AGE
- 3 DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY EDUCATION LEVEL
- 4 DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY CURRENT OCCUPATION
- 5 DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY INCOME LEVELS
- 6 DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY NUMBER OF YEARS IN MARRIAGE
- 7 DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY NUMBER OF CHILDREN
- 8 DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY RELIGION

ABSTRACT

It has always been assumed that men enjoy a privileged position in society. However little has been done in the area of men studies to verify this. Much focus has been on women studies to an extent that men who comprise half of humanity have been given very little thought.

While feminist scholars have continued to regard men as the oppressors of women, a new field of gender studies namely men studies has emerged with evidence that men too can be oppressed.

This study has focused on men with an aim of gathering views and information on whether patriarchal culture is oppressive to them or not. This study has attempted to identify the social processes that are oppressive to men, the response of men to the changing gender roles and also come up with recommendations on how male oppression can be tackled.

Study findings reveal that there are some limitations in a patriarchal culture that are oppressive to men. Findings further reveal that gender role changes has contributed a great deal to male oppression. Because of this, findings indicate that men are opposed to gender role change. However, because the role of the women has changed, men have no choice other than to also change their traditional male roles to avoid role proliferation.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION.....	i
DEDICATION.....	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT.....	iii
LIST OF TABLES.....	iv
ABSTRACT.....	v
 CHAPTER ONE	
1.0 THE PROBLEM STATEMENT OF THE STUDY.....	1
1.1 Introduction.....	1
1.2 Problem Statement	4
1.3 Research Questions.....	5
1.4 Study Objectives.....	5
1.5 Justification Of The Study.....	6
1.6 Scope And Limitations.....	7
1.7 Definition Of Key Terms.....	7
 CHAPTER TWO	
2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW.....	9
2.1 Introduction.....	9
2.2 Meaning Origin And Universality Of Male Domination.....	9
2.3 Expectations And Limitations Of Males In A Patriarchal Culture.....	12
2.4 Changing Gender Roles And Its Effect On Patriarchy.....	17
2.5 Are Men Willing To Change.....	24
2.6 Theoretical Framework.....	24
Feminist Theory.....	25
Liberal Feminist Theory.....	25
Socialist Feminist Theory.....	27
Radical Feminist Theory.....	27
2.7 Hypothesis	27
2.8 Operational Definitions	28

CHAPTER THREE

3.0	STUDY METHODOLOGY.....	31
3.1	Site Selection.....	31
3.2	Unit Of Analysis.....	31
3.3	Sampling Method.....	31
3.4	Methods Of Data Collection	32
3.5	Data Analysis.....	33
3.6	Expected Outcome Of Project.....	33

CHAPTER FOUR

4.0	DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION.....	34
4.1	Introduction.....	34
4.2	Distribution Of The Respondents According To Factors Of Study.....	34
4.3.0	The Masculine Identity.....	38
4.3.1	Views On Sexuality.....	38
4.3.2	Glorification Of Males.....	38
4.3.3	Lineage And Kinship.....	39
4.3.4	Heirship.....	40
4.3.5	Biological Differences.....	40
4.3.6	Supremacy.....	40
4.4.0	TRADITIONAL MALE ROLE IN SOCIETY	41
4.4.1	Masculinity And Leadership	41
4.4.2	Masculinity And Emotions	42
4.4.3	Arbitrator And Security Provider	42
4.4.4	Masculinity And Discipline	43
4.4.5	Home Builder	43
4.4.6	Masculinity And Social Status	43
4.4.7	Masculinity And Property Allocation	44
4.4.8	Masculinity And Decision Making	44
4.4.9	Masculinity And Production Control	44
4.5.0	PERCEPTION OF ROLES	44
4.5.1	Financial Limitations	45
4.5.2	Insurbodination	46
4.5.3	Income Disparities	49
4.5.4	Disparities On Education Level	52

4.5.5	Limitations In Decision Making	53
4.5.6	Women Empowerment	54
4.5.7	Production Control	56
4.5.8	Diet And Oppression	57
4.5.9	Domestic Violence	58
4.5.10	Oppression And Age	59
4.5.11	Oppression And Social Status	60
4.5.12	Spouse Behaviour	60
4.5.13	Denial Of Conjugal Rights	60
4.5.14	Bareness	61
4.6.0	GENDER ROLE CHANGES AND ITS EFFECTS	62
4.6.1	Perception On Gender	62
4.6.2	Perceptions On Gender Role Changes	63
4.6.2.1	Family Break Ups	63
4.6.2.2	Role Sharing	63
4.6.2.3	The Effect Of Changing Gender Roles	65
4.7	Male Oppression In Relation To Feminist Theory	66

CHAPTER FIVE

5.0	SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	70
5.1	Summary.....	70
5.2	Conclusions.....	72
5.3	Recommendations	73
	REFERENCES.....	75
	APPENDIX I.....	77
	INTERVIEW GUIDE.....	77

CHAPTER ONE

1.0 THE PROBLEM STATEMENT OF THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

An article in the big issue of the East African Standard of 30th June 2003 titled “*why I had to escape from the beating of my cunning wife*” describes the ordeal of a battered husband. In this article, the victim claims that his wife routinely beat him for a period of 5 years. Nobody believed his story including the police. When he could not take the beating anymore, he walked out of the marriage. The experiences of this man is a pointer to what is happening in the lives of most men today. However, unlike the victim who was brave enough to come out in the open and confess that he is a victim of husband battering, very few men can take this bold step. Because of fear that they will be ridiculed most men continue to suffer in silence for fear of being ridiculed by the society that they are weaklings. In our society a man who confesses that a woman battered him will automatically become a laughing stock. This is because men are regarded as the stronger sex by the patriarchal culture that we live in. In this culture, a man who can be beaten by his wife is considered not fit to be called a man. He would rather have been born a woman who is considered to be a weakling. An incidence such as this is regarded as an abnormality in the society. It is seen as a reversal of the accepted behaviour in society.

In every society, we have values, norms and practices, which lay down the expected behaviour of individuals in the society. A patriarchal society is characterized by a culture that shapes and supports male dominance in society. According to Hester (1992), a patriarchal society takes the form of a male hierarchical ordering of society which derives from ideological interpretations of biological differences between men and women in particular women capacity to be mothers. Weber in Syndie (1987) on the other hand argues that patriarchy is a universal form of male domination experienced the world over.

Thus, when the term patriarchal culture is used, it is usually presumed that we are referring to an ideology that supports male supremacy in society.

Patriarchal culture has persisted through time the world over. Indeed one could argue that this culture is as old as society. The persistence of patriarchy can be traced back to our culture, which determines gender roles by associating certain attributes with the male members of our society and others with the female members. Attributes associated with masculinity include bravery, wisdom, authority, strength, independence and emotional detachment while femininity is associated with dependence, emotionality, cowardice and weakness. In this culture, weak men are seen as abnormal, while strong and aggressive women are also branded abnormal.

For a long time, patriarchy has encapsulated the mechanisms, ideology and social structure which have enabled men throughout much of human history to gain and to maintain their domination over women. Men's superiority has been taken for granted for many years as the normal and desirable state of affairs which need no explanation. Because of this, there is always a tendency to assume that the male members of society enjoy a privileged position in comparison to their female counterparts.

However, most literature on gender studies have very little to tell us about men. Gender studies have concentrated too much on women studies at the expense of male studies. This has led to the assumption that only women are gendered as if gender affects only one group. The general picture that one gets from the gender literature on women studies is a situation whereby women are seen as the oppressed and men the oppressors.

Since men are seen to enjoy a privileged position in the society, it has always been presumed that they cannot be oppressed, indeed, how can the oppressor be oppressed?. However, the development of a new field in gender studies namely men's studies has come up with evidence suggesting that men too can be oppressed. In as much as women feel oppressed by the patriarchal culture they are born into, similarly men also feel oppressed by this culture, although in different

ways, Siedler (1989). According to Bred and Kaufman (1994) and Kimmel and Messner (1995) in Anderson (1997), scholars have now decided to reconsider the lives of men just like they have revised their thinking about women. In the U.S.A. for instance, men's studies have risen partly as a response to issues raised by feminism. Many men have realised that traditional forms of masculinity can be oppressive to men as well as women. Attention to masculinity ranges from attempts to understand and challenge the social construction of masculinity to the wish to reclaim for men the right to so-called feminine qualities, such as vulnerability.

Thus, the developing field of men's studies do not just study men but specifically challenges the patriarchal bias in traditional scholarship, which has tended to take men as the given universal standard against which others are judged. Men studies therefore take gender as a central feature of social life, gender shapes men's ideas and opportunities, therefore, men's studies see men as gendered beings.

As men's studies see how gender and sexism shapes their lives, patriarchy which touches on men's values, expectations and roles in the family is being challenged. According to Petras (1985), the traditional concept on who a man should be has caused a sense of dissatisfaction due to the structures it has placed on the males to the extent that it has denied the individual man personal fulfilment. This argument of Petras is supported by Siedler (1989), who argues that men have been moved out of touch with their feelings and emotion such that they have difficulty connecting with what they feel and experience. Siedler further argues that it has become difficult for men to imagine or dream of alternative ways of living because of the culture they inherit which demands that they fit into a certain identity defined by the society. This, according to Siedler leads to many men suffering.

The argument by Siedler that it has become difficult for men to think of alternative ways of living due to societal expectations of masculinity is further complicated by the changing gender roles in society which is threatening men's dominant position and making some of them sub-ordinate to women. This to me is a form of oppression. In the U.S.A. for instance current concern with masculinity has produced a growing number of books on the subject as well as men's groups and

therapeutic weekend in which men are encouraged among other things to recover their suppressed emotions.

Since very little is known about male oppression, an explanatory study will be carried out to give us more information on the topic under study. This study will focus on married men because patriarchy is best projected in marriage where a man has the responsibility of both husband and father, a household head, breadwinner and major decision maker at home among many other responsibilities. The study area will be Nairobi, the capital city of Kenya where married men from different parts of the country can be located.

1.2 THE PROBLEM STATEMENT

It has always been taken for granted that males are privileged and therefore cannot be oppressed. Most feminist scholars have always seen women as the oppressed beings and regarded men as the guilty sex, Koch in Hinding (1986:214). But the growing interest in the field of men's studies is producing evidence that men too can be oppressed by patriarchy. Since there is very little work on the ground that tells us how men are oppressed, this study will attempt to investigate the nature and the form this oppression takes.

Since this study is breaking into a new area, it will generate a lot of public interest to all the stakeholders in that it directly challenges the existing status quo. The social stereotypes generated from the social system and acted out through the social system will be challenged by this study. The presumptions that males are dominant, that we are living in a man's world and that the woman is the second sex, Beauvoir (1953) will be reconsidered through this study. The patriarchal way of looking at gender relations will be revised. Arguments by some feminists' scholars who see men as the sovereign who provides woman - the liege with material protection and will undertake the moral justification of her existence, Beauvoir (1953) will also be given a new dimension through this study.

This study being exploratory, it will attempt to give first hand information by looking at the basic facts. Studies conducted in future will be built up by these

basic information. This study will also make additional contributions to feminist investigation on gender relations which for a long time has been biased in the sense that patriarchal relations according to feminist scholars has always been seen as favouring males and oppressing females. This study will look at the relationship between men and the wider society and give us a better understanding of men who comprise half of humanity, a subject previously given little attention by scholars.

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

To underscore the problematic issues raised, this study will attempt to answer the following questions:

1. What attributes does a patriarchal culture consider as appropriate to men?
2. What obstacles do men encounter when trying to fit into these attributes? Is this oppressive to them?
3. What effect do the changing gender roles have on men?
4. Do men see themselves as gendered beings?, and are they willing to change their patriarchal roles?

1.4 STUDY OBJECTIVES

The overall aim of the study is to investigate whether patriarchy is oppressive to men.

Specific Objectives

1. Assess the expectations of men in a patriarchal culture and show how this is oppressive to them.
2. Identify social processes oppressive to men.

3. Seek to understand the male response to the changing gender roles in the society.
4. Make recommendations for further research and for policy in matters of gender reform.

1.5 JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY

As indicated in my introduction, this study will be an exploratory study since little is known in this area of gender studies. It has been taken for granted that males are privileged and because of this, they are seen as the oppressors and not the oppressed. However, with new evidence emerging that males too can be oppressed, this study will make new contributions to policy matters regarding gender reforms. Policy makers in the area of gender will have additional knowledge which they will use for better planning and implementation as far as gender relations are concerned. This study has the potential to make recommendations for practical direction in future by linking what has been happening with what should happen in the area of gender relations.

We know from many studies how important male groups are in virtually all known communities. A better understanding of these men will be provided by this study since the study will look at the relationship between males and the wider society. In relation to this, this study will make contributions to the growing field of men's studies. The growing interest in the field of men studies will lead to the formulation of additional feminist theories and widen the existing feminist theoretical perspective on gender relations. Men comprise half of humanity and viewing them within their most meaningful family relationship (marriage), may well become a significant component of the growing field of men's studies. This study will provide a challenge to scholars to reconsider the masculine world in future studies to clear the presumption that only women can be gendered as opposed to men.

1.6 SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS

This study will take place in Nairobi. The respondents will be married men drawn from the different socio-economic classes within the city based on residence. However, because of the gender stereotypes characteristics of our society, it might prove difficult to break the ice in men to get the information, and this will be a limitation. The fact that this study will focus only on married men living out other categories of men will also be a limiting factor.

1.7 DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

PATRIARCHAL CULTURE: This refers to institutional power relations that give men power over women. It is a male hierarchical ordering of society whereby in matters such as decision making, access to resources, control over resources and control of reproduction, men have the upper hand.

OPPRESSION: According to Frye 1983, oppression refers to a situation where options are reduced to a very few and all of them expose one to penalty, censure or deprivation. Frye argues that it is “a system of interrelated barriers and forces which reduce, immobilised and mould people who belong to a certain group, and effect their subordination to another group. Hooks (1984) supports Frye’s argument when she argues that oppression can be defined as the absence of choices. From the above definitions, oppression can be seen as a situation whereby one is exposed to circumstances, which are hard to endure. For the purpose of this study, I will try to understand how reduced options or absence of choices in a patriarchal culture is oppressive to men.

CULTURE: These are patterns of expectations, beliefs, values, ideas and material objects that define the taken for granted way of life for a society or group.

MEN'S STUDIES: This is a field of study focusing on men and challenging patriarchal biases in traditional scholarship.

MARRIAGE: This refers to a situation where there is legal union of a man and a woman as husband and wife. Here in Kenya, marriage may be contracted by

customary law, in church, or by civil ceremony. A customary marriage is solemnised by the consent of the brides family and is traditionally arranged between the kin's folk of the couple. church and civil marriages entail marriage rights and penalties derived from English custom. In Kenya all these marriages are recognised.

CHAPTER TWO

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, I will present a critical review of the relevant literature related to the topic under study.

For many years' men's superiority in society has been taken for granted as the normal and desirable state of affairs which need no explanation. This superiority has been viewed as advantageous to men because it sets the universal standards against which others are judged.

2.2 MEANING, ORIGIN AND UNIVERSALITY OF MALE DOMINATION

As mentioned in Chapter 1, patriarchy is a concept used to attempt to grasp the mechanisms by which men in general manage to dominate women in general from intimate sexual encounters to the most general economic and ideological factors. It is power of men over women experienced on a day to basis by all women , and transcending particular modes of production, Weber in Syndie (1987). Weber further argues that patriarchy is a form of dominance characteristic of the household group. He observes that in marriage, patriarchy gives the father or husband authority as the senior of the household. He is able to exercise his power without restraint because his domination is seen as absolute, legitimized as well as constrained by traditional norms. In a patriarchal household according to Weber, the authority of the master is based on tradition, which includes the belief that the personal relations within the household are natural.

Weber analysis of patriarchy occurs in the context of his analysis of power, the probability that one actor within a social relationship will be in a position to carry out his own will despite resistance. This implies that in patriarchal relations, men can have their own way despite any resistance since they are the dominant actors in any social relationship within a patriarchal setting.

Hester (1992) argues that patriarchy takes the form of a male hierarchical ordering of society which derives from ideological interpretations of biological differences between men and women in particular women's capacity to be mothers. It provides the sexual hierarchical ordering of society. This means that in any social setting, men are seen as holding a higher social status than women. This argument can be considered valid in that most of our social institutions are male dominated. Here in Kenya for instance, the field of politics, education, religion and economy are all male dominated in the sense that men occupy the top positions in these institutions.

Radical feminist theorist on the other hand view patriarchy as an autonomous social, historical and political force. Patriarchy is defined as a "sexual system of power in which the male possesses superior power and economic privilege", Eisenstein (1979:17).

Ramazanoglu (1989) argues that patriarchy not only means the power of men in general over women in general, but also the hierarchical character of male power and the ideological legislation of this power as natural, normal right and just.

Little is known about the origin of patriarchy. Some radical feminists attempted to explain the origins of patriarchy by claiming that women controlled many of the early hunting and gathering societies, but men organized themselves to conquer women by force, thereby also gaining control of originally women centred forms of social organization. However, this is debatable. Bunch (1975) argues that women collectively controlled the land, languages, culture and the communities. Men were able to conquer women with weapons that they developed for hunting when it became clear that women were leading a more stable, peaceful and desirable life. This is also debatable.

Theories of patriarchy do not tell us why men dominate. These theories do not tell us whether male dominance is rooted in male control over females bodies and sexuality, or over female labour and its products or both or whether they are located somewhere else, Acker (1989).

Thus, the question still being asked today is how did men gain control of the systems of production and reproduction which has made them dominant. In an attempt to explain this, radical feminists see patriarchy as having emerged from men's control of female sexuality. However, Rubin (1975:15a) argues that kinship systems relate persons through social categories that may or may not have their basis in biological relations but rather a product of the relationships by which sex and gender are organized and produced. Rubin argues that gender is a socially imposed division of the sexes that is reproduced through the production of gender identities. People are not created in a gender neutral process. Their personalities represent the gendered categories around which kinship systems are organized.

From the above arguments, it is clear that it difficult to ascertain the origin of patriarchy. However, the universality of patriarchy cannot be denied. Weber in Syndie (1987) argues that patriarchy is a universal form of male domination. This implies that all over the world, men are the super-ordinate and women the sub-ordinate. This argument is supported by Beavoir in Nye (1998) when she argues that women are always the slaves and men the masters. This argument by Beavoir was inherited by several generations of British and American feminists and a name was coined to denote the universal domination of women by men, patriarchy.

Ortner, 1974 argues about issues that are universal in human society and argues that sub-ordination of women is one of them. Similarly, one could argue that the domination of men is also a human universal in that all over the world, men are considered to be superior to women, and hence the universality of male domination. Levin in Hinding (1986) explains the universality of male dominance by reference to the rugged conditions of early human life. Conditions under which the physically stronger male had to be the hunter and the woman the caretaker of

the home, however, this could be debatable. But all said and done, male dominance is a pan cultural fact.

2.3 EXPECTATIONS AND LIMITATIONS OF MALES IN A PATRIARCHAL CULTURE.

As mentioned in Chapter I, the culture that we inherit determines or shapes our ideas of masculinity and femininity from the time we are born. The culture we inherit determines gender roles by associating certain attributes with the male members of society and others with the female members. Giddens (1999) argues that gender socialization pervades our lives. Quite a bit of unconscious learning occurs as an infant, beginning with how infants are held. Hospital attendants and parents react to girls and boys differently even when they think they do not. Toy's, books and the like all show marked differences across gender. Lorber and Farrell (1991) argue that "*The division of the social world into women and men is so deeply ingrained that from the moment of birth, when the sex assignment of a new born is made, parents, doctors, midwives and all those around the infant do gender*" - starting with a name". One could therefore argue that culture defines our identity as either males or females in all areas of our social life. This argument is supported by Beauvoir (1953) who argues that "one is not born a woman, one becomes a woman", similarly we could argue that one is not born a man, rather one becomes a man.

Studies conducted in the U.S.A in 1972, Broverman et al (1972) to find our masculine and feminine qualities indicated that certain qualities were considered as appropriate to women and others to men. Women were expected to be intuitive, emotional, dependant, irrational, passive and weak. Men were seen as rational, aggressive, independent and strong, born leaders. This kind of gender stereotyping shows the societal expectations of the two sexes such that if one does not fit into the attribute deemed fit for men, they are seen as deviants or abnormal. The

demand by the society that one behaves in a certain manner leaves one powerless to do what they want and also gives them less power to define the shape that society should take. This is a limitation to the individual. Males being classified as born leaders and strong could be considered as favouring the males, but this is restrictive to men in that it does not give them power to define their own lives, rather, it's the larger society that defines what shape their lives should take.

Petras (1985) argues that the traditional concept of who a man should be has caused a sense of dissatisfaction due to the structures it has placed on the males. He further argues that more and more approaches to masculinity and males are pointing out the disadvantages for personal fulfilment embodied on the traditional masculine role and self concept. This argument by Petras signifies that all along, patriarchy has been less than fulfilling for men in that it denies the individual personal fulfilment.

Siedler (1989) supports Petras' argument when he argues that culture has moved men out of touch with feelings and emotions so that they have difficulty connecting with what they are feeling and experiencing. He argues that men tend to locate themselves through rationality and intellectual understanding which is not enough to express one's emotions and feelings. For too long, men have learnt to live within the narrow boundaries of reason alone, threatened by feelings and emotions that they have had so little relationship with since patriarchy demands that a man should not be emotional like a woman. Siedler further argues that men have difficulty in expressing their feelings because culture expects men to almost always hide emotions, that is, appear not to be emotional at all. This implies that men are actually emotional beings but there is external pressure on them to hide this emotionality. Not being able to express one's feelings or emotions can be oppressive. This argument is supported by Frye (1983) who asks the question "*can men cry?*" and goes ahead to reveal that men can cry in the company of women but not in the company of men because "*it is men, not women who require restraint, and men not only require it, they reward it*". The man who maintains a steely or tough or laid back demeanour, invulnerability, marks himself as a member of the male community and is esteemed by other men. The way this restriction fits into the structures of men's lives is as one of the socially required behaviours which, if

carried off, contributes to their acceptance and respect by significant others and to their own self esteem. It is therefore to the benefit of men to practice this discipline according to Frye. Frye further argues that one's suffering and frustration befalls one partly or largely because one is a member of that category, and it is therefore not a wonder that some men cite as evidence of their oppression their much advertised inability to cry Frye (1983). This implies that men are not invulnerable by nature but they are made invulnerable by culture. This restricts men to even express their emotions through crying because this would be considered feminine and un-rewardable.

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Blakely in Hinding (1986) argues that men's habit of emotional suppression is not only unhealthy but actually dangerous. Men do not handle scorn well, mainly because they do not allow themselves to express hurt, vulnerable feelings directly. She argues that the very men in the office who denigrate women for emotionalism are the ones who bark at their staff and sink into sullen moodiness themselves. This implies that men struggle so much to conceal their feelings. This is supported by Siedler (1989) who argues that, "*As men, we learn to treat emotions and feelings as signs of weakness*". Men learn not to show their feeling to others since this is a sign of weakness. He further argues that this hiding of emotions is a deep cultural inheritance because men's emotions and feelings are socially and historically constructed leaving them with no handle with which to work with themselves.

From the above arguments, it is quite clear that men are forced to hide their emotions and feelings by the culture which they inherit. According to Siedler (1989), men have taken control of the public world and sought to define the very meaning of humanity in terms of the possession of reason. Reason has been defined in opposition to nature and to men's emotions, feelings, needs and desires. He argues that men present themselves as rational and reasonable, so defining others as lacking these essential qualities which define their humanity. If people are to learn on trust in feelings, emotions, intuitions and fantasies, these are not seen as genuine sources of knowledge and understanding. They are derided and ridiculed.

Siedler further argues that identification of masculinity with reason has blinded men to their masculinity as something that has been socially and historically sustained, "we are so used to identifying our interests with the universal's interests of others that we have often blinded ourselves to the tensions and contradictions in our experiences". Because of this, men end up speaking for others before they learn to speak for themselves. This is because men grow up into an identity and consciousness within particular relationship in their families, within class and gender relationships of power and subordination.

Siedler further argues that men have become so used to discounting their feelings and desires in order to do the right thing that they are barely aware of how this estranges them from themselves. He argues that "*since this sustains our superiority over women it is difficult to imagine that the very source of our dignity as men can actually be undermining, even hurting and damaging parts of ourselves. We have to show how we turn our emotional relationships into an exercise of rational decision making, so constantly transforming the nature and character of our experience*". According to Siedler, this moves men out of touch with their emotions and feelings which can have no place in their rational deliberations. This is a way that men use to sustain a self-control that is connected to their inherited conceptions of masculinity. Men do not realize that the very moral and philosophical traditions which have sustained their sense of identity and power has also weakened and undermined them. According to Siedler, it is as if men can only find strength and identity in the public realm, but outside the public realm, men exist as weak, indecisive and child-like in their private relationships, a symptom of the weak relationship men have with themselves.

The argument by Siedler signifies that men are actually suffering privately through emotional suppression. Siedler portrays a picture of people whose lives are shaped by forces and barriers made by others. There are restrictions and limitations in the lives of men which restrict their motion to any direction. Men are in a situation that Frye (1983) would describe as the experience of being caged in by barriers which are not accidental and hence avoidable, but are systematically related to each other in such a way as to catch one between and among them and restrict or penalize motion in any direction. The situation that men find themselves in is one that could

lead to depression and frustration in which case an individual could end up being oppressed.

Patriarchal culture despises weak and dependent men. Men are expected to be independent and self sufficient which means they should not want anything from others. This has led to men limiting themselves and compromising their individuality in order to be what others expect of them, Siedler (1989). This makes many male individuals lack sense of limits or boundaries because they will always want to go on to impress that they are males. One tends to adapt to what others expect of him, not what he expects for himself. It is for this reason that Siedler argues that if we live in "*a man's world, it is not a world that has been built upon the needs and nourishment of men*". Rather, it is a social world of power and subordination in which men have been forced to compete if they are to benefit from their inherited masculinity. Siedler gives an example of how a man can be pushed to attend meetings every night and pretend not to get tired or exhausted because he does not want to admit weakness simply because in the eyes of the society, he is not supposed to be weak. This implies that one could become resentful and frustrated by societal expectations which is a form of oppression.

Men have been brought up to think that they can cope with any situation that life presents them with. They constantly push themselves beyond their limits thinking they are making themselves invulnerable to the criticism of others. They exhaust themselves taking on much more than they can manage, proving their very sense of masculinity in constantly pushing themselves against their limits and barely acknowledging their own tiredness. Men according to Siedler work as if they are machines oblivious of their own bodily need, and are strangely proud of this. Often men exhaust themselves at work that they become drained and empty. Because they are so exhausted, Siedler argues that it becomes difficult to listen to demands when they get home because they have wasted themselves at work but expect to be praised for their exertions not castigated when they get home.

Even in the area of sexuality, men still have to prove themselves. Siedler argues that the language of male sexuality is that of will, performance and conquest. It is an arena for males to prove themselves. When men are challenged for not giving

enough of themselves in relationship with women, they react so impulsively and aggressively because they resent it if any demands are made on them to respond more openly in the emotional relationship. Sometimes, it is easier for men to participate more in domestic work and children than it can be to change the tone of their emotional and sexual relationships. This is because traditional notions of masculinity places them at such a distance from their emotional lives, and makes it difficult for them to know their own emotional needs, let alone respond to others. This kind of situation can create conflict within the individual and result into oppression, in that the individual will be torn in between trying to meet the societal expectations of masculinity and emotional relationship with others.

The arguments brought forward by Siedler and others create an impression that men are not comfortable with their dominant role. Their assumedly privileged position in society places a high demand on them to perform as men and in most cases leads to the individual man suffering at the expense of societal expectation. What is repugnant to every human being is to be reckoned always as a member of a class and not as an individual person, Hinding (1986).

2.4 CHANGING GENDER ROLES AND ITS EFFECT ON PATRIARCHY.

Mackinnon (1983) argues that the law sees and treats women the way men see and treat women, that is the state is coercive and ensures men's control over women's sexuality. She argues that the state is male, meaning that its systems, its mode of operations and its underlying assumptions are based in men's power. To most feminist scholars, man is the oppressor and woman the oppressed. To maintain this status quo, men have to actively maintain and perpetrate their power over women and this takes place as in the maintenance of any social order, by pressure to consent, including force, the threat of force and ideological pressures, Hester (1992). This is supported by Frye (1983) who argues that it is said that oppressing is oppressive to those who oppress. This implies that to remain dominant, men have to put up some effort and this could be quite tasking to a man and oppressive especially with the current changing status of women. We find that currently, more women are continually joining the ranks of the gainfully employed and the patriarch is slowly losing his sit in the home. This is a cause of further oppression

to men in that their dominant position in society is now being threatened. They are perceiving their role as being under a threat in a world that is different from any in the past (Goode 1982).

Lewis and Salt (1986) argue that whenever women change their roles outside or inside the family, men must change roles to complement those of their wives; otherwise, role conflict will proliferate. This means that men will either be pressed into family work and services or volunteer willingly to take their fair share of combined family and outside work.

With the women's movement, women would not like to get back the older feminine privileges accompanied with lack of respect and material rewards that went with those courtesies. This means that as women forge forward to fight for equal opportunities with their male counterparts, roles previously taken for granted as belonging to women or to men "naturally" are now being shared. Brenton in Petras (1975) supports this when he argues that men face far more difficult problems than women specifically to the parental role because while the mothering role has remained essentially the same throughout the ages, the father's role has been changing radically. The trend to the equality of the sexes is rapidly doing away with the external scaffolding of authority that used to structure him in the past. The shrinking of the wider family to its nuclear base focuses the spot light of paternal responsibility directly on him and this responsibility has enlarged in diverse ration to his authority in that his duties have expanded while his rights have diminished. Loosing a right one previously can be very oppressive to the victim.

In a conference held in Nairobi, Kenya in 1993 on gender and kinship, it was revealed that the composition and organization of households is more complex today than about 100 years ago. Many households are no longer centred around a male head and his sons. On the contrary, almost half of all households are headed and / or managed by women. This conference revealed that changing family situations have made it imperative that roles of particular family members have to change to accommodate the new situational demands. Situational demands are illustrated by the father's performance of some of the domestic activities that are specifically regarded as the mother's duties, for instance husbands who

occasionally cook for the family and share widely in other activities. Situational demands interfere with role performance, for instance a father who strives to fulfil his roles within the family and outside the home. The individual father is likely to face a wide distracting and sometimes conflicting array of role obligations. If he conforms adequately in one direction, fulfilment will be difficult in the other. The result is role strain, difficulty experienced in meeting given role demands. A working father therefore experiences a great deal of conflict and strains trying to manage a job outside the home and many of his familial tasks, Zamberia (M.A Thesis 1990).

Zamberia also argues that unequal allocation of available resources result in societal inequalities, this could result into conflict to obtain these scarce resources. Husband and wife may disagree, for instance, a husband with a traditional orientation, possibly because his mother played a predominantly if not exclusively domestic role, envisions his wife doing the same. Such a husband can be considered as one who would like to retain the status quo by subordinating his wife. In trying to play the master, such a man may encounter challenges from his wife which could lead to his being oppressed.

When we look at the Kenyan situation today, we find that like everywhere else in the world, Kenyan women have not been left behind in the struggle for equal opportunities in all areas of life with men. Today, we find many women playing the role of breadwinner in the family, a task previously considered masculine. This is supported by Mwikali and Ouko during the conference on Gender and Kinship in Nairobi (1993) who argue that during the colonial period here in Kenya, men were portrayed as the family's breadwinners whose responsibility was to support their families. As a further ideological incentive, men were symbolically compensated with authority over women. Policies were established to pressure men into wage economy and put property in men's name through land reform and to subsidize men's farming through credit and extension. Women were to stimulate male's work force productivity through home labour which included food production, water and fuel collection. With the growth of urban areas, men had to leave rural areas in search of wage employment. However the situation is rapidly changing. The family breadwinner today need not necessarily be a man; also property need

not necessarily be put in men's name because even women can own properties today. Also, in the search for wage employment in urban areas, we find that a good number of women are migrating from the rural to urban areas in search of wage employment especially as house-helpers.

Since gender relations are today taking a different approach; most men are finding themselves on the receiving end. It is quite intimidating to most men who have to contend with the fact that their wives are the family breadwinner. This makes most men suffer inwardly because the culture they have been brought in abhors this state of affairs. Man is supposed to be the breadwinner, not his spouse.

Changing gender relations have not spared men in marriages also. According to Ehenreich in Lewis and Salt (1986), marriage previously used to provide males with guaranteed sex, emotional security and laundry service but now, liberated women are creating men who are impotent and anxious instead of secure. This means that the patriarch is less than comfortable with his current position. Goode (1982) supports this when he states that "*men will not joyfully give up their rank in spite of its burdens,*" an implication that the changing status of women is making men do things they would rather not do such as baby sitting, doing their own laundry and cooking. Being coerced to do something could be quite oppressive to the victim.

As the role of women continues to change, the traditional role of the father is also changing. Traditionally, fathers were pertained as distant and aloof, especially from their children. The father supported (helped) the mother in her relationship with children. Because fewer mothers worked outside the home, mothers were central to their children's development fewer fathers had direct relationship with their children. Today emphasis is on equal importance of fathers and mothers upon children development, therefore, the positions and roles that men play in contemporary families are being challenged and redefined at a rate greater than in the recent past, Lewis and Salt (1986).

The redefinition of men's roles as relates to the bringing up of children which will involve baby sitting and changing of diapers is a situation that most men are

uncomfortable with and would rather avoid them totally, but because of the changing gender roles, many men find themselves in the previously unknown territory due to lack of alternative and this can be a source of oppression to many. Activities like baby sitting and changing of diapers are considered feminine because Patriarchy insists that it's a mothering role. This is because the mother has always nurtured her children in a patriarchal culture; she has always involved herself deeply in their socialization. However, since the father works outside the home, he has very little opportunity to be with his children or even to make his presence felt. But, due to hard times, many men find themselves in the home taking care of the children while their wives are outside trying to earn a living to sustain the family. This interrupts the structure of a family relation. According to Nye (1988) the father participates in child care and house work, but only while maintaining at the same time a stubborn and often unconscious resistance.

Lewis and Salt further argue that today's father no longer teaches his children his craft, no longer controls their education and has little to say about marriage yet he is expected to exhibit a wide range of fatherly responses, for instance support his youngsters financially, involve himself in their problems, help his wife care for them physically, baby sit with them occasionally ... and on top of all this, advice and criticism have been coming in thickly and heavily for instance if he has a nurturing bent, he is called a motherly father and if he fails in this, he is accused of distancing himself from his children. The advice can be contradictory at times and the criticism more so because the society in general has divergent opinions on the proper role of the father and this springs up from the patriarchal system. The father is therefore placed in an awkward position at certain times and this to me is a form of oppression.

Kaplan and Sydney (1980) argue that men are often not confident about their abilities as fathers. They always worry about the emotional and financial responsibilities of fatherhood. In marriage according to this two, men are granted greater power. Because of this, many females are raised culturally to be dependent on husbands who are pillars of strength, but they soon realize that men do not meet the implied husbandly guarantee of constant strength, knowledge, competence and protection. When a husband is unable to meet the demands placed by the society

upon him, he sees himself as a failure in the eyes of his wife and the society at large and this could be very oppressive to such a man.

Men's dominance in society has led to many feminist scholars branding them as oppressors, rapists, pornographers and wife beaters. Radical feminists see men as their enemy. They see the agent of their oppression as man as long as he identifies with and carries out the supremacy privileges of the male role. This further enhances male oppression because such negative connotations do not augur well for the male in society because they believe that they are simply trying to fit into a culture that dictates to them their role. Kempton in Hinding (1986) argues that women say men are beasts jokingly and then realize to their surprise that they believe it. She further argues that women cannot share men's pride in the world they have mastered including conquering the woman. Men know that this is true and that is why they fear the hatred of women because they know that women are the true maintenance class. This is because women hold for men the key to social order such that even the lowest worker rests upon the labour of his wife. A man according to Kempton may be a less than admirable man, but at least he is a man, and not a woman. Kempton further argues that when men imagine a female uprising, they imagine a world in which women rule men as men have ruled women, their guilt which is the guilt of every ruling class will allow them to see no middle ground. This implies that men are not ready to relinquish the hold that they have on women and have to constantly ensure that the social order is maintained so as not to lose their dominant position in society. This is quite challenging to men in a world where women are fighting for equal rights as men.

According to Sayers in Hinding (1986), from the beginning of time, men have asked distractedly what on earth do women want? This implies that men have accepted the patriarchal relations in the society and they expect females to also do so for the purpose of maintaining social order. If women ask for more than what is expected by the society, they pose a threat to the dominant role of men, and this in itself is enough to make one oppressed.

Being a working man, to have the role of breadwinner in a harsh and threatening world is not a privilege, Kaplan and Sedney (1980). The working man is

dehumanized because the wage he gets does not cover the amount needed to keep the whole family. Yet culturally, he is expected to be the provider in the family. If he fails in this duty, he is considered a failure in the society. The fact that most women have taken the role of breadwinners in the family is intimidating to most men, and in that case, oppressive. In the U.S.A. for instance, opting men out from the breadwinner role started in 1950s according to Ehrenrich (1983).

Also, as the work place opens up to the women the widest opportunities to struggle to organize and hence enlarge themselves, most women have turned their back against men because the history that they know is that of unchanging patriarchal structures through which men have subjugated women. Men have always represented hierarchy, patriarchy and power and feminists argue that the only way to abolish these structures is for women of whatever social class to unite against men of whatever class. Therefore Patriarchy today is being countered by another powerful ideology called feminism, a movement which believes that women's experiences, concerns and ideas are as valuable as those of men and should be treated with equal seriousness, concerns and respect. Ramazanoglu (1982) argues that *"it is very often the case that whatever women do is defined as being in the private or domestic domain"* whereas what men do is in the public domain. The challenge posed by feminism requiring what had previously been considered as private to be made public is unsettling to most men because as Beauvoir (1953) argues, women have always been men's dependent, if not his slave, the two sexes have never shared the world in equality. It is therefore unimaginable to most men that the slave is now fighting for equal rights as his master.

According to Sayers in Hinding (1986), the very common error that men have fallen into is the assumption that all one's tastes and preferences have to be conditioned by the class to which one belongs. This to Sayers is unreasonable and irritating to the victim. Men believe they belong to a particular class in society and their behaviour has to fit into this particular class. But with women challenging the societal expectations on them, men have no alternative; they are now forced to change to accommodate the changing role of the woman.

According to Edwards (1985), men just like women are cursed with the same conflicts women experience and should not be envied and therefore reviled. She argues that men just like women find it hard to choose between modern life's contraries. If you talk to a man who is worried about his life, he sounds exactly like the worried woman, as if he is being torn along the same seams as she. This is oppression.

2.5 ARE MEN WILLING TO CHANGE

From the above literature, one could argue that patriarchy seems to be oppressive to men. But the truth of the matter is that very few men want to abandon their dominant status in society. This is supported by Siedler (1989) who argues that men's response to feminism has been a slow and difficult process in which many men have sought to identify with feminism rather than change themselves. He further argues that it is important for men to learn that they can have their vulnerability as well as strength, anger, fears, reason as well as feelings. But the question that still remains to be answered is whether men see themselves as gendered beings who can be oppressed or would they rather continue playing the role of the Patriarch in a society that is experiencing rapid changes in the area of gender roles. Kandiyoti in Lorber and Farreu (1981) gives us the example of men in Zambia who resist the more modern ordinance marriage, as opposed to customary marriage because it burdens them with greater obligations for their wives and children. So is it possible for men to change?

2.6 THEORETICAL FRAME WORK

From the literature review presented, male oppression can be looked at from various angles. These include the culture inherited and the changing gender roles in society. The major theoretical framework relevant for this study is the feminist theory.

FEMINIST THEORY

The theoretical and political frameworks of feminist thoughts emerge from some of the classical traditions of social and political theory. Feminist theory emphasizes having equal opportunities for both men and women in society. This theory attempts to situate the every day events of women's and men's lives in an analysis that links our personal collective experience to an understanding of the structure of gender relationships in society and culture, Anderson (1997). Feminist claim that what we know both intellectually and practically is thoroughly infused with gendered assumptions about the character of the social world, its problems its inhabitants and its meaning. Feminist theory helps us to understand the conditions in society and to envision the possibilities for liberating social changes. This theory helps us to understand the character of social structure, and therefore, the possibilities for social change.

Three major theoretical perspectives have been developed in feminist theory namely liberal, socialist and radical feminism. All these theoretical perspectives take gender as their central framework. The relevance of the feminist theory to this study is that it attempts to explain to us the social basis for gender by arguing that the category man or woman is culturally constructed. They are generated from the social system and acted out through the social system which is made of institutions which reproduces and consumes and internalise it according to this theory, the institutions the shape and mould the experience of individuals in the society to act in specific roles. Both men and women's role in society are defined by the institutions in our society. This explains why patriarchy has persisted through time. Patriarchy is reproduced through the social systems from one generation to another and hence its continuity.

LIBERAL FEMINIST THEORY

Liberal feminist theorists argue that to achieve equal status for men and women, all stereotyped social roles for men and women have to be abolished. This implies that male - female categories constructed by society have to be done away with. male dominance and female subordination has to be done away with. Equal

opportunities should be made available to both sexes. This argument is relevant to this study in that male oppression is sometimes as a result of stereotyped social roles which make the victim act contrary to his feelings as an individual. If the society can accept that a man can just be as vulnerable as a woman or a woman can just be as brave as a man, may be, there would be less oppression in the society. The argument by liberal feminists that the abolition of gender segregation of occupational roles is necessary for the achievement of equality is very relevant to this study. We find that some roles such as baby sitting and other domestic works are considered feminine. Men find it difficult to engage in such roles because of the gender segregation of occupational roles. This is something that needs to be done away with according to the liberal feminists, who further argue that for the acquisition of gender equality, all domestic consumption work, and child care work as well as the responsibility for its performance must also be freed from gender stereotyping and must be divided equally between partners and between parents.

Wellstonecrast(1779) a liberal feminist argued that learning and socialization are responsible for the formation of the mind. She further argued that gender role characteristics were the result of education (social learning). According to Wellstonecrast, blind submission to authority not only limits social and political freedom but also inhibits the development of mental reasoning. Wellstonecrast's argument can be used to explain how learning and socialization are responsible for making men what they are. Learning and socialization from the society states the do's and don'ts and in this way, the individuals freedom is inhibited. Similarly, the individual thinks in terms of what the society expects of them and not in terms of what he expects for himself. Liberal feminists emphasizes gender socialization as the origin of gender differences, thereby assuming that changes in socialization practices and the re-education of the public will result in more liberated and egalitarian gender relations. This argument can further be used to explain how socialization reduces the options available to men to a very few and even the few options expose them to penalty, censure or deprivation thus leading to oppression.

SOCIALIST FEMINIST THEORY

The argument by socialist feminist theorists that capitalism interacts with patriarchy to create women's oppression is also relevant to this study. According to these theorists, capitalism has an interest in maintaining gender identities and relations which guarantee a low paid expendable female work force in manufacturing and service industries. These theorists argue this benefits men since it gives them privileged access to better paid jobs, public life and leisure outside work. This argument can be used to explain why men are more economically empowered as compared to women. It can also explain why men have better paying jobs as compared to women and why men fear giving women equal opportunities as them because this would interfere with the status- quo which men would like to maintain.

RADICAL FEMINIST THEORY

Radical feminist theory analyses patriarchy as the primary cause of women's oppression. This theory looks at the devaluation of women in all patriarchal societies as evidence of the centrality of patriarchy in determining women's status. This theory can be used to explain the universality of male domination because through patriarchy the status of the woman is determined. Radical feminists argue that patriarchy emerged by men's control of female sexuality and this explains men's violence against women and the many cultural practices designed to control female sexuality, Anderson (1997). According to Eisentein (1979), this theory emphasizes male power and privilege as the bases of social relations. This theory is relevant to this study in that it can be further used to explain male dominance in practically all of our social institutions.

2.7 HYPOTHESIS

The following hypothesis will guide the study:-

1. Men do not regard traditional male roles as oppressive to them.
2. Men's personal profile influence their behaviour towards spouses.
3. Male oppression is to a large extent explained by gender role changes.
4. The more men are oppressed, the less their support for gender role changes.

2.8 OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS

The following are the key variables for this study.

1. **Independent variables:** These are variables that influence the dependent variable. They therefore account for some variation observed in the dependant variable. For this study, independent variables will include:
 - (a) traditional male roles
 - (b) personal profile
 - (c) gender role changes

Traditional male role: This refers to tasks or duties and responsibilities to be undertaken by males as defined by society. Some of the indicators of traditional male roles include; property ownership, production control and decision-making.

Property ownership: This refers to a situation whereby one has the right of possession of assets like land and houses.

Production control: This term refers to who determines the number of children a couple should have and when.

Decision Making: This refers to who determines the course of action to be taken when sorting out issues or who is to be consulted before an action is taken.

Personal Profile: This refers to an individuals details such as age, occupation, religion, education level, income and residence, number of years in marriage and number of children.

Age: The number of years lived from birth to the time of the study. The age of respondents was classified as follows:

30 – 39

40 – 49

50 – 59

60⁺

Occupation: This is defined in terms of main socio-economic activity of the respondents.

Religion: This refers to respondent's belief for instance belief in Christianity, Buddhism or Islam.

Education level: This refers to the level of school completed by the respondent interviewed. The study had five levels of education namely; Primary, Secondary, College, University and other.

Income: This is the gross monthly income computed on the basis of reported monetary earnings of the respondent. Income was classified as follows:

<10,000

10,000<25,000

25,000<40,000

40,000<55,000

55,000⁺

Residence: This refers to the area the respondent lives. Residence was classified as follows:

Up market residential area

Middle market residential area

Low market residential area

Gender role changes: This refers to a change of patterns of behaviour in which women and men behave differently, contrary to cultural expectations associated with their sex. It refers to changes in property ownership, production control and decision making role.

2. **DEPENDENT VARIABLES:** These are variables believed to be influenced by others. This study has oppression as the dependant variable other concepts used here include deprivation, penalty, censure and subordination.

Deprivation: Denial of freedom to enjoy. It is assumed that traditional male roles have denied men the freedom to enjoy.

Penalty: This refers to a situation whereby one is punished for failure to obey rules. The society penalizes men for failing to obey the laid down rules defined by culture.

Censure: This refers to unfavourable criticism. It is an expression of disapproval against those that fail to comply with societal rules.

Subordination: This refers to being regarded as less important. It is a junior rank. It is assumed that men will not support gender role changes because they do not want to work under women.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter the relevant literature for this study was reviewed. A theoretical framework relevant for the study was also adapted. Hypothesis to guide the study were also formulated. An operational definition to the relevant factors of the study was done to gain indepth understanding of the respondents.

CHAPTER THREE

3.0 STUDY METHODOLOGY

In this chapter I will present the research design that was used to meet the study objectives.

3.1 SITE SELECTION

The study was carried out in Nairobi District / Province. Nairobi covers an area of 695 km² and has a population of 2143252, central bureau of statistics (1999), Kenya population and housing census, Nairobi. This comprises of 1,153,828 males and 989,426 females. Administratively, Nairobi is divided into 8 divisions namely central, Dagoretti, Embakasi, Kasarani, Kibera, Madaraka, Pumwani and Westlands. Nairobi borders Kiambu and Thika districts on the North, Kiambu on the west, Kajiado on the south and Machakos on the East. The reason for choosing Nairobi as my area of study is because of its accessibility and resource limitation. Also, since the topic under study involved human societies worldwide since patriarchy is universal, Nairobi is ideal for the study because men from different backgrounds can be found here. Being the capital city of Kenya, Nairobi hosts people from almost every location in Kenya and is therefore ideal for capturing the views of almost all the Ethnic groups within the country.

3.2 UNIT OF ANALYSIS

The unit of analysis refers to the focus of the study. This study's focus was married men. The study attempted to understand married men in patriarchal relations who were therefore regarded as the unit of analysis.

3.3 SAMPLING METHOD

Being a qualitative study, non-probability sampling was identified as the most appropriate and practical sampling method to be used in the study.

Non-probability sampling refers to process of case selection other than random selection singleton (1988). It is a sampling method that will suffice to select a range of

cases non-randomly without concern for precise statistical generalisation. Also, because the study was an exploratory study with the objective of becoming more informed about the problem itself, probability sampling was regarded as unnecessary. However, in non-probability sampling there is no way of specifying the probability of each units inclusion in the sample and there is no assurance that every unit has some chance of being included.

This study was therefore conducted using purposive sampling methods whereby the researcher had to rely on her expert judgement to select units that were representative or typical of the population under study. In this study, Nairobi was purposively selected as the study area. Important sources of variation in Nairobi's population were identified and a sample that reflects this variation was selected for the purpose of gathering information. Variation was done on the basis of residence whereby 6 estates were purposively selected on the basis of the up market middle and low market residential areas. Two estates were purposively selected to represent each category of residence. For the upmarket estates, Runda and Loresho estates were purposively selected, BuruBuru and Otiende estates were purposively selected to represent the middle market estates while Kibera and Kawangware slums were purposively selected to represent the low market residence. A sample of 60 married men were purposively selected from the 6 residential areas, (i.e. 10 married men were purposively selected from each of the 6 residential areas to be included in the final sample of the 60 married men selected for the study). The ages of the respondents ranged from 30-65 years. All the respondents interviewed were non polygamous.

3.4 METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION

For data collection, in depth interviews were conducted with individual respondents who comprised a cross section of married men purposively selected. An unstructured interview guide was used to enable the respondents give their own views and opinions without restricting them to particular responses. This gave the respondents an opportunity to express themselves exhaustively. All the questions in the interview guide were formulated with an aim to attempt to answer the research questions formulated for the study and also to test the hypothesis developed for the study.

A review of secondary data available was also used as a method of data collection. Secondary data included both published and unpublished literature.

3.5 DATA ANALYSIS

For data analysis, frequency tables were used to distribute respondents according to their various factors. Key themes derived from the research objectives formed the basis of data analysis. Recurring patterns running through the data was used to form topics and sub-topics for the study .Quotable quotes derived from the data collected has also been used to analyse data. Data has also been analysed around the hypothesis to find out whether they support or differ from the hypothesis formulated to guide the study.

3.6 EXPECTED OUTCOME OF THE PROJECT

This study will attempt to find out whether patriarchal culture is oppressive or not oppressive to married men. This academic report will be made available to students and other researchers who may have future interest in this particular field of study.

CHAPTER FOUR

4 DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, I will present and discuss the findings of the study. This analysis will attempt to answer the research questions raised up in chapter 1. To gain in-depth understanding of those interviewed, a clear description of the respondents' characteristics was obtained. Apart from sex and marital status which was constant, the respondents had some varying characteristics. Data related to these are displayed in the tables below.

4.2 DISTRIBUTION OF THE RESPONDENTS ACCORDING TO FACTORS OF STUDY

Distribution of the respondents by residence

From table 1 below, we find that respondents from the three types of residential areas were equally represented in the study. 33.4% of the respondents were drawn from each of the 3 categories of residence.

Table 1

Residence	No	%
Up Market	20	33.4
Middle Market	20	33.4
Low Market	20	33.4
TOTAL	60	100

Distribution of the respondents by Age

Table 2 below shows that the age of the respondents ranged from 30 – 60⁺ years. 66.8% of the respondents were aged between 30 – 49 years and formed the majority of

the respondent's interviewed. Only 10% of the respondents were 60 years and above, an indication that as men grow older, they retire back to their rural areas. Very few men who have attained the age of 60⁺ are found in towns.

Table 2:

Age	No	%
30 – 39	20	33.4
40 – 49	20	33.4
50 – 59	14	23.3
60 ⁺	6	10.0
TOTAL	60	100

Distribution of the respondents by education level

From table 3 below, we find that all the respondents had attained some formal education. Out of the 60 respondents, 6.3% had attained primary level education, 40% secondary, 23.3% had gone to college while 30% had attained university education.

Table 3

Education Level	No	%
Primary	4	6.3
Secondary	24	40.0
College	14	23.3
University	18	30.0
Other	0	0
TOTAL	60	100

Distribution of respondents by Current Occupation

Table 4 below shows that the majority of the respondents, 45% were salaried employees, 34.4% had their own businesses ranging from company ownership to small businesses like vegetable vending and running food kiosks. 16.7% of the respondents were wage earners, these included builders on construction sites and those

who go to industrial area to do low paying contractual jobs such as packaging. Only 5% of the respondents were unemployed, an indication that most men have some form of income. The table shows that 95% of the respondents had some means of income generation.

Table 4

Current Occupation	No	%
Salaried employee	27	45.0
Own business	20	33.4
Wage earners	10	16.7
Unemployed	3	5.0
TOTAL	60	100

Distribution by Income Levels

Table 5 below shows that 26.7% of the respondents earn less than 10,000 shillings, 20% earn between 10,000 to less than 25,000 while 28% earn between 25,000 to less than 55,000. 25% of the respondents get a monthly income of more than 55,000. From the above table, we can conclude that there are great disparities on the income level of the respondents. This shows why some live in the up market while others have to content with their low market residences

Table 5

Income level	No	%
<10,000	16	26.7
10,000<25,000	12	20.0
25,000<40,000	10	16.7
40,000<55,000	7	11.6
55,000 [†]	15	25.0
TOTAL	60	100

Distribution of respondents by number of years in marriage

Table 6 below shows that the respondents interviewed had been in marriage for five years and above. 61.7% of the respondents had been in marriage for between 10 to 24 years while 21.6% had been in marriage for more than 24 years.

Table 6

No. of years	No	%
4 – 9	10	16.7
10 – 14	15	25.0
15 – 19	12	20.0
20 – 24	10	16.7
25 – 29	8	13.3
30 ⁺	5	8.3
TOTAL	60	100

Distribution of respondents by number of children

Majority of the respondents, 85% had between 1 – 6 children, only 11.6% of the respondents had more than 6 children as shown in table 7.

Table 7

No. of children	No	%
None	2	3.3
1 – 3	27	45.0
5 – 6	24	40.0
7 – 9	5	8.3
10 ⁺	2	3.3
TOTAL	60	100

Distribution of respondents by religion

The majority of the respondents interviewed were Christians who comprised of 83.3% of the respondents interviewed as shown in table 8.

Table VIII:

Religion	No	%
Christian	50	83.3
Muslim	8	13.3
Other	2	3.3
TOTAL	60	100

4.3.0 MASCULINITY AND IDENTITY

The overall objective of this study was to investigate whether Patriarchy is oppressive to men. In this section, I will proceed to report the respondents' views on patriarchy and male oppression. This section begins by presenting findings on the respondent's views on their sexuality.

4.3.1 Views on sexuality.

Study findings revealed that men feel privileged to have been born men and are proud of their male identity. It emerged from the study that from an early age men are made to feel more important than their female counterparts. According to most men, this feeling of being important is derived from the society into which they are born. Some of the male views on sexuality that came up during the study are listed below.

4.3.2 Glorification of males

Study findings indicate that from an early age, a lot of praise is bestowed on the male child by the society as compared to the female child. Findings indicate that male children grow up knowing that they are born leaders and that they are the preferred sex. The male child is usually referred to as a future ruler or leader by the society. This reference extends into the adult life where by they are expected to fully exercise the privilege bestowed on them by the society. The girl child on the other hand is hardly considered as a ruler or leader, she is seen in totally different light. The end result is that men grow up believing that they are superior to their female counterparts. Findings also reveal that male children further acquire praises from the kind of names they are given. Heroic names in the society are usually a preserve for

the male child. Names of strong and fierce animals are usually used in praise of the male child. During the study names such as,

“lion”

“bull”

“cock”

“leopard”

were identified as some of the names used in reference to males. Some are even referred to as *“rock”*, to show how strong they are. These praises clearly reflect the perception of the society towards males. The kind of praises bestowed on males from an early age goes along way in making them feel that they are the sex that matter. some of the quotable quotes that came up during this study to support the above argument include, a respondent who argued that,

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“even during my early ages my widowed mother continuously swore that she wishes she had been born a man, then she would have done this and that....”.

According to this respondent the male identity is a coveted identity because even women wish they were born men. One of the respondent also argued that when he was growing up, any confrontation with his sisters, would always end up in his favour because those around him including his own parents would tell him not to argue with that,

“prostitute”.

This according to the respondent meant that whereas as a man it is common knowledge that you will inherit your father’s land and other properties, the destiny of the female child is unknown because one cannot predict where she will be married. She could end up getting married in any part of the world and therefore she is like a prostitute or like a bird which has no permanent abode.

4.3.3 Lineage and kinship

Findings also revealed that men feel privileged to have been born men because their families are assured of continuity. A man will always remain in his community to carry on the family line unlike a woman who will at one time go away to be absorbed in another community. Some respondents argued that they feel privileged to be born men because they cannot imagine themselves getting married in other communities. Quotable quotes that came up during the study to support this include,

"it is you who will dig my grave,",

"it is you who should take care of this home".

Being identified as the right sex for responsibilities to be delegated to is a source of pride to most men as study findings revealed..

4.3.4 Heirship

Findings reveal that men find it to be advantageous to have been born men because they will inherit property which they never worked to acquire. As a man you inherit land, animals, houses, and any other property that belonged to your father free of charge. A respondent argued that

"even if my father had one thousand acres of land I will not struggle to buy it, it becomes mine automatically".

This privilege is not extended to women.

4.3.5 Biological differences

Study findings also revealed that men felt that the male identity is a privilege identity because when it comes to matters of reproduction the woman's physiology is usually interfered with so much when she gives birth such that her beauty perishes so fast unlike the men's physiology which remains intact. Men do not age as fast as women. They remain youthful for a long while. Men also do not undergo the pains of child birth and this is an added advantage to being male.

4.3.6 Supremacy

Findings indicate that men grow up believing that the leadership role is an exception for males only and they see this as natural. Men regard those women who are fighting for equal opportunities with men as desiring to have been born men, otherwise why should they fight for recognition. They argued that even females recognise the fact that it is advantageous to be male and this is why they keep on fighting for equality with men. "quotable quotes that came up during the study include a respondent who stated that;

"I am the commander in my house, even my wife has to ask me for permission to get pregnant."

The above arguments clearly indicate that men feel proud to have been born men. These arguments further indicate that gender stereotyping occurs from an early age such that men grow up in a society that is already gendered. The kind of praises bestowed on males from an early age by the society goes along way in making them feel that they are the superior sex.

Nevertheless, there were a few respondents who argued that they do not consider themselves privileged to be men since it is God who created some to be male and others females however, these respondents changed their minds in the course of the interview when they were asked questions related to gender role changes.

When it struck them that gender role changes would mean taking up some roles that are traditionally considered feminine such as baby sitting, they argued that they now considered themselves privileged to be males because there were some feminine roles they could not perform even if gender role changes were effected.

The above findings support the arguments advanced by Eisentein (1979) who argues that every society contains a "*sex – gender system*" and both women and men tend to value men and men activities more. Thus, the supremacy contained in the male identity makes men believe that they are the right sex.

Findings reveal that being male is an identity that men would always want to be identified with regardless of their social status in society.

4.4.0 TRADITIONAL MALE ROLE IN SOCIETY

Findings indicate that men believe that they play a very important role in the society ranging from the leadership role to the role of homebuilders. Men recognise that the society has clearly defined their roles and it is up to them to take up the challenge and fulfil these roles. Some of the traditional roles of a man that came up during the study are listed below.

4.4.1 Masculinity and leadership

Study findings reveal that men believe they are born to be leaders. Because of this, they should be strong, aggressive and face challenges boldly. This view is supported by Boverman (1974) who argues that masculine qualities include being aggressive and strong. Tied to the role of leadership, men consider themselves to be

breadwinners in their houses. They believe that it is their duty to provide for their families, for instance make sure that their families are well fed, clothed and housed. Respondents argued that if as a man you do not take good care of your family, the society will judge you as a failure and nobody likes to be considered a failure. There was also a general consensus by the respondents that since men are born to lead they have the responsibility of directing events in the society as well as in their houses.

4.4.2 Masculinity and emotions

Because men are perceived as leaders, they cannot afford to be too emotional in times of crisis because they are supposed to give strength especially to women and children who the society regard as being vulnerable. A respondent argued that *“in case of an event that involves death in the family one person should remain strong to see how the crisis can be handled”*. *This person should be the man who is regarded as the house hold head.*

According to this respondent, if all the family members including the man of the house engaged in emotional expressions, there would be nobody left to face the impending challenge.

Siedler (1989) argues that the society expects men to always hide emotions. Frye (1983) supports this when she argues that you are esteemed as a man when you hide your emotions. Emotional suppression is a socially required behaviour which if carried off contributes to male acceptance in the society because men reward emotional restraint.

4.4.3 Arbitrator and security provider

Traditional male role also include arbitration in times of conflict, for instance when there are marital problems, it is usually the men who are called to be arbitrators between the warring parties. Study findings also revealed that men consider themselves as security providers in terms of protecting their country and families from external attacks. Respondents argued that this is why you find in the army the majority of soldiers are men. Also at the family level, if thugs attacked one's family the man should be at the forefront to fight off the thugs. This is why traditionally, it is the man who sleeps facing the door so as to be the first to access the door in case of danger.

4.4.4 Masculinity and discipline

Men also regard themselves as disciplinarians, they play the role of instilling discipline on their wife's and children . However, it is important to note that there was much emphasise on the role of the man as a disciplinarian for wife among men who live in the low market residential areas as compared to those that live in the up and middle market residential areas. Findings indicate that men who live in the low market residential areas regularly batter their wives even for flimsy reasons because they believe that a woman should be disciplined any time she shows some signs of defiance to the husband. It does not matter whether this defiance is strong or weak. So long as it is defiance, she should be disciplined to bring her back to her subordinate position. The form of discipline preferred by men in this category is beating. They argued that beating is a very effective disciplinary tool to use against an errant wife. The other two categories of men discipline their spouses by staying away from home or coming home late.

4.4.5 Home builder

It also emerged from the study that in almost all communities, men play the role of homebuilders. It is the man's duty to build a house for his family. According to one respondent even among the Masai where the woman used to build the house the Masai men have now started constructing houses for their families. Study findings also reveal that in some communities it is the men who are supposed to point out the spot on which a member of their community can build a house, while in some communities it is the role of a man to untie the animal which will be used for dowry payment in case there is a marriage.

4.4.6 Masculinity and Social status

It also emerged from the study that men believe that they play the role of determining the status of their families in society. Respondents argued that a man is a pillar of status in the family, if the pillar falls, there may be no measurement for the family and the family may be looked down upon because it lacks a man head. A house without a man head according to most respondents is usually seen as lacking a very important member of the family.

4.4.7 Masculinity and Property allocation

This study also revealed that the role of property allocation is a man's. It is the man who determines who should get what in the family. Study findings indicate that men consider themselves, as the ones who own property even their wives are part of their property.

4.4.8 Masculinity and Decision Making

Men play the role of decision makers in the society. Any time an important decision is to be made, they have to be consulted before action can be taken regardless of how far one might be. This is because as household heads, men are regarded as the one's who will judge wisely regarding the decision to be taken.

4.4.9 Masculinity and Production control

Traditionally, men determined the number of children to be brought forth in the family.

From the arguments above, one can conclude that the culture that we inherit determines gender roles by associating certain attributes with the male members of the society and others with the female members. It is not by coincidence that non of the respondents considered the role of baby sitting or cooking as a man's role. The reason for this is that we are born in a society that is already gendered and as we live in these societies, we tend to naturalise these gender roles to the extent that we forget that these roles are just societal constructions and can be changed. This argument is supported by Giddenes (1999) who argues that gender socialisation pervades our lives. Thus what men regard as the traditional male role is merely a social construction.

4.5.0 PERCEPTION OF ROLES

Regarding the traditional male roles, there was a general agreement among the respondents that they had no problems with these roles. Respondents argued that these roles are not oppressive to them. What oppresses men are the challenges they face to meet these roles. These challenge ranges from financial limitations to lack of control in kitchen matters which have become a real source of frustration to men.

These challenges according to the respondents are the products of society, which no longer provides a conducive environment for men to exercise their roles. Oppression caused by these challenges cuts across all categories of men as study findings indicate.

One factor that came out strongly during this study is that the leadership role of men is being challenged today and men feel threatened by this. Men are no longer the effective household heads known traditionally because their leadership role has been eroded. When one's power is reduced in areas that one used to exercise much control, frustration will be the end result. Frustration and oppression go hand in hand. Because the traditional male role is being threatened especially by the feminism movement, men today have less control in virtually all areas of life. Men began losing control at work places when women began to vie for positions previously regarded as belonging to men. While men were losing their leadership positions at work places, most of them still exercised a lot of control in their homes, however, study findings indicate that the patriarch is now slowly losing control even at home. He no longer has full control over the happenings around him and this has caused much oppression to the patriarch. Some forms of oppression men experience due to the challenges they face clearly came out during this study. The forms of oppression are listed below.

4.5.1 Financial Limitations

Study findings indicate that men feel that in order to fulfil their traditional male roles, they need enough finances. However, financial incapability is a major source of limitation that hinders men from fulfilling their roles and hence leads to oppression. For one's family to be adequately provided for in terms of food, clothing, shelter, education and even health, money is needed. Study findings indicate that as a man when your family is well taken care of, it becomes a source of pride to that particular person. If you do not provide adequately for your family the society judges you as a failure because you have failed to meet your obligations as the household head. Study findings indicate that men feel oppressed when they fail in the duty of providing adequately for their families. They are ashamed because they feel they have lost face in the society. It is important to note that men do not feel oppressed with their role as providers for their families, they only feel

oppressed when financial limitations come between them and the role they are trying to fulfil.

Study finding also indicate that men who have failed to provide for their families adequately are seen as not working hard enough. This indicates that the society stands as a judge watching over those that are adequately fulfilling their roles and those that have failed. The most affected group as far as financial limitations is concerned are residents in the low market areas and a few from the middle market residential area.

It emerged from the study that financial inability lowers the social status of a man. The society sees you as a lesser man. This kind of judgement is not taken lightly by the victims because it directly injures their pride as men and this acts as a source of oppression. Findings further indicate that any type of failure for instance lack of school fees for children lack of adequate clothing for ones wife and children and inappropriate shelter are directly linked to the man. One of the respondents stated that he once heard a neighbour commenting about his childrens' dressing to another neighbour and he felt hurt when the neighbour remarked that his children

“dress no better than street children”.

According to this respondent, he tries so much as a father to meet his role obligation but he is unable due to financial constraints. A respondent also remarked that when your wife does not dress well it is the man who is blamed for not taking good care his wife. According to this respondent, judging men without looking at their situation in totality is not fair. The society should understand that no man in his right senses would neglect his family. On the contrary a man will always wish he could give the best to his family because this gives him pride. Thus we find that financial constraints is one form of oppression that men regard as a hindrance to achieving their traditional male roles. Also, without proper finances, your leadership role as a man is diluted as study findings indicate.

4.5.2 Insubordination

Study findings reveal that men generally consider themselves to be house hold heads they believe that they are the superior sex. Findings indicate that men are not taking it kindly that their leadership role as house hold heads is being challenged by

women. The role of leadership is regarded by men as God given, and during the study many respondents referred to the bible to drive their point home. Their argument is that Adam was created first and then Eve. Even god himself declared that he was making a helper for Adam not an equal for Adam.

Generally study findings indicate that men are blaming women for wanting to take up their God given leadership role. Respondents argued that our culture clearly defines the roles of both sexes. They argued that culturally a man is the house hold head, he is the leader and whichever decision he makes or whatever orders he gives should be taken seriously. However today this is not the case. Women do not want to be subordinate to men, instead they are also vying for the leadership role in their homes. This has led to a lot of conflict in the society because a situation of uncertainty has been developed in men to the extent that men are no longer sure whether they are the centre of authority or not. Respondents argued that the conflicts that we witness in most families today is as a result of women not recognising the leadership role of the man. Because of this most men feel frustrated and oppressed because their authority is no longer recognised. Generally the respondents felt that if both sexes were to stick to their roles as laid down by culture, there would be less conflict in the society. A respondent was quoted to say *“you cannot have two men living in the same house because both will want to head that house”*.

This respondent was simply referring to a situation where women want to take up the leadership role of men and as a result two centres of authority are created.

According to the respondents women advocating for the leadership role are going against the wishes of God who deliberately made the two sexes differently and ordained one sex to head the other. They argued that in any social setting there must be a head and followers. Study findings indicate that men cannot understand why women are uncomfortable with their God given roles and have turned out to be troublemakers, by attempting to take up roles, which do not befit them. What emerged out of this study is that the most oppressed men as far as the leadership role is concerned are men who belong to the upper and middle class. There was a general confession from these category of respondents that they are just figureheads in their houses. The real heads of their houses are their wife's. They can no longer

exercise the kind of power that goes with the leadership role bestowed on them traditionally by culture. They claim to have lost almost total control over their wives and children. Their decisions are no longer taken with the seriousness it deserves in fact, among this category of married men, insubordination is the order of the day. They argued that they are badly oppressed but this oppression does not manifest itself outwardly due to the ridicules they would face in society. Most confessed that their inner ego is the one that is most affected, but outwardly they tend to pretend that all is well. This argument can be supported by Siedler (1989) who argues that men become so *“used to discounting their feelings and desires in order to do the right thing and are unaware that this estranges them from themselves”*. The fact that men are not able to express their oppression openly is a creation of the society which has no room for men who cannot exercise control over women. A man who confesses openly that he is just a figure head in his house would automatically become the centre of ridicule from fellow men and women alike. He will be looked upon as a coward, one who is not fit to lead. On the contrary, study findings reveal that men do not like to be associated with cowardice because it is demeaning to them. Hence they would rather choose to suffer inwardly than come out openly and show the world that they are suffering. Further probing as to why these category of men are more oppressed, study findings revealed that most of them are married to elitist women most of whom are advocating for gender role changes.

While study findings reveal that men living in the up and middle market residential areas suffer more insubordination as far as their leadership role is concerned. Findings reveal that men living in the low residential areas do not encounter as much opposition to their leadership role. Study findings indicate that their role as household heads is still effective to some extent. The decisions and orders they make in their houses are to a large extent effected. Further probing as to why these group of men do not meet much opposition in their leadership role, findings revealed that most of them resort to the use of force including physical force to command compliance from their wives and children. Due to the use of force or fear that force will be used, many of their spouses recognise their leadership role and give them very little opposition. However when one resorts to the use of force to effect their authority, it shows that they are not in full control as leaders.

The use of force to achieve an end is an indication that there is opposition or resistance towards the one in charge. The use of force can become quite oppressive to the user. Thus, we can conclude that men of all categories are oppressed as far as the traditional leadership role of the man is concerned.

From the above findings we realise that men recognise that they are meant to be leaders, and are willing to take up their leadership role however, they cannot do this effectively due to the challenges and oppositions they continually encounter. We can therefore conclude that the role of leadership is not oppressive to men, the real oppressor is the insubordination they encounter when they want to exercise their leadership role.

It is a known fact that when one's leadership role faces opposition the control that this person has is reflected in other areas of life. Study findings clearly revealed this. Because men can no longer apply the traditional leadership role bestowed on them by the society effectively they have lost the powers to be authoritative in many other areas of life. In most cases men are forced to comply with situations that are uncomfortable for them.

4.5.3 Income disparities

It goes without saying that in a patriarchal culture, the man is supposed to earn more than the woman since he is the superior sex. Study findings reveal that the amount of income a man generates as compared to his wife can become a source of oppression. Respondents argued that a man should always have something more than his wife. Study findings reveal that men feel that as house hold heads they can only earn the respect of others when their income is over and above their spouses. Respondents argued that the society has placed men above women and because of this, men should always take up leading positions in virtually all areas of life including having a higher income than his spouse. It is demoralising for a man who has to depend on others including his wife to meet expenses which traditionally he should meet. Study findings reveal that most men feel threatened when their wife's income is more than theirs. One respondent remarked that *"even if I had stayed with my wife for 30 years, I would feel threatened if she starts earning more than me"*.

The arguments that respondents brought forward to support their views that women should earn less than men include the views that there is low submission from women when they earn more than men. They become strong headed and are not ready to listen to instructions.

Respondents further argued that when a mans income is lower than that of his wife, he is seen as useless by his spouse. In case there are children in the marriage, she will keep on telling them how useless their father is, her relatives plus your relatives will also come to know how useless you have become. It will not stop here because the community around you will also get to know that your wife is the real bread winner in the house. This will lead to lack of respect from those around you to an extent that they will even start calling you names. To support this, a respondent remarked that at one time he took a loan to support his wife's business, which began doing so well. However, to his amazement,

"the once submissive wife changed her character and started undermining me",

to the extent that she could no longer take orders from him. To add insult to injury, his children also turned against him because of what the mother used to tell them. According to this respondent, his wife used to tell his children how their father could not afford many things and it was due to her effort that things were moving in that house. A time reached when these children started referring to their father as *"a tout whose work was just to eat not knowing where the food came from"*.

This enraged the respondent to the extent that he stopped his wife from managing that business. This is just one example of how oppressed men can be when their spouses earn more than them. From the study, a great number of men are oppressed when it comes to the question of how much income they get in relation to what their partners get.

This study also revealed that the society makes life uncomfortable for men with less income than their spouses. Patriarchal culture states that a man should be dominant or superior in all aspects. Negative comments from the society are usually directed to men whose income is less than their partners. Most of the time, such men are referred to as the women of the house while their partners are seen as the heads of these houses. The reason for this is because the dominant role of the man as far as income is concerned has been taken over by the woman. The society

also views such men as being kept by their wife's and have little respect for them. This oppresses the men concerned. Another important point that came up during this study in relation to income is that in most cases even when a woman earns more than the man, the man is still expected to contribute more towards the family budget, after all, women argue that men are the house hold heads, so they should bear more responsibility.

This study also revealed that women are always suspicious that men are hiding their money somewhere, so even when a man does not have money genuinely, nobody believes him. Still on the question of income, it came out clearly that men's money is regarded as belonging to both husband and wife while the wife's income belongs to the woman alone. This is a cause of distress to most men and a source of oppression.

Study findings also indicate that men find it difficult to ask for financial assistance from their spouses. A man may know very well that his wife has the finances that could help in some project, but he feels uncomfortable approaching the wife for the same. The reason for this is that it lowers the esteem of the man, all these can be traced back to patriarchy. In patriarchy it is the woman who should be on the receiving end, not the man.

From the above findings, it is quite clear that traditional male roles which support male dominance in all areas of life is impacting negatively on the male members of society as far as income matters are concerned.

These roles never took into account that a time would come when the patriarch's role would be overridden by events beyond his control and the patriarch will be left without an alternative way of living. Siedler (1989) supports this argument when he argues that *"the tension between what we might want for ourselves, and the fragmented identities that we are offered is in danger of disappearing for it has become difficult to imagine or dream of alternative ways of living"*. If as a man you feel threatened by your wife's income, what cause of action are you expected to take as far as patriarchal culture is concerned? The answer is that this culture

does not offer you an alternatives way of behaviour so most men are in a dilemma torn between traditional male roles and the changing gender roles.

4.5.4 Disparities on education level

Study findings reveal that a man's level of education can also turn out to be a source of oppression. A man who is less educated than his wife normally finds himself on the receiving end both at the family level and the societal level. Study finding indicate that since patriarchy advocates for an all round male dominance, this dominance should also be reflected in the level of education attained by men in comparison to women. It is important to note that findings indicate that the society regards it as inappropriate for a man to marry a woman more educated than he is. It is seen as a wrong move and such marriages are not expected to last. All these can be traced back to our patriarchal culture, which have no room for female supremacy in virtually all areas of life. Because of these men who have attained lower educational levels as compared to their spouses find themselves stigmatized by the society. They are seen as trying to fit into shoes too big for them because women in these kinds of marriages are never ready to take instructions. They believe that since their academic papers speak volumes as compared to those of their spouses, they should be the ones to be listened to even when they do not make sense.

Findings further indicate that no matter how happy a couple with such educational disparities may seem, at the back of the man's mind, there will always be that uncomfortable feeling that he does not measure up to his wife's educational level. This in itself is a source of oppression to most men.

This study also revealed that men in this kind of marriages are always struggling to measure up to their wife's standards. However, in most cases their wife's do not appreciate them. Any suggestion they may have to better their marriage life or any contributions they make do not make sense to their wife's. Their suggestions or contributions are seen as stupid. Any slight conflict in the marriage will always be blamed on the

"stupid man"

who lacks knowledge. Any ideas from such a man is usually ignored. Such men are expected to get direction from their wife's who consider themselves to be

household heads because of their academic qualifications. This is a complete reverse from traditional male role, which expects the man to be in charge always. This leads to oppression. Study findings reveal that even though equal educational opportunities are being offered to both males and females, men generally feel that when it comes to marriage, a man should take up a wife of the same educational level as his if not one with less educational qualification. This study findings indicate that families are more stable if the man is more educated than a woman. To support this point, one respondent narrated how his wife of 15 years who has a degree which he does not have always blames the kids poor performance in school on their stupid father.

"She boasts endlessly of her intelligence that had enabled her to reach the highest institution of learning".

According to this respondent, his children always make fun of him that their mother is more intelligent than him. This respondent has become so frustrated that he has decided to pursue a parallel degree programme and stop further insults from his family members. According to this respondent,

"even if a man's income is more than that of his highly educated wife, women still have a way of undermining you".

The above findings indicate that men are still expected to prove their supremacy in our learning institutions by attaining higher qualifications than women. It is another problem that patriarchy has failed to address. Times have changed and gender role changes even in the field of education is inevitable. Therefore patriarchy should not load it on men that they have to be more qualified academically than the women they take up as their wives.

4.5.5 Limitations in decision making

This study reveals that men consider decision making to be one of the traditional roles of a man. However the role of decision making has also proved to be a source of oppression for most men. Men nowadays are no longer the sole decision-makers. They are in most cases forced to consult their partners before making decisions on important issues, otherwise their decisions will be sabotaged or defied by their spouses if such decisions are not appealing to them. To support this, a respondent

narrated how he once sold a sheep to a neighbour without consulting his wife, when his wife came to learn about it,

“she borrowed money, paid the neighbour and brought the sheep back home”,

to the husband’s embarrassment. Patriarchy states clearly that decision-making role is a man’s role. Women are usually considered to be rash in decision making and hence poor decision-makers. Hence, decision making is a man’s domain. However findings reveal that men can no longer make independent decisions. Quite often their decision-making capability is challenged and this has led to many men being oppressed. It is important to note here that men appreciate their decision making role and they do not consider this role to be oppressive to them. What oppresses them is the opposition they encounter when trying to carry out this role.

However there were a few respondents who argued that many times, when they face opposition especially in matters they consider to be important, they can resort to the use of force to implement whatever decision they want to make. As already stated, the use of force is also a form of oppression. All said and done, we can conclude that the challenges men face in decision making is a real form of oppression to the men involved because it directly challenges their supremacy as far as decision making is involved

4.3.6 Women empowerment

This is another area that was cited by men as being a major source of their frustration. As more and more women become empowered, we find that some high ranking positions in the society are occupied by women. Findings indicate that men married to such women normally feel powerless as far as the traditional role of the man is concerned. A man traditionally is supposed to be more prominent than the woman but we find that sometimes there is a reverse of this trend. If a woman is more prominent than you, as a man, you will exercise every little control over her. Findings reveal that men find such women unbearable and men who have to keep up with such women are badly oppressed. During the study many respondents cited the case of a former Ugandan vice president who believed that since she was the vice president, she was no longer answerable to her husband but the nation. When her husband slapped her at one time for coming home late without a proper reason, her remark was,

"how can you slap a whole vice president?"

According to this study findings men regard the behaviour of this vice president as a very good example of how women behave when they are in powerful positions. They want to show the world that women too matter. However respondents argued that they do this in a vengeful manner to show how small man can be reduced. Findings indicate that men who find themselves relating to such women usually find themselves walking in the woman's shadow. Men regard this as a reversal of roles that badly injure the men's pride and hence leads to oppression.

When a woman's prominence supercedes that of the man the society tends to use negative connotations against the man. Quotable quotes that came up include men being referred to

"as the woman of the house",

"a defeated man",

"a weak man"

or

a "wife dependant."

Considering the culture that we have been brought into, such references are really demeaning to the man in question and such a man will be obviously oppressed.

We can therefore conclude that when women take up powerful positions in society men lose their confidence as heads. They feel threatened, unprotected and out of place. A review of the case of the Ugandan vice president who could challenge her husband by reminding him of her position in the society is enough threat for any man, such a man will obviously feel that he lacks security. When a man is exposed to such a situation there is the fear that the woman will use the machinery at her disposal to discipline him. If such a situation arises whereby a woman has the machinery to discipline a man, the man in question cannot be classified to be in a privileged position in the society as most feminist scholars argue. Therefore the feminist theory that states that men enjoy an advantageous position in society cannot apply here.

4.5.7 Production Control

The term production control as used in this study refers to who determines the number of children to be brought forth in a family. It is another area of life where men feel oppressed. Patriarchy recognises the man to be the one to determine the number of children to have. However, study findings indicate that the control that men used to have over production issues has been eroded. It is no longer effective. Women have to be consulted on production matters to find out whether they support or disagree with the man's decision. Study findings indicate that generally, men would prefer to have more children but are unable to because they lack the support of their spouses.

Study findings indicate that women are turning out to be the real production controllers. This is because most of the family planning or birth control devices are made for the woman. A woman can use the birth control devices at her disposal and decide whether she wants to give birth or not. Because she has an upper hand as far as birth control devices are concerned, she can use this advantage to trick the man. Cases were cited during this study on women who will argue that they cannot give birth to more children and yet deny that they are using birth control devices. Such women will always argue that they do know why they cannot conceive while at the back of their minds, they know very well that they are using birth control devices. Similarly a woman may trick a man that she does not know why she has conceived and yet she is using birth control devices, knowing very well that she is not on any birth control device and that this conception is deliberate. Many men have fallen prey to this, and are now realising that in most cases, the final say on how many children a couple should have lies mostly with the woman.

We find that traditionally, a man is expected to have many children. One respondent remarked that

"a woman should give birth until she exhausts her eggs",

however study findings indicate that men no longer have control over women's productivity. The large number of children they desire to have may not be realised because of this. The only alternative they have is to become polygamous, but the AIDS scare has deterred most of them from taking more wife's. Hence, many men

continue to suffer because their traditional male role of production control can no longer be effected due to the changing times.

4.5.8 Diet and oppression

During the study men raised complaints from an unlikely quarter, the kitchen. Study findings reveal that even though most men keep away from the kitchen, what comes out of the kitchen frustrates most of them. Patriarchal culture considers the kitchen to be an out of bond area for men. Because of this many men cannot dare enter the kitchen for fear that they will be intruding in an area that is not theirs. There is also the fear that a visitor or a relative might find you in the kitchen and this will turn out to be a subject of discussion in the society and the man involved will be ridiculed in the society.

Study findings indicate the men regard the kitchen to be a woman's place. However respondents complained that they have no control over what they eat. Some argued that women have delegated their duty of cooking to house girls who do not make meals to the men's liking. What is interesting is that men in most cases are afraid to tell their partners that they do not like what comes from the kitchen. The reason for this is that women do not take it kindly when you criticise their cooking. Because of this most men keep mum and continue to suffer as they eat what they dislike. Another factor that came out strongly regarding kitchen matters is that the most affected men are from the upper and middle class residential areas. Respondents in this category complained of too much spices being put in their food while they would like to get the natural test of the food, they also complained that in most cases, foodstuffs that the woman likes is what is regularly laid on the tables, the man's preference is usually ignored. One respondent argued that there is a certain kind of food that he loathes but it happens to be the wife's favourite dish, because of this, this food is regularly prepared in his house to his disappointment. According to this respondent, he does not have

“the courage to tell his wife how much he hates this food”,

because he knows that a quarrel will ensue. To avoid picking up a quarrel, this respondent usually sneaks out of the house every time he realises that his meal will comprise of this particular food. He goes to a nearby restaurant and eats there.

When he comes back to his house, he asks for very little food so as not to create curiosity that he has eaten elsewhere since this will also create a quarrel.

Study findings further indicate that there is less complaint over kitchen matters by men who live in the low residential area. The reason for this is that unlike their counterparts in the up and middle residential areas who have a variety of food stuff to choose from, men who live in these areas mainly survive from hand to mouth. They have no variety to choose from. They buy what to cook on a daily basis and in most cases, it is the man who buys what is to be cooked each day. Because of this complaints were fewer from this category of men. The major complaint among this category of men was badly prepared meals.

The above arguments indicate that gender stereotyping has led to many men finding it difficult to take up kitchen chores, for instance prepare their own meals the way they like. The culture that we are brought in has no place for a man in the kitchen and because of this most men continue to suffer.

4.5.9 Domestic violence

Study findings indicate that men suffer from domestic violence but only a few of them come out in the open to complain. Respondents argued that women have Fida to run to in case they suffer from domestic violence, but men have no such organisations to run to. Findings indicate that men do not take it kindly that anytime a case of domestic violence comes up, it's the man who is always considered to be the offender. Findings indicate that some women batter their husbands and then run to organisations like Fida or the Police to seek help claiming that they are victims of wife battering. Because men are considered to be the stronger sex, nobody will believe their story that they have been battered. Our organisations have been structured to believe that women are the weaker sex and can therefore not beat men. Rather the reverse is expected.

Study findings indicate that some women are known to be stronger than men and such women are known to use physical force against men. However a man who confesses to husband battering is jeered by both men and women in society. Because of this most men continue to suffer in silence. Findings further indicate

that husband battering is really widespread. The few incidents that come up in the public domain are just a tip of the ice berg. Respondents cited incidents of husband battering some of them claiming that they are also victims of husband battering. To drive this point home, the front page of, "*The daily Nation of 17th October 2003*" highlighted the ordeal of a battered husband who claims his wife has been beating him for the last 10 years.

It's important to note that this man had suffered for 10 years before breaking his silence. This is a clear indication that most men would rather suffer privately than go public due to the sanctions placed on them by the society. It is also important to note that this man ran for help at FIDA, an organisation that deals with domestic violence against women, not men. This implies that the society does not see the need to put up organisations to deal with men's problems since it is considered that men are strong enough to tackle their problems without any assistance. However study findings indicate that men actually long for their own organisations which will deal with their problems such as husband battering. For men to confess that they need a FIDA of their own , the only conclusion that one could draw is that even in the area of domestic violence, men are oppressed.

4.5.10 Oppression and age

Generally, findings revealed that men of all ages are oppressed in one way or another. Oppression is universal to all men. Also findings indicate that as men grow older, their hold on their families becomes more ineffective. Findings indicate that men with grown up children usually find themselves isolated, as they grow older. This is because the woman normally gang's up with the children and force the man to support their decision. Findings Indicate that even the harshest of fathers are usually tamed as they grow older. The reason for this is that when a man reaches a certain age, he becomes incapable of providing for himself and his family and therefore has to rely on his children for support. In such circumstances, the man becomes dependant and is forced to support the wishes of the majority. This is an issue that traditional male role has failed to address. Many old men therefore find themselves in very frustrating circumstances. Another issue raised is that when men grow older and retire to their rural homes their spouses who are supposed to take care of them, for instance cook for them suddenly develop the habit of

frequently visiting their children in the towns or even abroad. Sometimes, these visits could go up to six months, during which time the old man is expected to do most of the things by himself. Findings indicate that such men do not last for long after retirement. The frustrations they undergo force them into an early grave.

4.5.11 Oppression and social status

Another issue raised by men during this study includes situations whereby a man is always looked at in comparison with other men especially by their wives. Women like to compare their husbands with other men who have made it in life. They will keep on referring to the successful men in their conversation to indicate to their spouses that he should also strive to be successful.

Findings indicate that men do not like to be compared with men who appear to be more successful than them. Neither do they like to be compared with men who are judged to be failures in society. The fact that this comparison is a reality many men face each day is a clear indication that men are really oppressed. The social status of a man is largely tied to his occupation. Men in occupations which are considered to be low paying, for instance wage earners at construction sites are more oppressed than those with occupations which make them stand out in society for instance large scale business men.

4.5.12 Spouse behaviour

Another issue raised during the study includes women who have turned into alcoholics and smokers in the name of women's liberation and can no longer behave like the "*decent woman*" that a man would like to be identified with.

4.5.13 Denial of conjugal rights

Denial of conjugal rights is another issue that also came up during this study, Siedler (1989) argues that "*sexual relations have become another occasion for men to prove themselves*". It is an arena created for the sole purpose of men to prove that they are men in line with the traditional gender roles. Study findings indicate that men are losing the power they previously had which enabled them to make women comply with their sexual demands. Study findings indicate that some men

have been reduced to beggars as far as sexual relations are concerned. This has injured the pride of most men.

4.5.14 Barenness

The absence of children in a marriage was also identified as a source of oppression to men. Inability to have children is usually traceable to a defect in the man or woman or both. Children are the expected fruits of a marriage, and where they are missing, there is usually a lot of misery. Findings indicate that men regard children as a source of pride and inspiration. Children are expected to carry on the family name. Also, children are expected to inherit property from their parents. Without children, life seems to come to an end for most men because there will be nobody to continue their lineage. A mans effort could also be in vain in the sense that there will be nobody to inherit his property.

Findings indicate that a childless man suffers much oppression from the society. He is seen as unproductive and hence a liability in society in the sense that he has failed to fulfil his pro-creation role which ensures continuity of the society. The society expects you to produce children to take over from you and when this children do not come, you become a centre of ridicule. A childless man whose wife is barren is often under pressure from relatives and friends to take up another wife who will bear him children. To a man who does not desire to be polygamous, such kind of pressure leads to a lot of discomfort.

Findings reveal that a man's oppression is more enhanced when the cause of barenness is traceable to him. One respondent argued that ,

“there is nothing more painful to a man as being incapable of impregnating a woman”.

Such a man is stigmatised in the society and derogatory names are used in his reference. Even women have very low opinion of such men and regard them as not being better than children.

CONCLUSION

To conclude this section on the forms of oppression men face, this study will validate the first hypothesis which states that, *“men do not regard traditional male*

roles as oppressive to them". Study findings support this hypothesis as indicated in the report. This study findings reveal that men appreciate the roles given to them traditionally and are willing to carry out these roles. What is oppressive to men are the challenges and limitations they encounter in the course of trying to effect these roles. An example can be derived from the leadership role of a man, men appreciate the fact that they are house hold heads, however this role has been diluted by women who also want to be seen as heads. The second hypothesis which states that "*men's personal profile influence their behaviour towards their spouses*" is also confirmed in this study. An example can be derived from education level. Men whose wife's are more educated than them tend to treat their wives differently.

4.6.0 GENDER ROLE CHANGES AND ITS EFFECTS

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Study findings indicate that men are satisfied with their role as men as defined by traditional gender roles. However, study findings have indicated that these roles are hard to fulfil considering the many hurdles that have been put on the men's way. Because of this, one would expect men to support gender role changes which in turn would have no boundary on what a man's role should be or what a woman's role should be, however study findings indicate that men are not ready to see gender role changes being effected.

4.6.1 Perception on gender

Study findings indicate that generally men do not consider themselves as gendered beings. This is in sharp contrast to the arguments brought forward by gender theorists specialising in the field of men studies. Although this study findings indicate that men do not consider themselves as gendered the fact that traditional gender roles discriminates men when it comes to issues like cooking, crying or baby sitting is a clear indication that men are indeed gendered. Of late, we have also witnessed job advertisements which state that "*women applicants are encouraged to apply.*" The question that comes to mind is why the discrimination in these job advertisements. The fact that it is only the women applicants who are encouraged to apply discriminates against the male applicants and in this respect men are gendered.

4.6.2 Perceptions on gender role changes

As already indicated in this report, men feel privileged to have been born men. They will not settle for anything less than being men. Generally, study findings indicate that men are opposed to gender role changes. Findings indicate that men would appreciate it if women would stick to their roles just as men have stuck to theirs. Findings indicate that men are not willing to support gender role changes because this would subject them to roles they consider subordinate to men. For example they do not want to be reduced to cooks and baby sitters. Findings reveal that men are afraid of gender role changes because the moment they give in to this changes, it will mean they have surrendered their superiority and have agreed to go for a subordinate position, nobody likes demotion. Men like to stay at the top.

4.6.2.1 Family break ups

Another argument advanced during this study is that many families will break up if roles were changed. Men in particular took issue with women whom they considered as likely to abuse the changes. They gave various examples of how women would misuse these changes to further frustrate the men. Findings indicate that men see women as incapable of handling some powerful roles like that of house hold head or bread winner. If such roles were delegated to women officially, many men will be in trouble. Conflict will arise and families will break up.

4.6.2.2 Role sharing

Findings indicate that there is a general fear by men that their supremacy will be affected by gender role changes. This view is supported by Sayers in Acker (1989) when she argues that *“when men imagine -----a world in which women ruled men as men have ruled women, their guilt which is the guilt of every ruling class, will allow them to see no middle ground”*. In such circumstances men would like to retain the status quo as it is.

Findings indicate that men cannot envision a world where the woman is regarded as the bread winner. Respondents argued that experience has proved to them that in situations where women have turned out to be breadwinners, they look down upon men. They assume the role of instructors and keep on ordering the men around. As

much as the man would like to defy such orders, he cannot because of the fear that she will punish you by denying you pocket money or your conjugal rights.

Respondents also argued that women bread winners regularly remind men that it is them who are putting food on the table and therefore they are the real men. One respondent argued that,

“She will continually remind you that she is the one feeding you”.

This is insulting to most men and they can never dream of supporting gender role changes. One respondent argued that,

“I would rather die than take up the feminine roles”.

The argument that God is the one who separated the roles from the beginning was also advanced during this study. Men do not understand why they should undo what God has already put into place. Respondents generally felt that a woman should always be subordinate to a man because from time immemorial, this has been the trend. They argued that there is no logical reason why we should deviate from this trend. One respondent argued that

“I cannot imagine a situation whereby my wife will be required to pay dowry to my parents because to me, gender role changes would mean accepting that a woman can also pay dowry to the man’s family”.

To him this is a taboo.

Generally, study findings indicate that men consider the traditional roles of a woman as demeaning and they do not want to be part of this demeaning role. However, it is important to note that it is the society that has created all these through gender stereotyping. If men were not socialised into believing that some roles are meant for men and others for women, such a strong opposition from men in the question of gender role changes would not arise. Study findings further reveal that men occasionally take up feminine roles, for instance if his wife is sick or has gone for further studies. They however always comfort themselves that, *“it is only a temporary situation”*. This implies that men do not envision themselves as staying permanently in such situation. It also implies that they do not take up these roles willingly, circumstances force them, and they are always ready to abandon these roles as fast as possible. This brings me to my third hypothesis, which states

that, “*male oppression is to a large extent explained by gender role changes*”. Findings once again supports this hypothesis. Patriarchy has bestowed so much power on the masculine identity to an extent that men cannot imagine doing away with such powers. Once you have tested the helm of power, it is only logical as a human being that you would like to retain this sovereignty. To be denied this sovereignty can cause oppression.

Everybody likes to be in a powerful position and those who are privileged like men to have been born into structures that consider them to be powerful will not be willing to share this power easily.

4.6.3 The effect of changing gender roles.

Findings indicates that men are not willing to support gender role changes. However gender role changes is a reality that men cannot avoid. As Zamberia (1993) argues, changing family situation have made it imperative that roles of particular family members have to change to accommodate the new situational demands. Situational demands according to Zamberia constitute the father’s performance of some of the domestic activities that are specifically regarded as the mother’s duties he argues that husbands occasionally cook for their families and share widely in other activities. Nye (1988) supports Zamberias argument when she states that sharing of house hold tasks must interrupt the structure of family relations. *The father is challenged as head of the family and participates in child-care and house work, but only while maintaining at the same time a stubborn and often unconscious resistance.* The argument by Nye that men maintain a stubborn and often unconscious resistance when challenged to take up roles that are considered feminine is an indication that gender role changes already have an effect on the man.

Whether men like it or not, the fact that the traditional role of the woman is changing, the traditional role of the man must also change because a change in one area of life will always affect other areas of life which also have to change. The woman has changed and men should realise that women are not ready to get back to the older feminine privileges accompanied with lack of respect and material rewards that went with those courtesies. Women are forging forward to fight for equal opportunities with men. She is no longer the person whose place is in the

kitchen. She is now recognised as a force in offices and even in politics. She does not want to look back or go back to the dark days where she was seen as insignificant. The changes that are taking place the feminine world have had a huge impact on the life of the patriarch.

Study findings indicate that men have been forced by gender role changes to become baby sitters and cooks. Others have been reduced to househusbands because they do not have jobs and have to depend on their wives for sustenance. As a house husband, men find themselves doing most of the domestic work while the woman is away in the office.

In the area of finances, findings indicate that many men rely on their wife's to boost up their income. They accept financial assistance from women. Other men even go ahead to delegate some of their traditional responsibilities to their wife's, for instance, findings indicate that women have taken up the role of paying school fees, buying food in the house and even paying rent. It is also interesting to note that most men ask their wives for financial assistance when they want to build homes. Apart from this, findings indicate that some women even help men to pay dowry and all these happens because the effects of gender role changes are already taking effect.

Also, the fact that findings indicate that men recognise the challenges they encounter when pursuing their traditional male roles is enough proof that gender role changes are already impacting on the man.

Men have spoken and they have acknowledged that the changes taking place in the life of women are making their positions less powerful. They regard themselves to be under threat. This is because women are now impeding in areas originally reserved for men only.

4.7 MALE OPPRESSION IN RELATION TO FEMINIST THEORY

Feminist theory emphasises having equal opportunities for both men and women in society. This theory is based on the assumption that what we know both intellectually and practically is thoroughly infused with gender assumptions about

the characters of the social world, its problems its inhabitants and its meaning. Study findings indicate that men have been brought up in a society which is already gendered. The meanings that men attach to their roles in society are derived from the societal institutions which are already gendered. What men regard as natural for instance the role of household head are all gendered assumptions created by society. Findings indicate that men have internalised gender roles to an extent that they do not see an alternative way of doing things.

The argument by the liberal feminist theorists based on the assumption that in order to achieve equal status for men and women all stereotyped social roles for men and women have to be abolished is also relevant to this study in the sense that if the stereotyped gender roles were done away with, men will not have any difficulty or feel ridiculed to take up any role in the society such as baby sitting. Wellstoncraft (1779) a liberal theorist argues that learning and socialising led to blind submission to authority this inhibits the development of mental reasoning according to Wellstonecraft. Study findings indicate that men have never questioned why they are required to behave in a certain manner by society. Instead they have blindly followed tradition collectively portraying a picture of a group of people who are incapable of reasoning. If men could ask why they are required to behave in a certain manner, maybe they would realise that gender stereotyping is just a creation of society and can be done away with. Also if stereotyping was done away with the oppression that men experience when trying to fulfil their role obligations would not be there. The man's freedom will also not be inhibited by the do's and don'ts stated by society. The individual man will stop thinking in terms of what the society expects of him as a man and start thinking in terms of what he expects for himself.

Socialist feminist theorists argue that capitalism has an interest in maintaining gender identities and relations, which guarantee a low paid female work force. This is all to the benefit of the man since it gives them privileged access to better paid jobs. Study findings indicate that men are very much interested in retaining their masculine identity because it gives them privileges in society. The male identity is synonymous with power, bravery, and reasoning and aggressiveness just to

mention a few attributes attached to the male identity. To retain this identity men will always oppose gender role changes to maintain the status quo.

Radical feminist theorists on the other hand argue that Patriarchy is the primary cause of women's oppression. Study findings indicate that men like to be dominant in all areas of life. To remain dominant, you have to suppress the person that aspires to access the privileged position that you enjoy. This is why men are opposed to gender role changes, because they feel threatened that women will access the privileges they have enjoy for long and their dominance will be eroded. This argument is supported by Sayers in Acker (1989) when she argues that "*where no other claim to distinction exists, a man defines himself by his difference from the supportive sex, he may be less than admirable man, but at least he is a man, at least he is not a woman*". This implies that men of all categories consider woman to be the true maintenance class. Women hold for men the key to social order and men would not like this social order to be interrupted as study findings indicate. Because of this men would like to keep women in the lower ranks of society to maintain the status quo. Hence findings indicate that the three major theoretical feminist perspectives are relevant to this study. However, the feminist theory is biased in the sense that it addresses female oppression but say nothing about male oppression. Feminists theorists have failed to address the kind of oppression experienced by the other half of humanity namely men. In fact feminist theorists give us the impression that they are not even aware that male oppression exists. When we look at the three categories of feminist theorists namely, the liberal, socialist and radical feminist theorists, all of them portray men as the oppressors forgetting that the oppressor can also be oppressed as study findings have revealed.

Feminist theorists have also failed to explain to us the origin of gender roles. It still remains a mystery as to how patriarchal culture came into being and has continued to produce itself one generation after another. Also, these theorists have failed to tell us how a gender less society can operate considering the fact that biologically men are different women, in the sense that the lactation role of the mother can never be transferred to the father. It is difficult to envision a society where the two sexes will to share roles equally, for instance in the African setting, where would we place dowry payment. If a man pays dowry will the woman also be expected to

pay dowry and in this case will the man move to the woman home since she paid dowry to the man's parents. Even if stereotyped roles were removed we can never have equal status for men and women as advocated by feminist theorists. Abolishment of gender role stereotypes can only lower the level of oppression experienced by men and women but cannot make the two sexes achieve equal status.

CONCLUSION

Findings indicate that men value their male identity. They consider it a privilege to have been born men. Also men feel oppressed by the hurdles they encounter when trying to fulfil their masculine roles. Findings further indicate that gender role changes are already impacting on the men and men are being forced to take up roles considered feminine. Findings also indicate that there is a very strong connection between feminist theory and male oppression even though this theory is biased.

CHAPTER FIVE

5 SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 SUMMARY

The overall objective of this study was to investigate whether patriarchal culture is oppressive to men. As has been demonstrated by the literature review, patriarchal culture is regarded as universal. This culture has laid out certain expectations upon the male members of society. The literature reveal that these expectations have limitations which affect the patriarch. Literature review further reveal that the changing gender roles have had a lot of effect on men but despite this, men are still unwilling to change.

To gather more information for the topic under study, a sample of 60 married men was identified for the study based on their area of residence. The 60 respondents were interviewed and their views regarding the topic under study collected.

Findings from the study indicate that there are some limitations that men encounter in a patriarchal culture that hinder them from fulfilling their masculine roles effectively. Findings reveal that these hindrances are the real cause of male oppression. Hence, traditional male roles are not oppressive to men, what oppresses men are the limitations they encounter in the process of trying to fulfil these roles. Therefore, the first hypothesis which states that “men do not regard traditional male roles as oppressive to men” is confirmed by this study. Findings indicate that men appreciate their traditional male role and would only be happy to fulfil these roles.

One of the specific objectives of this study was to assess the expectations put on men in a patriarchal culture. Findings indicate that there are some specific roles that the society identifies with masculinity. These roles include leadership, decision making, discipline and property allocation. Pages 41 – 43 of this study clearly outlines these expectations.

This study also embarked on identifying the social processes oppressive to men. Findings indicate that some of the social processes oppressive to men include financial limitations, domestic violence, childlessness and women empowerment. Pages 44 – 61 of this study clearly outline these processes.

Another specific objective of this study was to seek to understand the male response to the changing gender roles. Findings indicate that men are opposed to the changing gender roles. However, they have been forced to accept these changes because the role of the women has changed. A change in the woman's traditional role means that the man also has to change to avoid role proliferation. However, findings indicate that given the choice, most men will not support gender role changes. Pages 61 – 64 outlines the male response.

Another hypothesis formulated to guide the study states that "*men's personal profile influence their behaviour toward their spouses*". Findings support this hypothesis. The study reveal that there are variations in the way men in the three different categories treat their spouses. Some of the factors that create this variation include residence, income level, education level and women empowerment.

The third hypothesis of this study states that, "*male oppression is to a large extent explained by gender role changes*". Findings once again support this hypothesis. Men regard these changes as largely responsible for most of the problems they encounter in society. This is because women are impeding in areas originally regarded as a preserve for men. This has led to a situation of role conflict to the extent that men are no longer sure of their traditional role in society.

The fourth hypothesis states that "*the more men are oppressed, the less their support for gender role changes*". Findings indicate that since men largely regard gender role changes as responsible for their oppression, they are not willing to support any call for role changes. Findings once again confirm this hypothesis.

5.2 CONCLUSION

As has been demonstrated by the study findings, contrary to the view of most feminist theorists, men are indeed oppressed. Study findings indicate that women play a major role in male oppression. From the findings there is a clear indication that most of the obstacles that men face in the process of trying to fulfil their gender role expectations are actually put there by women. We can therefore conclude that women see men as their oppressors and men also see women as their oppressors therefore the two sexes oppress each other. The only difference is the magnitude of oppression that each inflict on the other.

The study findings has also revealed that men appreciate the traditional male roles bestowed on them by the society. In fact men feel proud when they are regarded as leaders, household heads, aggressive, brave, strong and unemotional. This is why findings indicate that men are proud of their masculine identity. What emerged in this study is that the real oppressor of men are not the traditional gender roles perse, but the obstacles that they encounter when trying to exercise these roles. One such big obstacle is the feminist movement, an ideology based on political theories and principles which advocate for social changes intended to free women from oppressive social structures.

Contrary to the views of Siedler (1989) that men are not aware that they are oppressed, study findings indicate that men are aware of their oppression. However study findings support Sielders argument when he states that men present themselves as rational and reasonable and become used to discounting their feelings and desires since these qualities sustain their superiority. Findings support these sentiments because there is enough evidence to prove that men suppress their emotions.

Findings further reveal that even though men recognise that they are oppressed they are not willing to support gender role changes. Findings indicate that men cannot advocate for gender role changes because they consider it to be a threat to their supremacy.

Study findings also indicate that men do not recognise that they are gendered. Men have not identified the areas they feel discriminated against.

Study findings further reveal that the man's duty has expanded while his rights have diminished.

It is also clear from the study findings that even though men do not support gender role changes, these changes are a reality that men cannot ignore. Study findings indicate that men have already started seeing the effects of gender role changes upon their lives.

From the study findings it is quite clear that the feminist theorists have not addressed male issues adequately. These theorists have been too fast to condemn men not realising that men are also oppressed and that male oppression needs to be addressed adequately like women oppression.

Last but not least findings indicate that oppression affects all categories of men similarly all categories of men are against gender role changes

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

This study's objective was also to make recommendations for further research and for policy in matters of gender reform. This section focuses on these recommendations.

1. Men should come out in the open and publicly declare that they are oppressed. In this way men will see the need of establishing organisations like FIDA to help them deal with their problems. Such male organisations are already in place in countries like the U.S.A. and BRITAIN and the progress these organisations have made towards dealing with male issues is tremendous.
2. Men should accept the fact gender role change is here to stay whether they support these changes or not. The sooner they realised this and welcomed the changes the

better it will be for them. This is because the oppression that they experience in relation to gender role changes will be dealt with.

3. Adequate theories should also be developed to address the issue of male oppression, because the available theories have very little to tell us about this subject.
4. The available literature on men's studies indicate that men are seen as the universal standard against which others are judged. I would recommend that the society should not regard men as the ideal sex. Men should not be used as a measuring rod for others in society because masculinity also has its disadvantages as study findings indicate. Instead other forms of universal judgement should be developed, and they should not be seen to be favouring a particular sex.
5. More effort should be put in place if gender role changes are to be effected. Men and women need to be educated on the subject. This will help deal with the issues of gender stereotypes. If the society is educated or sensitised that male and female roles can be inter changed, we will not have situations of men being ridiculed for baby sitting or women being ridiculed for being aggressive.
6. Men and women should go back to the drawing board and agree on the equitable share of the family burden.
7. Men should realise that whenever women change their role outside or inside the family, men must change roles to complement those of their wives to avoid role proliferation or role conflict.
8. Last but not least, more research should be done in the field of male studies so as to expand it by looking out for other factors not covered in this study since very little is known in the field of male studies.

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APPENDIX I

INTERVIEW GUIDE

1. How do you view you sex as a man? Do you admire women more than men.
2. What do you consider to be the role of a man in the society
3. Your role as a man in your house
4. Are you satisfied with these roles?
5. Are there some set backs you encountered when carrying out your role if so, what kinds of set backs.
6. Women have raised their voices and complained that they are oppressed. Do you think that men are oppressed too? If so what forms of oppression do men undergo.
7. In your view, whom do you consider to be the oppressor of men?
8. What do you think can be done to stop male oppression.
9. Would you urge fellow men to continue expressing their feelings in matters related to male oppression?
10. As a man, do you feel discriminated against by the society? If so, in what ways?
11. Do you believe that sex role polarisation has ended?
12. Do you believe time has changed? And in what way?
13. If male and female tasks were to be changed would you feel comfortable taking up the feminine roles such as baby sittings? Give reasons.
14. Has there been a time in your life when you found yourself taking up chores you would consider feminine? Give examples.
15. In your house, how are roles shared?
16. Whom do you consider to be the house hold head? Bread winner? Decision-maker, and property owner?
17. As a married man, who determines the number of children you should have?
18. As a man what, are your views on gender role changes?
19. Do you support gender role changes? Give reasons
20. What do you think it would be like to live in a world where you did not constantly do gender?
21. Can you envision a genderless society in future?
22. What effects do you think gender role changes has had on men.
23. What message would pass on to other men as relates to traditional male tasks in relation to the changing gender roles?