

**DETERMINANTS OF WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN DECISION-  
MAKING POSITIONS IN THE HOTEL INDUSTRY:**

**A CASE OF FOUR STAR HOTELS IN MOMBASA, KENYA**

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## DECLARATION

The research project report is my original work and has not been submitted for a degree or any other award in any other institution.

Sign: ..... Date: .....

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**L50/76674/2009**

The research project report has been submitted for examination with my approval as the university supervisor.

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## **DEDICATION**

This research is dedicated to my family, my mum Heraclia Gathoni Waweru, my Dad Jimmie Waweru Gikonyo, my two brothers Timothy Gikonyo and Samuel Ithiga who have encouraged me every step of the way and to my husband Maximilian Dengler, for his constant and unrelenting support, love and encouragement.

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## **ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

|               |   |   |
|---------------|---|---|
| <b>CEO</b>    | - | Chief Executive Officer                   |
| <b>FIDA</b>   | - | International Federation of Women Lawyers |
| <b>GDP</b>    | - | Gross Domestic Product                    |
| <b>ILO</b>    | - | International Labour Organization         |
| <b>KNCHR</b>  | - | Kenya National Commission on Human Rights |
| <b>SPSS</b>   | - | Statistical Package For Social Sciences   |
| <b>UK</b>     | - | United Kingdom                            |
| <b>UN</b>     | - | United Nations                            |
| <b>UNIFEM</b> | - | United Nations Development Fund for Women |
| <b>USA</b>    | - | United States Of America                  |

## **ABSTRACT**

The purpose of this study was to establish the determinants of women's participation in decision-making positions in the hotel industry the case of four star hotels in Mombasa, Kenya. Specifically, the study sought to establish the influence of personal factors, institutional factors, social cultural factors and professional factors on women in participating in decision making in the hotel industry. The study used descriptive survey design. The target population are the employees of four star hotels in Mombasa, Kenya who comprises of 390 management staff. They included senior, middle and low level managers in various departments. The study employed stratified random sampling technique in coming up with a sample size of 193 respondents from a total of 390 in the specific department in four star hotels in Mombasa, Kenya. From each stratum, simple random sampling was used to select the respondents for the questionnaires. Semi-structured questionnaires were used to collect primary data from the managers. The questionnaire was administered using a drop and pick later method. The quantitative data in this research was analyzed by descriptive statistics using statistical package for social sciences SPSS (V. 21.0). The qualitative data took an exploratory/conceptual content analysis process. In addition the study used Karl Pearson's product moment correlation analysis to assess the relationship between the variables. The data was then, presented using tables and figures. The study found that working hours, corporate culture and corporate policies affect women participation in decision making in the hotel industry. Social gender roles and stereotypes, societal norms and attitudes, ideals and aspirations, employee coping with the specific hours worked and number of female in management also affect women participation in decision making. There is a positive correlation between the factors and the women's participation in decision-making positions in the hotel industry. This study concludes that socio-cultural factors has the highest effect on women's participation in decision-making positions in the hotel industry. The study recommends that the top management should allow more women take up decision making positions in political, economic and social spheres of life within the workplace which acts as a limiting factor to women participation in decision making in the hotel industry in Kenya. Finally, women should be more aggressive and assertive in their roles in the hotel industry so as to compete with their male counterparts.

# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the Study

Women around the world at every socio-political level find themselves underrepresented far removed from decision-making levels. Women hold barely 16 % of parliamentary seats around the world (Kuria et al, 2012). The exclusion of women from decision-making bodies limits the possibilities for entrenching the principles of democracy in a society, affecting economic development and discouraging the attainment of gender equality.

Worldwide, progress has been recorded in women taking up decision making positions in political, economic and social spheres of life. These positions have for long been the preserve of men. This progress can be attributed to deliberate action taken by United Nations agencies concerning gender equality (1945 United Nations charter) and in the declaration of human rights (1948).

Research in Sub-Saharan Africa has revealed that women are more likely to live in poverty than men in 22 out of the 25 countries for which data is available (UN Women, 2012). According to the Roundtable Conference of the Pathways to Women's Empowerment (2009), in Malawi, women faced significant negative cultural practices and religious beliefs. Many of these concerned women perceive their place as being in the home and their stereotyped roles as mothers and career women. Men are perceived as superior and more fitted for public roles. Emphasising the need to actively involve women in order to reap their full potential, Albright (2011) stipulated that every country deserves to have the best possible leader and this means women have to be given a chance to compete. If they are never allowed to compete in the electoral process and decision making then the countries are really robbing themselves of a great deal of talent.

Despite an illuminating picture painted about the capabilities of women in Africa, women's participation in decision-making at the community, district, regional, and national levels have been met with some challenges. This has led women groups to advocate for a fairer

representation of women in decision-making processes both at the district and national sphere (Sossou, 2011).

In the hotel industry, women are steadily taking up positions in the higher rungs of management. Research indicates that women's participation in business leadership is important to a country's economic growth (Coleman, 2004; Minniti et al, 2004). The International Labour Organization (ILO) recognizes the critical role that women play in enhancing socioeconomic development throughout the world (ILO, 2005; UNIFEM, 2008). Participation of women in key decision making positions in industry has been linked to introduction of desirable gender-specific capabilities. These capabilities include building stronger relationships among staff, introduction of open communication styles that enhance efficiency in industry, ability to motivate followers and bring out the best in them and democratic styles of leadership that encourage staff cooperation (Newburry et al, 2007).

Kenya's development record and its demographic composition suggest a need for active involvement of women in key decision-making bodies. There is a clear indication that even though women form the majority voters in Kenya, they are still under-represented in leadership positions. In Kenya, similar progress has been made in the participation of women in decision making in the hotel industry. More women are now taking up management positions and are actively involved in key decision making. However, the number of women in these key decision making position is still low when compared to the number of men. This situation is attributed to personal, institutional and societal barriers that prevent women from reaching decision making positions (Onsongo,2004).

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

The hospitality industry plays a strategic role in economic development in Kenya. The industry has made major contributions toward the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) over the past few years, therefore contributing towards the economic development of the country (Kuria et al 2012).Despite being in a position to employ a large number of people, recent research indicates that the nature of hotel employment with working odd hours, working in shifts and the social stigma of working in the hotels curtails many females in joining the industry (Taylor, 2002). As a

result, hotel jobs favor male employees than their female counterparts in this sector. Since women are already disadvantaged at the recruitment stage, there are higher chances of them being inadequately represented in decision making positions (Lodiaga et al, 1995). This, coupled with personal, institutional and social cultural factors play a key role in influencing the participation of women in decision making positions in the industry.

Available literature is insufficient in providing information on the institutional, personal and social cultural factors that influence women's participation in the hotel industry in Kenya. This being said, a survey of the pioneering and recent literature on women's participation in decision making shows that most of it is based on research done in the west (Fu et al,2004; Chen et al, 2005; Chiang et al, 2006). There is insufficient literature on women and decision making in Africa. A preliminary search of secondary sources reveals that data on Kenyan female managers in the hospitality industry is almost non-existent. The existing literature in Kenya (Nzomo, 1995; Kanake, 1997) largely documents women in management and in political leadership but does not go into the details of factors influencing women in participation in decision making.

The advancement of women in management jobs has not kept pace with the correspondence increase in the number of working women. Their presence in senior management level is negligible. Women are graduating and entering management positions, yet there is a bottleneck at middle management levels. While entry is easy, progression slows down after the middle level and in most situations, regardless of their technical and professional qualifications or achievements; women are prevented from climbing up in the corporate ladder to reach the top. This status report reveals the glass ceiling that blocks the entry of women into highly paid jobs.

### **1.3 Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to establish the determinants of women's participation in decision-making positions in the hotel industry the case of four star hotels in Mombasa, Kenya.

### **1.4 Objectives of the Study**

The study was guided by the following research objectives

1. To establish the influence of personal factors on decision making by women in hotel management.

2. To identify the role that the institutional factors plays in influencing women's participation in decision making in the hotel industry.
3. To assess the influence of social cultural factors on women in participating in decision making in the hotel industry.
4. To establish the role of professional factors on women in participating in decision making in the hotel industry.

### **1.5 Research Questions**

The study sought to answer the following research questions

1. What is the influence of personal factors on women's participation in decision making in the hotel industry?
2. In what ways do institutional factors influence women's participation in decision making in the hotel industry?
3. How do social cultural factors influence women in participating in decision making in the hotel industry?
4. What is the role of professional factors on women in participating in decision making in the hotel industry?

### **1.6 Significance of the Study**

There is no sufficient data on factors influencing women's participation in decision making positions in the hotel industry in Kenya and Africa in general and this study endeavors to show case women's representation in decision making positions in the hotel industry in Kenya. It is hoped that the findings may add to existing knowledge on the challenges confronting women participation in hotel decision making processes. The leaders in the industry could use the study findings and recommendations as a guide of empowering women in the area.

This study seeks to inform policy making that enhances not only women's participation in decision making positions, but also ensures that there is equal participation between men and women in decision making positions in the hospitality industry. This study may be useful to the

government of Kenya, FIDA and KNCHR among other non-governmental organizations that fight for the rights of women. The recommendations made may be very essential as it may act as a starting point for reforms in the area of decision making and the inclusivity of women and the marginalized groups.

Additionally, this study endeavors to add on to the existing literature on women in management and decision making positions in Kenya and Africa in general. Students, researchers and other academicians that seek literature and other learning materials on the research problem would find this study useful.

### **1.7 Delimitation of the Study**

This study sought out to analyze the determinants of women's participation in decision-making positions in the hotel industry. The study focused specifically on four star hotels in Mombasa, Kenya. The study was limited to three variables that is; personal factors, institutional factors and social cultural factors. The study data was collected from the management staff of all the four star hotels in Mombasa, Kenya.

### **1.8 Limitations of the Study**

The study encountered time constrain as the period allocated for the study is limited and has to combine the study and work given that the researcher is employed. The study, therefore, focused on a small proportion of the total population as a representative of all the possible respondents. The study also encountered financial constrains in the research process given that the researcher is self-sponsored.

### **1.9 Assumptions of the Study**

The researcher made the assumption that the respondents would be cooperative enough to give the required information of the study. The researcher assumed that all information collected from respondents was true to give a clear and true picture. The researcher also assumed that external factors like strike would not arise as this would affect the process of data collection and hence



the completion of the project. The researcher assumed that the cited respondents had some knowledge on determinants of women's participation in decision-making positions in the hotel industry.

### **1.10 Defination of Significant Terms used in the Study**

**Decision-making**– This is the cognitive process resulting in the selection of a belief or a course of action among several alternative possibilities.

**Institutional factors** – these are aspects relating to/constituting/involving an institution that determines how its operations are executed.

**Male dominance**- refers to activities where men have the most power and influence.

**Participation**-Is a development approach, which recognizes the need to involve deprived segments of the population in the design and implementation of policies concerning their wellbeing.

**Socio-cultural factors** – These are the larger scale forces within cultures and societies that affect the thoughts, feelings and behaviors of individuals.

**Under representation**-A disproportionately small number of women representatives in decision making.

### **1.11 Organization of the Study**

Chapter one gives the background of the study, states the problem and outlines the purpose of the study. The specific objectives and significant of the study, scope of the study are also introduced in this chapter. In chapter two, theoretical literature review and previous research associated with the problem to be addressed in the study is covered. A theoretical review and conceptual Framework, detailing the independent and dependent variables in the study is also examined. Chapter three outlines the research design and target population of the study, the methods that were used in the research in collecting and analyzing the data. Chapter four

discusses data analysis, presentation and interpretation of the research findings in line with the objectives of the study. Chapter five finally presents the discussion of key data findings, conclusion and recommendations of the study.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

Literature on women and decision making in the hospitality industry and especially in the hotel industry in Kenya is scarce. This chapter presents a theoretical and empirical review of the literature from research worldwide and in Kenya as regards women and decision making in the hotel industry. The review is divided into three sections and various subsections. The chapter ends with a presentation of the theoretical framework on which the study is anchored.

#### **2.2 Status of Women in Hotel Management**

In this section, literature related to the status of women in decision making positions (management positions) in the hotel industry in Kenya and in other parts of the world was reviewed. This review served to put the research topic into perspective. Since the 1970s, there has been a growing number of women in the labor force. A study by Powell and Graves, 2003 indicates that the proportion of women in the managerial ranks has increased in almost all countries. Despite this progress, however, the number of women present in top decision making positions is still relatively low. A Harvard Business Review research report released in January 2011 stated that women occupy 3 percent of fortune 500 CEO positions and comprise less than 16 percent of all corporate officers worldwide. A similar survey on Women Leadership Development conducted by Mercer which included responses from human resources at organizations throughout Africa, North America, Europe, Asia Pacific and the Middle East revealed that few women were found in key decision making positions. The survey further found that the majority of women were stuck at middle level management and much more at the bottom levels in the management ladder.

Woods et al, 2000 points out that women in hotels in the USA are marginalized into the lowest paid jobs with limited or unclear career paths. Corroborating ideas are also found in the work of Guerrier et al, 2003. Women in the hotel industry are either vertically segregated into jobs

regarded as low in skill and status or horizontally segregated into particular jobs or both (Ng & Pine, 2003; Purcell 1996:18; Hicks 1990; Church & Frost, 2004; Kattara, 2005). Lee and Vidakovic (1995) document the vertical segregation of women in the U.K, reporting that 92.1% of managers in a hotel sample were men. McKenzie-Gentry (2007) reports that women managers only represent 3% of the total staff in hotels in Belize, UK. McKenzie-Gentry also points out that this percentage is lower than that found in other types of companies. Burgess (2003) indicates that men are better represented in higher status jobs related to the financial management of hotels than are women. In Spain, Ramos-Mir et al. (2004) present similar evidence of this problem in the hospitality industry in the Balearic Islands.

Dowling (2007) notes that in New Zealand, staff of the hotel industry are predominately female, yet at management levels these women are not equally represented. In India, research and surveys reveal that men out-number women in terms of attaining top managerial positions Koshal, et al (2006). Recently the Confederation of Indian Industry released a study “Understanding the Levels of Empowerment of Women in the Workplace in India” covering 149 large and medium size companies across regions. The report highlights that women comprise 16 percent at junior management level, 4 percent each at middle and senior levels, and only 1 percent in organizational leadership positions (Centre for Social Research, 2009). Moreover, a review of secondary sources shows that data on Indian female managers is almost non-existent. The very lack of statistical data signifies the lack of attention paid to the persistent issue of women in leadership positions in the Indian context. A few studies that have been conducted on the issue of women representation in management jobs reveal that women are lagging far behind men in managerial jobs. The nature of hotels employment with working odd hours, working in shifts and the social stigma of working in the hotels curtails many females in joining the industry (Taylor, 2002). In Kenya, this has led to hotel jobs favoring male employees than their female counterparts (Kuria et al 2012).

From the above literature on the status of women in industry and specifically in the hotel industry, the following conclusions were made. From the review on literature regarding the status of women in the hotel industry, there is strong evidence to suggest the existence of a glass ceiling with regards to decision making opportunities for women. This section examined these

factors in detail. The glass ceiling metaphor was used to describe frustrations of working women at every level in industry or organizations who aspire for higher goals but find themselves blocked by an invisible barrier (Marvin, 2000; Meyerson and Fletcher, 2000). The glass ceiling refers to “invisible, generally artificial barriers that prevent qualified individuals ( in this case, women) from advancing within their organization and reaching their full potential” (Knutson & Schmidgall, 1999). The international Labour Organization (ILO) recognizes these obstacles as emerging from cultural biases, gender stereotyping and attitudes against women ( ILO, 2002). The factors which determine women's participation or nonparticipation in top management and decision-making positions hinge on a number of variables which can be divided into institutional/corporate, sociocultural, personal and professional factors.

### **2.3 Institutional/Corporate Factors and Decision Making by Women**

In the corporate sector, the glass ceiling is examined and reflected in the culture, climate and practices. Robbins and Coulter (2003) define corporate culture as values, beliefs and norms shared by members of an organization that dictate their behaviour towards each other. Corporate culture also reflects how members of an organization behave towards outsiders. Corporate culture further influences what employees are allowed to do within an organization. It also influences how people analyze and define issues in an organization (Deal & Kennaly, 1982).

Schein(1992) further states that corporate culture dictates how members of an organization adapt and integrate and also dictates how they view diversity within an organization (Schein 1992;Kundu 2003;Cooper 2001). It is corporate culture, therefore, that determines how gender issues are integrated in an organization. Powell and Butterfield (2003) argue that in most organizations, culture dictates that effective management can be attained through adherence to a purely masculine gender stereotype (Powell and Butterfield 2003). Use of management styles that are considered feminine are thus held as undesirable by the organizations (Cooper 2001;Maier,1997). Powell and Buterffield(2003) are of the view that this stereotype leads organizations to prefer aggressive male-like behaviour thereby locking women out. This consequently leads to their discrimination when it comes to attaining decision making positions in the organizations.

Corporate practices focus on policies put in place to govern organizations. These include mentoring, networking, training and development, flexible working hours and support services that allow effective reconciliation of employees multiple roles (Knuston& Schmidgall,1999).Any discriminative practices as regards mentoring, provision of flexible working hours(especially to cater for women who often have to attain a family-work balance), networking and family friendly initiatives serve to strengthen the existence of invisible barriers in an organization. Wentling (2003) argues that women's advancement to top decision making positions is directly related to their increased knowledge and skills and the professional development opportunities made available to them throughout their careers by their organization(Wentling 2003). Their advancement also relies on availability of special rotational job assignments which expose them to areas of revenue producing sides of business (Cooper 2001). Cooper (2001) also observes that few organizations give such opportunities. Studies by cooper(2001) and by Gordon and Whelan(1998) recommend expanding women's access to core areas of business to break the glass ceiling. The studies also recommend provision of an assortment of developmental experiences to broaden the base of their experience and of their visibility.

Corporate climate encompasses attitudes held towards women that could result to unsupportive work environments (Knuston and Schmidgall,1999).Klenke points out the existence of such networks as 'old boys' network' as one of the discouraging factors in organizations (Klenke,1996). These networks largely exclude women in the organization. Davidson and Cooper (1992) point out the benefits of networks in organizations as including upward mobility and information exchange. These networks are also important in career planning and in laying out strategies so as to advance in an organization. Further, these networks provide support for members, provide encouragement and act as a platform for increased visibility in an organization (an important factor in promotions) (Davidson and Cooper, 1992).

Cooper (2001) further states that in many cases, women are kept out of formal networks, find their skills being underutilized and their ideas ignored. Moreover, women often find themselves kept out of crucial decision making meetings in organizations. They also tend to be given lower level projects that attract little or no visibility. He further points out that women are over scrutinized and often seen as a test case for women in the future.

A study carried out by Maltis et al (1998) reported that 99% of female executives in their study felt the need to prove their ability repeatedly and/or over perform in order to counter negative assumptions leveled against them. All these discriminatory practices create the ‘invisible woman syndrome’ that works against women in attaining decision making positions in organizations.

## **2.4 Socio-Cultural Factors and Decision Making by Women**

In most societies, women are relegated to housekeeping roles and the upbringing of children. This relegation is achieved through the process of socialization. The process defines what roles men and women are expected to perform in society, what kind of occupations are acceptable for men and which for women and what activities each are allowed to carry out. Through this process, women get caught up in socially defined roles that are often subservient and domesticated (Schoept, 1977). In the workplace, these societal norms often clash with any other that advance careers for women, therefore acting as setbacks for many women. The 1987 UN training manual on Policy Development for Increasing the Role of Women in Development affirms that through the process of socialization, women and men learn stereotypical behaviour that governs how they conduct themselves at the workplace.

Nzomo (1995) argues that the socio-cultural beliefs and myths about the role of women in society are the major determinants of women’s failure to advance to top management positions both in the public and private sector. Bello (1992) regards socio-cultural beliefs as the major barriers in this regard. These beliefs emphasize the superiority of men and the inferiority of women. They form an integral part of the socialization process and the gender education and training most men and women are exposed to from childhood. Based on the concept of role expectancy, an individual develops through the years his or her own set of internalized values, beliefs, attitudes, ideals and aspirations. Another barrier is the institutional framework guiding the gender division of labour, recruitment and upward mobility. Olojede (1990) notes that since men dominate public decision-making bodies, it is the male values that are reflected in them. In Kenya women’s participation in key decision-making positions is still minimal.

According to a combined analysis of 25 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, women spend at least 16 million hours per day collecting water compared to 6 million hours spent by men (United

Nations, 2012). This domestic burden on women reduces the time they have for other activities such as education or income generating activities. Walking or travelling long distances also exposes women to increased risk of gender-based violence and other risks to their safety.

Women also remain more vulnerable to external shocks such as environmental disasters or rising food and fuel prices with fewer assets such as financial resources, education and social networks to support them (Bridge, 2010). Economic crises tend to have a highly gendered impact. Women dominate sectors such as garments, agriculture and electronics and are therefore more likely to lose employment than men when there is a decline in consumption (Buvinic, 2009). It is estimated that the global financial crisis resulted in 16 million more unemployed women between 2007 and 2009 and that women were pushed into informal and unsafe jobs at a faster rate than men (Mayanja, 2010). Cuts in social spending hit women both as service users and as workers. There is also growing recognition that in times of economic crisis violence against women tends to increase.

## **2.5 Personal Factors and Decision Making by Women**

Women's lack of self confidence and fear of what others think of them are some of the attitudes that act as a barrier to their participation in decision making in organizations. Women often refrain from lobbying and networking after work. Moreover, they tend to avoid assertiveness and aggressive behaviour (qualities that are desired in attaining decision making position in most male-led organizations) (Olojede, 1990). Women are often afraid of being labeled bossy or being described as masculine. Moreover, they often don't directly ask for promotions like their male counterparts do (Knutson & Schmidgall, 1999). These personal factors combine to deprive women of their rightful positions in decision making within organizations. The fear of coping with demands and responsibility that comes with decision making also serves to keep many women away from decision making positions (Lynch & Post, 1996).

The main reason behind low participation and decision making process are illiteracy, patriarchy, lack of clarity in government policies for empowerment. The meaningful participation can be ensured through awareness; monitoring of woman status on regular basis; research activities on woman participation in social sphere and their voting right. Importance should be given to



qualitative participation rather than quantitative representation. Khan (2001) says that women's role in decision making process is an important factor and needs to be considered for woman empowerment. Mainstreaming of women through gender specific policies is a necessary precondition for meaningful development. There is a lacuna between gender specific policies and reform agenda. He pointed out that government policies like reservation of seats, can promote empowerment and women access to development projects numerically but not practically.

In spite of this, much of the discussion and debate in advocating for women's literacy is addressed from what is described as a 'functional' perspective rather than a 'rights' perspective. The functional approach promotes learning for specific outcomes relating to, for example, health and economic development. A rights approach is concerned with the development of individuals to fulfill their potential and be involved in all levels of society as equal human beings. In their review of the Beijing Platform for Action, Unterhalter et al (2011) suggest that there has been an increase in global discourse, goals and policies related to equality, the barriers women face, and rights-based advocacy. However, they also indicate a lack of translation of policy to actions at local level.

The empowerment of women through literacy learning is only one important part of the total picture. Supporting women in learning, questioning, understanding and challenging the suppression they experience empowers them, but only partially. Creating greater economic and political opportunities to contribute to families, communities and nations also contributes to empowerment. Relationships with brothers, husbands and fathers, as well as community and authority leaders, are at its heart. If empowerment of women is to lead to greater equality, existing systems, authorities, laws and policies must be reviewed and amended.

As a result of cultural beliefs, some women tend to over concentrate on household duties at the expense of their jobs. Jobs that require travel are often avoided by women. This is often in regard to tending to family. In this regard, therefore, women's low aspirations serve to install an invisible barrier for them at the work place (Worcester, 1999).

## **2.6 Professional Factors and Decision Making by Women**

Sustainable and all around developments of an industry and society at large cannot be brought about without the full and unreserved participation of both woman and man in the development process, and such a balanced development should also call for the elimination of all forms of discrimination, and the protection against all forms of hindrances against women in decision making. According to Clark (1998), although women constitutes two third of the world's working hours, produce half of the world's food and above all, bear and rear children, women continue to be less considered during decision making processes.

Women are underrepresented in management positions in comparison to men all over the world (Tai et al., 2005). Female managers, who are hitherto called women managers, are faced with strongly held negative stereotypes, distinguishing them from their male counterparts in the workplace. Past research results indicated a tendency to describe female managers as less self-confident, less emotionally stable, less analytical, less consistent and having poorer leadership abilities than male managers (Owen and Todor, 1993). Some assumptions, typical of negative stereotypes attributed to female administrators are that: women tend to place family demands above work considerations. They have children to care for; thus, they lose time for an interest in their jobs; women work for supplemental income and that they lack the necessary drive to succeed in business; women take negative feedback personally rather than professionally and that they may run from the room in tears if criticized; and that women are unsuitable for top management position because they are too emotional and lack aggressiveness.

Findings by Arthur (2006) reveals; firstly, the failure of women to attain the highest management positions in proportion to their number in the organization; secondly, that the prevalence of negative subordinates' perceptions of female superiors; thirdly, that male superiors have unfavorable attitudes toward having women in management and would probably not promote a woman to the top executive slot even when her abilities are proven and those of the alternative male were not; and fourthly, that male superiors are more likely to give male subordinates more favorable treatment than female subordinates in decisions regarding commendations for a promotion, attending a training seminar and upholding a personal decision made by the subordinates (Harris, 1999; Udegbe, 1997). Mounting evidence suggest that there are negative

gender stereotypes about women which make them encounter more barriers than men in the workplace. These negative stereotypes or beliefs are more apparent when women seek or hold managerial positions. Despite many changes (for example, people becoming better educated and technological advancement) the age-old myths about women's and men's capabilities remain largely unchanged.

An argument has evolved over the last few decades, which queries whether women manage or lead differently from the ways men do. There are three views on this argument. The first is the women do lead differently which postulate that women inherently possess or develop certain traits that diverge sharply from male leadership characteristics. The opposing argument perceived little or no gender differences in leadership styles. The third position on this issue dismissed the difference in-leadership style debate as being inconsequential. What is important from this perspective is the end result. It does not make any difference how you lead as long as your leadership style is effective (Standford et al., 1995). Similarly, Udegbe (1997) contends that male stereotypes of independence, assertiveness, competence, competitiveness, lower emotional and analytic minds are consistent with the demands of leadership. On the other hand, female stereotypes reflecting dependence, weakness, emotional, nurturance and talkativeness are inconsistency with the functions of a leader. However, some women, in order to increase their effectiveness as leaders and dispel the notion that women are a weaker sex, may express autocratic leadership style. Thus, women and men are assumed to be identical in managerial behaviours, that is, a successful manager possesses some masculine attributes. Women are expected to behave like men and to conform to the male norms in the business world (Chow, 1999). Based on the foregoing, Udegbe (1997) suggested that there is no distinct female leadership style. In contrast to these negative perceptions about female superiors, some subordinates benefit from working with the female superior because they believe women have the natural milk of kindness that makes it difficult for them to unleash hardship on their subordinates.

Professional factors include the ability of the employee coping with the specific hours worked, the level of productive rate expected, the physical environment, as well as the expectancy of the work desired by management. For instance, research shows that night shifts in particular has a

high possibility of negative impact towards the health of the employee. In relation to this, approximately 20 percent of night shift workers have experienced psycho-physiological dysfunctions, including heart diseases. Extreme factors can affect the competence levels of employees.(Hart & Cooper, 2001). In the hotel industry operations run deep into the night and some cases there is 24 hour service. It thus follows that the profession demands a lot and women who have other roles and responsibilities should be given an opportunity to have an input in making decisions regarding the shifts so as to ensure they can balance between their professional and personal life.

The role in the organization also plays a significant role in women participation in decision making in the hotel industry.The hierarchical ranking of that particular employee within the organization can be a hindrance to women participation in the organization if there is less representation of women in the management board where in most cases there is male dominance.However, Powell and Graves (2003) indicates that the proportion of women in the managerial ranks has increased in almost all countries. Despite this progress, however, the number of women present in top decision making positions is still relatively low.

Interpersonal relationships within the workplace also can act as a limiting factor to women participation in decision making in the hotel industry. The workplace is a communication and interaction based industry. These relationships (either developed or developing) can be problematic or positive. Commonly some women go through harassment, discrimination, biased opinions and other derogatory experiences. These experiences have a significant effect on decision making by women in the hotel industry because they instill fear to those affected who may choose to keep quiet to safeguard their position in the industry (Hurrell, 1995).

## **2.7 Theoretical Framework**

This section focuses on the theories under which the study will be anchored. Specifically, this study is underpinned in the feminist theory and the male conspiracy theory.

### **2.7.1 Feminist Theory**

The study was guided by the feminist theory by Chodorow (1989). The theory recognizes the fact that gender divisions influence social lives of individuals. It focuses on oppression of women and tries to explain these oppressions through examining the structures in society that perpetuate them. The theory posits that both men and women have equal potential to realize their own dreams. Nzomo(1995) advances the idea that the realization of individual potential results from externally imposed constraints and the influence of values that exist in the society.

Rave and Larsen (1995) state that feminism is most usually defined as a belief in the equal valuing of all persons and an expectation of social, economic, and political equality for all persons. The emphasis is usually on equality for women, since historically women have played subordinate roles to men. Tong (1993) acknowledges the existence of a variety of feminist schools of thought, each with their own view of the causes and thus the solutions for the subordination and domination of women. And, indeed, there are divergent views within each form of feminism. Card (1991) stated that the phenomenon of feminists reevaluating traditional thinking should not lead one to the conclusion that there is a unity of voice among them. In fact, of such thinkers she states that we are marked in various ways in our attitudes and our habits of choice. Some thinkers examine or re-examine particular ethical concepts and traits equality, justice, caring, honesty in light of feminist struggles. Some identify and explore androcentric biases implicit in the theoretical standpoints of historically influential philosophers.

The theory proposes four ways of explaining the absence of women in key decision making positions in organizations. These are institutional or structural perspective, personal perspective, professional perspective and cultural perspective. The personal perspective views psychological attributes of women which include their attitudes at work and behaviour skills as playing a key role in their absence in decision making positions in organizations. The theory proposes these factors to include low self esteem, inadequate motivation to take up the challenge of moving up the corporate ladder, limited assertiveness and inability to handle crisis (Bond 1996). These personal attributes when turned around could also work in favour of women (Singh and Shahabudin, 2000).

The structural or institutional perspective proposes that some of the predisposing factors that constrain women from reaching top decision making positions include their limited power, limited numbers and constrained access to resources. Other factors include limited access to training and knowledge acquisition opportunities. The perspective views that if men and women are presented with equal opportunities then they have equal chances at leadership. However, structural factors in the organization constrain women from achieving their desired decision making positions. These factors include appointment practices that are discriminatory, absence of policies that ensure women participation and limited opportunity for leadership training (Bond, 1996). Deliberate reversal of these discriminatory practices in the organization, on the other hand, prove to be beneficial in propelling women to decision making positions.

The cultural perspective explores the social construction of gender and the assignment of specific roles and expectations to men and women (Smulders, 1998). Gender roles ascribed by society are carried to work place and are adhered to by members of the organization (Smulders, 1998). This leads to stereotyping and stigmatization of women in organization.

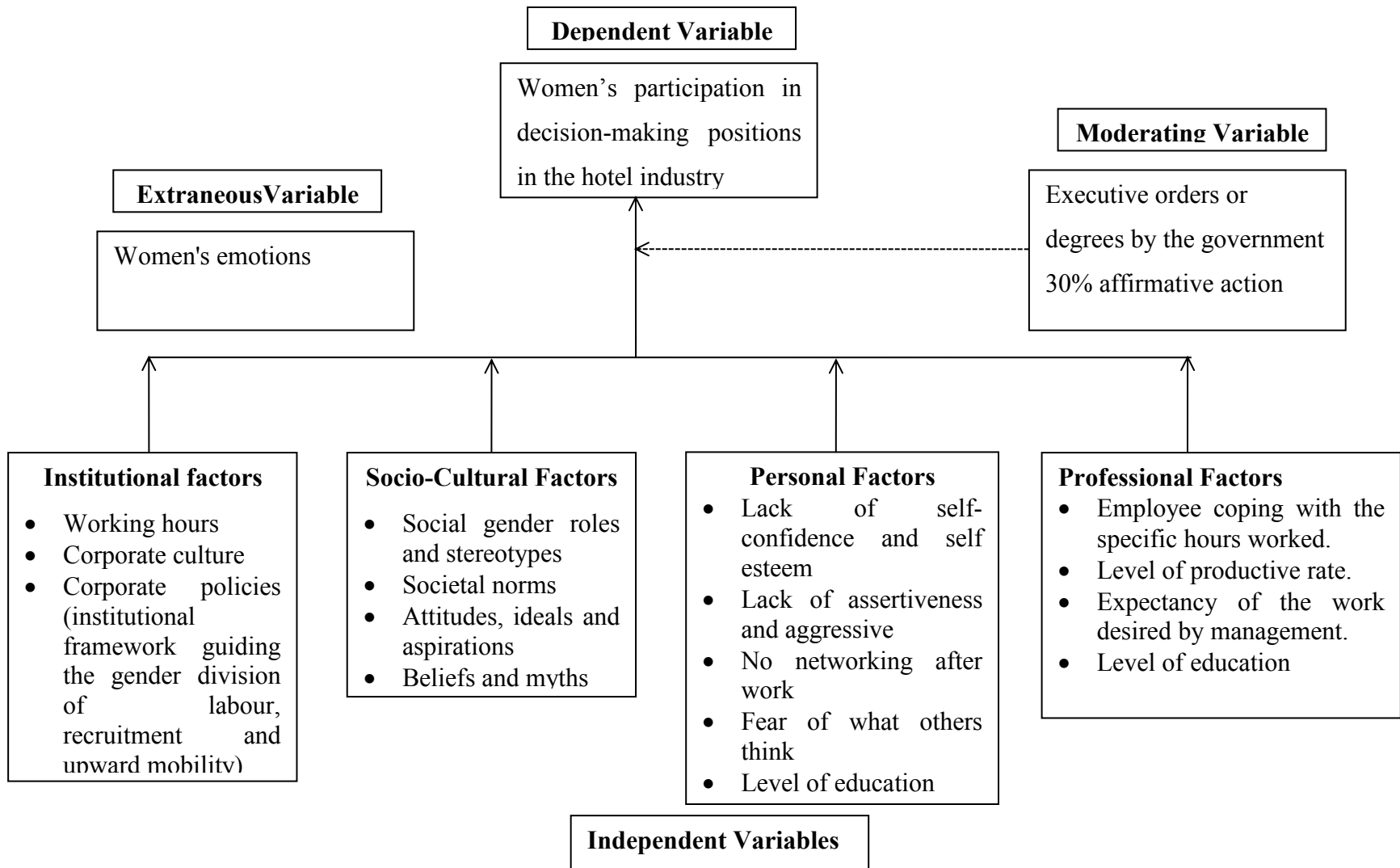
The Professional factors includes the ability of the employee coping with the specific hours worked, the level of productive rate expected, the physical environment, as well as the expectancy of the work desired by management. These four perspectives guided the study in finding out the factors that influence women's participation in decision making in the hotel industry in Kenya.

### **2.7.2 Male Conspiracy Theory**

The male conspiracy theory derives from feminist ideology and is based on the idea that men are discriminating towards women which would partially explain the low representation of women. From this theory one could believe that women do not get access to certain resources that would be beneficial in various platforms and therefore are left out. This has, from a feminist perspective, lead to the view that politics and public life is seen as the men's world and the home is the women's area. The fact that house and family responsibility hinders women from participating in decision making and public life is also part of the male conspiracy theory (Clark 1991).

## **2.8 Conceptual Framework**

A conceptual framework is a model that presents and explains the relationship between various variables. In a conceptual framework there are two types of variables: dependent variable and independent variable. In this study, the independent variables include institutional factors, socio-cultural factors, personal factors and professional factors while the dependent variable is Women's participation in decision-making positions in the hotel industry.



**Figure 1: Conceptual framework**



This study sought to establish the determinants of women's participation in decision-making positions in the hotel industry. The factors influencing women's participation in decision making in this study are grouped into four. The institutional factors are those within the hotels and mainly include the working hours, corporate culture and corporate policies (institutional framework guiding the gender division of labour, recruitment and upward mobility). In most societies, women are relegated to housekeeping roles and the upbringing of children. The culture defines what roles men and women are expected to perform in society, what kind of occupations are acceptable for men and which for women and what activities each are allowed to carry out. As such, the study socio-cultural factors such as social gender roles and stereotypes, societal norms, attitudes, ideals and aspirations and beliefs and myths were considered important. The personal factors included lack of self confidence and self esteem, lack of assertiveness and aggressive, no networking after work, fear of what others think and level of education.

Professionalism in an industry and society at large cannot be brought about without the full and unreserved participation of both woman and man in the development process. Women are underrepresented in management positions in comparison to men all over the world and female managers, who are hitherto called women managers, are faced with strongly held negative stereotypes, distinguishing them from their male counterparts in the workplace. In contrast to these negative perceptions about female superiors, some subordinates benefit from working with the female superior because they believe women have the natural milk of kindness that makes it difficult for them to unleash hardship on their subordinates. The professional factors considered in this study include employee coping with the specific hours worked, level of productive rate, expectancy of the work desired by management and level of education.

## **2.9 Knowledge Gap**

Nzomo (1995) did a study on women and democratization in Kenya and what relevance does the democratization have to postmodernism discourse. This study delves so much on political leadership of women and not the determinants of decision making.

Kanake (1997) did a study on the gender dimension of electoral politics in Kenya: capacity-building of women candidates for 1997 and beyond. This study largely documents women in

management and in political leadership but does not go into the details of factors influencing women in participation in decision making.

Dowling (2007) on the study on the hotel industry in New Zealand notes that, staffs of the hotel industry in New Zealand are predominately female, yet at management levels these women are not equally represented. However this study was not conducted in Kenya and therefore a local study needs to be conducted to bring out the Kenyan perspective.

## **2.10 Summary of Literature Review**

From the review of the literature, it can be concluded that although the number of women found at the lower and mid-level management positions has increased over the years ,the number of women participating in key decision making decisions in the hotel industry remains relatively small. This has been attributed to the existence of invisible barriers within the industry that prevent their upward movement. These barriers are manifested in occupational and vertical segregation of women in the industry (Maxwell 1997) through corporate factors, socio cultural factors, professional and personal factors.

Corporate factors include corporate climate, corporate culture and corporate practices that dictate how women are viewed within the organization. Socio-cultural factors focus on the process of socialization and the role the process has played in perpetuating stereotypical beliefs about women that get carried to the workplace and influence their participation in decision making. The professional factors focused on employee coping with the specific hours worked, level of productive rate, expectancy of the work desired by management and level of education. Personal factors focus on women predisposing factors like lack of self confidence and fear of criticism and how these factors contribute to their being inadequately represented in decision making positions in organizations.

An in-depth investigation into these factors is required to illuminate factors that influence women's participation in decision making in the hotel industry in Kenya. This is what the study sets out to focus on. This would be important in developing policies that support their participation and in turn develop the hotel industry as a whole.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents the methodology that was used by the researcher to find answers to the research questions. In this chapter the research methodology was presented in the following order; research design, target population, sampling procedure, data collection methods, instruments of data collection and the pilot study. The chapter also explains how data was analyzed to produce the required information necessary for the study.

#### **3.2 Research Design**

This study used descriptive survey design which necessitates the collection of both qualitative and quantitative data whereby respondents were expected to describe the determinants of women's participation in decision-making positions in the hotel industry with reference to Four star hotels in Mombasa, Kenya. It involved a field survey of the target population who outlined the determinants of women's participation in decision-making positions in the hotel industry. A descriptive research design as defined by Kothari (2005) is a process of collecting data in order to answer questions concerning the current status of the subject in the study. This research design was considered appropriate because variables involved did not involve any manipulation and established the current status of the phenomena (Borg & Gail, 1983).

#### **3.3 Target Population**

The target population was employees of four star hotels in Mombasa Kenya who comprised of 390 management staff. This included senior, middle and low level managers in various departments. These respondents were targeted as they were conversant on the subject matter of the study. Further, the respondents were accountable on the daily operation of the hotel. The target population was as presented in Table 3.1.

**Table 3.1: Target Population**

| <b>Category</b>         | <b>Frequency</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|-------------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Top management          | 15               | 3.4               |
| Mid level management    | 53               | 10.5              |
| Junior level management | 322              | 86.0              |
| <b>Total</b>            | <b>390</b>       | <b>100.0</b>      |

**Source: Four star hotel in Mombasa, (2014)**

### **3.4 Sampling Procedure**

The sampling plan described the sampling unit, sampling frame, sampling procedures and the sample size for the study. The sampling frame described the list of all population units from which the sample was selected (Cooper & Schindler, 2003).

A sample of 193 was arrived at by calculating the target population of 390 with a 95% confidence level and an error of 0.05 using the below formula taken from Mugenda and Mugenda (2003):

From Normal distribution the population proportion can be estimated to be

$$n = \frac{Z^2 PQ}{\alpha^2}$$

Where: Z is the Z – value = 1.96

P Population proportion 0.50

Q = 1-P

$\alpha$  = level of significance = 5%

$$n = \frac{1.96^2 \times 0.5 \times 0.5}{0.05^2}$$

$$n = 384$$

Adjusted sample size

$$n' = 384 / [1 + (384/390)]$$

$$\text{Approx} = 193$$

The study employed stratified random sampling technique in coming up with a sample size of 193 respondents from a total of 390 in the specific department in four star hotels in Mombasa Kenya. Stratified random sampling is unbiased sampling method of grouping heterogeneous population into homogenous subsets then making a selection within the individual subset to ensure representativeness (Bryman & Bell, 2003). The goal of stratified random sampling is to achieve the desired representation from various sub-groups in the population. In stratified random sampling subjects are selected in such a way that the existing sub-groups in the population are more or less represented in the sample (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). This was used since the population can be divided into distinct groups bearing distinct characteristics. From each stratum, simple random sampling was used to select the respondents for the questionnaires.

**Table 3.2: Sampling Frame**

| <b>Departments</b>      | <b>Population</b> | <b>Sampling ratio</b> | <b>Sample</b> |
|-------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|---------------|
| Top management          | 15                | 0.469                 | 7             |
| Mid level management    | 53                | 0.469                 | 25            |
| Junior level management | 322               | 0.469                 | 151           |
| <b>Total</b>            | <b>390</b>        |                       | <b>193</b>    |

### **3.5 Data Collection Instruments**

The study made use of both primary and secondary sources of data. Secondary data was obtained from both published and unpublished work and used for the review of literature. Published works include books and journals. The research made use of unpublished work that comprised reports from the hotel regarding such issues as training, recruitment and working hours.

Questionnaires were used to collect primary data from the managers. In order to ensure uniformity in responses and to encourage participation, the questionnaires were kept short and structured to cover multiple-choice selections in a likert scale. The questionnaires were preferred in this study because respondents included in the study were literate and able to answer questions asked adequately. The questionnaires included closed and open ended questions. Closed ended questions were used in an effort to conserve time and money as well as to facilitate an easier

analysis as they are in immediate usable form; while the open ended questions were used as they encouraged the respondent to give an in-depth and felt response without feeling held back in revealing of any information. With open ended questions, a respondent's response gives an insight to his or her feelings, background, hidden motivation, interests and decisions. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), questionnaires are used commonly to obtain detailed information about a population under study.

### **3.6 Validity of Research Instruments**

According to Somekh, and Cathy (2005) validity is the degree by which the sample of test items represents the content the test is designed to measure. Expert opinion was requested to comment on the representativeness and suitability of questions and give suggestions of corrections to be made to the structure of the research tools. To establish the validity of the research instrument the researcher sought opinions of experts in the field of study, especially the lecturers. This helped to improve the content validity of the data that was collected. It facilitated the necessary revision and modification of the research instrument thereby enhancing validity.

### **3.7 Reliability of Research Instruments**

Reliability was increased by including many similar items on a measure, by testing a diverse sample of individuals and by using uniform testing procedures. The researcher selected a pilot group of 10 individuals from the target population to test the reliability of the research instruments. In order to test the reliability of the instruments, internal consistency techniques was applied using Cronbach's Alpha. The alpha value ranges between 0 and 1 with reliability increasing with the increase in value. Coefficient of 0.6-0.7 is a commonly accepted rule of thumb that indicates acceptable reliability and 0.8 or higher indicated good reliability (Mugenda, 2008).

### **3.8 Data Collection Procedure**

This study collected data using a self-administered questionnaire. The researcher read and interpreted the questions and details in the checklist for clarity. The researcher informed the respondents that the instruments being administered were for research purpose only and the responses from the respondents were kept secret and confidential. The researcher obtained an

introductory letter from the University of Nairobi in order to collect data from the field and then personally delivered the questionnaires to the respondents so that they could be filled in and then collect the questionnaires later. The drop and pick later method was used in the study.

### **3.9 Data Analysis**

Data analysis was done after data had been collected and is a process used to make sense of the data. The type of data analysis tool that was used was dependent on the type of data, depending if the data was qualitative or quantitative (Walsh and Wiggins, 2003). Data collected was edited and coded using descriptive analysis methods in order to get meaningful results from the questionnaires, interview guides checklist and desktop findings. The quantitative data in this research was analyzed by descriptive statistics using statistical package for social sciences SPSS (V. 21.0) as it was more user friendly and most appropriate for analysis of management related attitudinal responses (Newton and Jeonghun, 2010). The qualitative data took an exploratory/conceptual content analysis process which was more ideal as the information gathered from the open ended questions was large and time consuming if not well planned (Wilson, 2010). The data was then be presented using tables and figures. In addition the study used Karl Pearson's product moment correlation analysis to assess the relationship between the variables.

### **3.10 Ethical considerations**

Certain ethical issues were considered in the study. Firstly, the researcher sought consent of every respondent. At the beginning of every interview, the researcher clearly stated the purpose of research. The respondents were then given a chance to ask any questions before consenting to be interviewed. Moreover, participation of respondents was voluntary. Issues concerning confidentiality of discussions were discussed with the participants and adhered to by the researcher. Also, due to sensitivity of some information collected, the researcher held a moral obligation to treat the information with utmost propriety. Further, since the respondents were reluctant to disclose some information, the researcher needed to reassure the respondents of use and confidentiality of the information given.

### 3.11 Operationalization of Variables

The Operationalization of Variables is shown in table 3.3

**Table 3.3: Operationalization Table**

| Objectives   | Variables   | Indicators   | Measurement scale                                    | Tools of analysis      | Types of data analysis         |
|--|---|--|--|------------------------|--------------------------------|
| To establish the influence of personal factors on decision making by women in hotel management   | <b>Independent:</b><br>Personal factors                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of self confidence and self esteem</li> <li>• Lack of assertiveness and aggressive</li> <li>• No networking after work</li> <li>• Fear of what others think</li> <li>• Level of education</li> </ul> | Ordinal<br>Ordinal<br>Nominal<br>Ordinal<br>Nominal  | Mean<br><br>Percentage | Descriptive<br><br>Correlation |
| To identify the role that the institutional factors played in influencing women's participation in decision making in the hotel industry | <b>Independent:</b><br>Institutional factors                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working hours</li> <li>• Corporate culture</li> <li>• Corporate policies (institutional framework guiding the gender division of labour, recruitment and upward mobility)</li> </ul>                      | Interval<br>Ordinal<br><br>Ordinal                   | Mean<br><br>Percentage | Descriptive<br><br>Correlation |
| To assess the influence of social cultural factors on women participation in decision making in the hotel industry                       | <b>Independent:</b><br>Socio-Cultural Factors                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social gender roles and stereotypes</li> <li>• Societal norms</li> <li>• Attitudes, ideals and aspirations</li> <li>• Beliefs and myths</li> </ul>  | Ordinal<br><br>Ordinal<br>Ordinal<br>Ordinal         | Mean<br><br>Percentage | Descriptive<br><br>Correlation |
| To establish the role of professional factors on women in participating in decision making in the hotel industry.                        | <b>Independent:</b><br>Professional Factors                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employee coping with the specific hours worked</li> <li>• Level of productive rate expected</li> <li>• Expectancy of the work desired by management</li> <li>• Level of education</li> </ul>              | Ordinal<br><br>Nominal<br><br>Ordinal<br><br>Nominal | Mean<br><br>Percentage | Descriptive<br><br>Correlation |
|  | <b>Dependent:</b><br><br>Women participation in decision making | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of female in management position</li> <li>• Level of involvement in running the hotel</li> </ul>   | Interval<br><br><br>Nominal                          | Mean<br><br>Percentage | Descriptive<br><br>Correlation |



## CHAPTER FOUR

### DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION OF THE STUDY

#### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses data analysis, presentation and interpretation of the research findings in line with the objectives of the study. The data obtained was presented in tables to reflect different response rates amongst the respondents. Analysis of the response rate, general information and independent variables was conducted and the obtained data was subjective to quantitative and qualitative analysis.

##### 4.1.1 Response Rate

The study targeted a sample size of 193 respondents from which 137 filled in and returned the questionnaires, making a response rate of 70.98%. This response rate was good and representative and conforms to Mugenda and Mugenda (1999) stipulation that a response rate of 50% is adequate for analysis and reporting; a rate of 60% is good and a response rate of 70% and over is excellent.

#### 4.2 Demographic Information

This section represents the general information of the respondents. The gender, age, education level and experience of the respondents are the main focused questions.

##### 4.2.1 Gender Composition

The study sought to find out the respondents' gender. The findings are presented in table 4.1

**Table 4. 1 :Gender of the Respondent**

|              | Frequency  | Percent      |
|--------------|------------|--------------|
| Male         | 4          | 2.9          |
| Female       | 133        | 97.1         |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>137</b> | <b>100.0</b> |

From the findings, majority of the respondents were female comprising of 97.1% who were followed by male whose percentage was 2.9%. Having more female workers in the hotel industry provides good focus on the areas to be addressed in this study.

#### 4.2.2 Age Bracket

The study sought to find out the age bracket of the respondents. The results are indicated in Table 4.2

**Table 4. 2: Age Bracket**

|                    | Frequency  | Percent      |
|--------------------|------------|--------------|
| 26-35 years        | 63         | 46.0         |
| 36-45 years        | 20         | 14.6         |
| 46 years and above | 54         | 39.4         |
| <b>Total</b>       | <b>137</b> | <b>100.0</b> |

According to the findings majority of the respondents (46%) were aged between 26-35 years, 39.4% of the respondents were aged between 36-45 years and 14.6% were over 46 years. according to the information obtained above, it is clear that the majority of employees are middle age.

#### 4.2.3 Education Level

The study sought to establish the level of education of the respondents. The findings are as shown in Table 4.3.

**Table 4. 3: level of education**

|                     | Frequency  | Percent      |
|---------------------|------------|--------------|
| 'O' level           | 8          | 5.8          |
| Certificate/diploma | 19         | 13.9         |
| Degree              | 97         | 70.8         |
| post-graduate       | 13         | 9.5          |
| <b>Total</b>        | <b>137</b> | <b>100.0</b> |

The findings indicate that majority of the respondents (70.8%) had degrees, 13.9% were at certificate level, 9.5% were post-graduate, and 5.8% had ‘O’ level. The results reveal that majority of the workers are learned and hence provided relevant information for use in the study.

#### 4.2.4 Years of experience

The study sought to find out the respondents’ years of experience. The findings are presented in table 4.4.

**Table 4. 4: Experience**

|                         | Frequency  | Percent      |
|-------------------------|------------|--------------|
| Less than 5 years       | 5          | 3.6          |
| Between 5 and 10 years  | 83         | 60.6         |
| Between 10 and 15 years | 3          | 1.5          |
| Between 15 and 20       | 14         | 10.2         |
| More than 20 years      | 32         | 23.4         |
| <b>Total</b>            | <b>137</b> | <b>100.0</b> |

According to the findings majority of the respondents (60.6%) had experience of between 5-10 years, 23.4% of the respondents had more than 20 years of experience, 10.2% had worked between 15-20 years, 3.6% were less than 5 years and 1.5% had between 10-15 years of experience. Given that a majority of the respondents had enough experience on their work, the data collected for the study will be helpful as the employees are knowledgeable on the subject under study.

#### 4.3 Personal Factors

The study also sought to find out the personal factors that influenced women participation in decision making in the hotel industry. The results are as indicated in Table 4.5.

**Table 4. 5: Personal factors**

|                 | Frequency | Percent |
|-----------------|-----------|---------|
| Low extent      | 30        | 22.2    |
| Moderate extent | 25        | 18.5    |
| Great extent    | 81        | 59.3    |

|              |            |              |
|--------------|------------|--------------|
| <b>Total</b> | <b>137</b> | <b>100.0</b> |
|--------------|------------|--------------|

The results in Table 4.5 indicate that majority of the respondents (59.3%) indicated that personal factors influenced women participation in decision making in the hotel industry to a great extent, 22.2% to a low extent and 18.5% to a moderate extent.

The study also sought to establish the extent that various aspects of personal factors affect women participation in decision making in the hotel industry. The results are as shown in Table 4.6.

**Table 4. 6: Extent to which various aspects affect women participation in decision making in the hotel industry**

|  | <b>Mean</b> | <b>Std. Deviation</b> |
|--|-------------|-----------------------|
| Lack of self confidence and self esteem        | 3.4088      | 1.33149               |
| Lack of assertiveness and aggressive behaviour | 3.5547      | 1.07046               |
| No networking after work                       | 2.7956      | 1.24935               |
| Fear of what others think                      | 3.0146      | 1.35030               |
| Level of education                             | 3.0876      | 1.35839               |

According to the findings the respondents indicated that Lack of assertiveness and aggressive behaviour affect women participation in decision making in the hotel industry to a great extent as expressed by a mean score of 3.5547, lack of self confidence and self esteem, Fear of what others think, level of education and no networking after work by a moderate extent as expressed by a mean score of 3.4088, 3.0146, 3.0876 and 2.7956 respectively.

#### 4.4 Institutional Factors

The study sought to establish the extent to which institutional factors influenced women participation in decision making in the hotel industry. The results are as indicated in Table 4.7

**Table 4. 7: Extent to which institutional factors influence women participation in decision making in the hotel industry**

|                   | Frequency  | Percent      |
|-------------------|------------|--------------|
| low extent        | 30         | 22.2         |
| moderate extent   | 41         | 29.6         |
| great extent      | 25         | 18.5         |
| Very great extent | 41         | 29.6         |
| <b>Total</b>      | <b>137</b> | <b>100.0</b> |

The results in Table 4.7 indicate that majority of the respondents (29.6%) indicated that institutional factors influenced women participation in decision making in the hotel industry both to a great and moderate extent, 22.2% to a low extent and 18.5% to a moderate extent.

The study further sought to establish the extent to which institutional factors influence women participation in decision making in the hotel industry. The findings are as shown in Table 4.8

**Table 4. 8: Extent to which aspects of institutional factors influence women participation in decision making in the hotel industry**

|   | Mean   | Std. Deviation |
|---|--------|----------------|
| Working hours   | 3.9270 | .96737         |
| Corporate culture   | 3.7372 | .87674         |
| Corporate policies (institutional framework guiding the gender division of labour, recruitment and upward mobility) | 3.6277 | .98524         |

The findings in Table 4.12 indicate that working hours, corporate culture and corporate policies (institutional framework guiding the gender division of labor, recruitment and upward mobility)

affect women participation in decision making in the hotel industry to a great extent as expressed by mean scores of 3.9270,3.7372 and 3.6277 respectively.

#### 4.5 Social-Cultural Factors

The study also sought to establish the extent to which social-cultural factors influence women participation in decision making in the hotel industry. The results are as shown in Table 4.8

**Table 4. 9: Extent to which socio-cultural factors influence women participation in decision making in the hotel industry**

|                   | Frequency  | Percent      |
|-------------------|------------|--------------|
| Low extent        | 51         | 37.0         |
| Moderate extent   | 10         | 7.4          |
| Great extent      | 56         | 40.7         |
| Very great extent | 20         | 14.8         |
| <b>Total</b>      | <b>137</b> | <b>100.0</b> |

The findings in Table 4.8 indicate that majority of the respondents (40.7%) indicated that social-cultural factors influenced women participation in decision making in the hotel industry to a great extent, 37% of the respondents to a low extent, 14.8% to a very great extent and 7.4% of the respondents to a moderate extent.

The study further sought to establish the extent to which social-cultural factors influence women participation in decision making in the hotel industry. The results are as shown in the table 4.10.

**Table 4.10: Extent to which aspects of social-cultural factors influence women participation in decision making in the hotel industry**

|                                     | Mean   | Std. Deviation |
|-------------------------------------|--------|----------------|
| Social gender roles and stereotypes | 3.9270 | .67120         |
| Societal norms                      | 3.8467 | .93061         |
| Attitudes, ideals and aspirations   | 3.6569 | 1.01052        |

The findings in Table 4.10 indicate that Social gender roles and stereotypes, societal norms and attitudes, ideals and aspirations affect women participation in decision making in the hotel industry to a great extent as shown by a mean score of 3.9270,3.8467 and 3.6569 respectively.

#### 4.6 Professional Factors

The study also sought to find out the professional factors that influenced women participation in decision making in the hotel industry. The results are as indicated in Table 4.11

**Table 4.11: Extent to which professional factors influence women participation in decision making in the hotel industry**

|                   | Frequency  | Percent      |
|-------------------|------------|--------------|
| Not at all        | 11         | 8.0          |
| Low extent        | 22         | 16.1         |
| Moderate extent   | 18         | 13.1         |
| Great extent      | 63         | 46.0         |
| Very great extent | 23         | 16.8         |
| <b>Total</b>      | <b>137</b> | <b>100.0</b> |

The results in Table 4.11 indicate that majority of the respondents (46%) indicated that professional factors influenced women participation in decision making in the hotel industry to a great extent, 16.8% to a very great extent, 16.1% to a low extent, 13.1% to a moderate extent and 8% did not have any effect at all.

The study further sought to establish the extent to which professional factors influence women participation in decision making in the hotel industry. The results are as shown in table 4.12.

**Table 4.12: Extent to which aspects of professional factors influence women participation in decision making in the hotel industry**

|  | <b>Mean</b> | <b>Std. Deviation</b> |
|--|-------------|-----------------------|
| Employee coping with the specific hours worked | 4.1679      | .81862                |
| Level of productive rate expected              | 3.9416      | .77428                |
| Expectancy of the work desired by management   | 3.7591      | 1.04688               |
| Level of education                             | 3.8175      | 1.34065               |
| Number of female in management position        | 3.9781      | .90316                |

According to the findings the respondents indicated that the level of involvement in running the hotel, employee coping with the specific hours worked, number of female in management position, level of education, expectancy of the work desired by management and level of productive rate expected affected women participation in decision making in the hotel industry to a great extent as expressed by means of 4.1679, 3.9781, 3.9416, 3.8175 and 3.7591 respectively.

#### **4.7 Women Participation in Decision Making**

The study finally inquired on the trend of women participation in decision making in hotels for the last five years. The results are as shown in table 4.13.

**Table 4.13: Trend of women participation in decision making in hotels for the last five years**

|   | <b>Mean</b> | <b>Std. Deviation</b> |
|---|-------------|-----------------------|
| Number of female in management position   | 3.8803      | 1.0325                |
| Level of involvement in running the hotel | 3.6025      | 1.1538                |

Regarding the trend of women participation in decision making in hotels for the last five years, the findings show there was improvement in the number of female in management position and also in the level of involvement in running the hotel as shown by a mean score of 3.8803 and 3.6025 respectively.



#### 4.8 Correlation Analysis

The data presented above on institutional factors, socio-cultural factors, personal factors and professional factors were computed into single variables per factor by obtaining the averages of each factor. Pearson's correlations analysis was then conducted at 95% confidence interval and 5% confidence level 2-tailed.

**Table 4.14: Correlation Matrix**

|  |                     | Women's participation in decision-making positions | Institutional factors | Socio-Cultural Factors | Personal Factors | Professional Factors |
|--|---------------------|--|-----------------------|------------------------|------------------|----------------------|
| Women's participation in decision-making positions | Pearson Correlation | 1  |                       |                        |                  |                      |
|  | Sig. (2-tailed)     | .  |                       |                        |                  |                      |
| Institutional factors                              | Pearson Correlation | .638   | 1                     |                        |                  |                      |
|  | Sig. (2-tailed)     | .029   | .                     |                        |                  |                      |
| Socio-Cultural Factors                             | Pearson Correlation | .764   | .523                  | 1                      |                  |                      |
|  | Sig. (2-tailed)     | .017   | .016                  | .                      |                  |                      |
| Personal Factors                                   | Pearson Correlation | .622   | .743                  | .597                   | 1                |                      |
|  | Sig. (2-tailed)     | .031   | .012                  | .028                   | .                |                      |
| Professional Factors                               | Pearson Correlation | .529   | .533                  | .720                   | .531             | 1                    |
|  | Sig. (2-tailed)     | .047   | .009                  | .002                   | .014             | .                    |

The table 4.14 indicates the correlation matrix between the factors (institutional factors, socio-Cultural factors, personal factors and professional factors) and women's participation in decision-making positions in the hotel industry. According to the table, there is a positive relationship between women's participation in decision-making positions in the hotel industry and institutional factors, socio-cultural factors, personal factors and professional factors 0.638, 0.764, 0.622 and 0.529 respectively. The positive relationship indicates that there is a correlation between the factors and the women's participation in decision-making positions in the hotel industry. This infers that socio-cultural factors has the highest effect on women's participation in decision-making positions in the hotel industry, followed by institutional factors, then personal factors while professional factors have the lowest effect on the women's participation in decision-making positions in the hotel industry among four star hotels in Mombasa, Kenya.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, DISCUSSIONS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE STUDY**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter presented the discussion of key data findings, conclusion drawn from the findings highlighted and recommendation made there-to. The conclusions and recommendations drawn were focused on addressing the objective of the study.

#### **5.2 Summary of Findings**

The study sought to establish the determinants of women's participation in decision-making positions in the hotel industry the case of four star hotels in Mombasa, Kenya.

##### **5.2.1 Institutional Factors**

The study revealed that Institutional factors affect the women participation in decision making in the hotel industry to a great and moderate extent. Working hours, corporate culture and corporate policies (institutional framework guiding the gender division of labor, recruitment and upward mobility) affect women participation in decision making in the hotel industry to a great extent as expressed by mean scores of 3.9270,3.7372 and 3.6277 respectively.

##### **5.2.2 Social-cultural factors**

The study found out that that social-cultural factors influenced women participation in decision making in the hotel industry to a great extent. Social gender roles and stereotypes, societal norms and attitudes, ideals and aspirations affect women participation in decision making in the hotel industry to a great extent as shown by a mean score of 3.9270,3.8467 and 3.6569 respectively.

### **5.2.3 Personal Factors**

The study established that personal factors influenced women participation in decision making in the hotel industry to a great extent. Lack of assertiveness and aggressive affect women participation in decision making in the hotel industry to a great extent as expressed by a mean score of 3.5547. The study also established that lack of self confidence and self esteem, fear of what others think ,level of education and no networking after work affets women participation in decision making in the hotel industry by a moderate extent as expressed by a mean score of 3.4088, 3.0146, 3.0876 and 2.7956 respectively.

### **5.2.4 Professional Factors**

The study revealed that professional factors influenced women participation in decision making in the hotel industry to a great extent. The level of involvement in running the hotel, employee coping with the specific hours worked, number of female in management position, level of education, expectancy of the work desired by management and level of productive rate expected affected women participation in decision making in the hotel industry to a great extent as expressed by means of 4.1679,3.9781,3.9416, 3.8175 and 3.7591 respectively.

## **5.3 Discussion of findings**

The study revealed that institutional factors affect the women participation in decision making in the hotel industry as represented by (29.9%) both to a very great and moderate extent. The study also revealed to a great extent as expressed by mean scores of 3.9270, 3.7372 and 3.6277 respectively. This is in line with Knuston and Schmidgall (1999) who explains that mentoring, networking, training and development, flexible working hours and support services that allow effective reconciliation of employees multiple roles (Any discriminative practices as regards mentoring, provision of flexible working hours(especially to cater for women who often have to attain a family-work balance), networking and family friendly initiatives serve to strengthen the existence of invisible barriers in an organization. Powell and Butterfield (2003) further argues that organizations to prefer aggressive male-like behavior thereby locking women out. This

consequently leads to their discrimination when it comes to attaining decision making positions in the organizations.

The study established that social-cultural factors influenced women participation in decision making in the hotel industry to a great extent as indicated by (40.7%). The study also established that social gender roles and stereotypes, societal norms and attitudes, ideals and aspirations affect women participation in decision making in the hotel industry to a great extent as shown by a mean score of 3.9270,3.8467 and 3.6569 respectively. This correlates with Bello (1992) who regards social-cultural beliefs as the major barriers to women advancement to top management positions both in the public and private sector. Further, women have domestic burden which reduces the time they have for other activities such as education or career. Walking or travelling long distances also exposes women to the increased risk of gender-based violence and other risks to their safety,thereby influencing their participation in the hotel industry which involves a lot of travelling.

Bello (1992) goes ahead to regard socio-cultural beliefs as the major barriers in this regard. These beliefs emphasize the superiority of men and the inferiority of women. They form an integral part of the socialization process and the gender education and training most men and women are exposed to from childhood. The position and decisions of women in the hotel industry are affected by the beliefs and myths of the community in Kenya. Women have the fear of rising to top positions due to the fear of ridicule by the male population.

The study also found out that personal factors influenced women participation in decision making in the hotel industry to a great extent as represented by a majorityof (59.3%). The study also found out that Lack of assertiveness and aggressive affect women participation in decision making in the hotel industry to a great extent as expressed by a mean score of 3.5547.This is in line with Olojede (1990) who states thatwomen often refrain from lobbying and networking after work. Moreover, they tend to avoid assertiveness and aggressive behavior.women often don't directly ask for promotions like their male counterparts do according to Knutson and Schmidgall(1999). Levels of education also affect women participation in decision making in the hotel industry throughlow participation and decision making process affected byilliteracy,

patriarchy, lack of clarity in government policies for empowerment (qualities that are desired in attaining decision making position in most male-led organizations).

The study deduced that that professional factors influenced women participation in decision making in the hotel industry to a great extent as represented by 46%. involvement in running the hotel, employee coping with the specific hours worked, number of female in management position, level of education, expectancy of the work desired by management and level of productive rate expected affected women participation in decision making in the hotel industry to a great extent as expressed by means of 4.1679,3.9781,3.9416, 3.8175 and 3.7591 respectively. This agrees with (Tai et al., 2005) who posited that the most Women are under represented in management positions in comparison to men all over the world. In line with Author (2006), women have children to care for; thus, they lose time for an interest in their jobs; women work for supplemental income and that they lack the necessary drive to succeed in business; women take negative feedback personally rather than professionally and that they may run from the room in tears if criticized; and that women are unsuitable for top management position because they are too emotional and lack aggressiveness.

#### **5.4 Conclusion of the Study**

Women's participation in decision-making at the community, district, regional, and national levels have been met with some challenges over the years. The hospitality industry, particularly, plays a strategic role in economic development in Kenya and has made major contributions toward the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) over the past few years. From the findings the study concludes that women participation in decision making in the hotel industry is affected by factors such as mentoring, networking, training and development, flexible working hours and support services that allow effective reconciliation of employees multiple roles. Any discriminative practices as regards mentoring, provision of flexible working hours (especially to cater for women who often have to attain a family-work balance), networking and family friendly initiatives serve to strengthen the existence of invisible barriers in an organization also affect the participation of women.

The study further deduces that the lack of assertiveness and aggressiveness among women affects their participation in decision making in the hotel industry. Involvement in running the hotel, employee coping with the specific hours worked, number of females in management position, level of education, expectancy of the work desired by management and level of productive rate expected are also among the aspects that affect women in the hotel industry.

Further, the study found out that there are various social cultural factors such as social gender roles and stereotypes, societal norms and attitudes, ideals and aspirations that affect women participation in decision making in the hotel industry.

The study also deduced that that professional factors influenced women participation in decision making in the hotel industry to a great extent. The involvement of women in running the hotel, coping with the specific hours worked, their numbers in management position, level of education, expectancy of the work desired by management and level of productive rate expected influences women participation in decision making.

There is a positive correlation between the factors and the women's participation in decision-making positions in the hotel industry. This infers that Socio-Cultural Factors has the highest effect on Women's participation in decision-making positions in the hotel industry, followed by institutional factors, then Personal Factors while Professional Factors have the lowest effect on the Women's participation in decision-making positions in the hotel industry among four star hotels in Mombasa, Kenya.

## **5.5 Recommendationsof the Study**

From the study findings and conclusions, the study recommends that:

1. Worldwide, the top management should allowmore women taking up decision making positions in political, economic and social spheres of life. The hotel industry in Kenya particulary, should encourage women taking up positions in the higher rungs of management as women's participation in business leadership is important to a country's economic growth The empowerment of women through literacy learning is only one

important part of the total picture. The government should Support women in learning, questioning, understanding and challenging the suppression they experience empowers them, but only partially. Additionally, creating greater economic and political opportunities to contribute to families, communities and nations, also contributes to empowerment. Relationships with brothers, husbands and fathers, as well as community and authority leaders, are at its heart. If empowerment of women is to lead to greater equality, existing systems, authorities, laws and policies must be reviewed and amended.

2. The study also recommends much of the discussion and debate in advocating for women's literacy to be addressed from what is described as a 'functional' perspective rather than a 'rights' perspective. The functional approach promotes learning for specific outcomes relating to, for example, health and economic development. A rights approach is concerned with the development of individuals to fulfill their potential and be involved in all levels of society as equal human beings.
3. The study further recommends that there is a need for interpersonal relationships within the workplace to act as a limiting factor to women participation in decision making in the hotel industry. The workplace is a communication and interaction based industry. These relationships (either developed or developing) can be problematic or positive. Commonly, some women go through harassment, discrimination, biased opinions and other derogatory experiences. These experiences have a significant effect on decision making by women in the hotel industry because they instill fear to those affected who may choose to keep quiet to safeguard their position in the industry. This study, therefore, recommends the top management of hotels to protect women at the working places. There is also a need to design a time frame that women who have families to take care of can work with without compromising the roles they play in their families.
4. Finally, this study recommends that women should be more aggressive and assertive in their roles in the hotel industry so as to compete with their male counterparts. Women should be asking for promotions directly from their managers to enable them rise up the career ladder in the hotel industry. Moreover, it is important that women build on their self esteem and confidence levels so as to avoid intimidation in the workplaces. Women



are the greatest hindrance of their achievement and there is a need for them to improve their personal factors which in turn affects their career paths.

### **5.6 Suggestion for Further Studies**

Another study should be done to investigate the role of the government in improving the working conditions of women in the hotel industry. A similar study should also be done on other small hotels since their operations are different from that of large hotels. Further studies should be done on the influence of the management on employees decision making.

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## APPENDICES

### **Appendix I: Letter of Transmittal**

University of Nairobi  
Extra Mural Dept,  
P.O Box 30197,  
Nairobi,

Dear Sir/ Madam,

I am a post graduate student, University of Nairobi pursuing a master's degree in Project Planning and management. I am undertaking a research study at the four star hotels in Mombasa, Kenya and the respondents will be members of staff involved in the project as well as user Departments. The study will involve carrying out an assessment on the determinants of women's participation in decision-making positions in the hotel industry: a case study of Four star hotels in Mombasa, Kenya.

I am writing this letter to request you to kindly assist me by filling in all the sections of the enclosed questionnaire, as honestly as possible. The information will be used purely for this study and not for any other purposes. Your assistance will be highly appreciated.

Yours Truly,

Loise Wanjiru Waweru

L50/76674/2009

## Appendix II: Research Questionnaire

### Introduction

*Please read the questions carefully and fill out the following questionnaire on the spaces provided. Please tick (✓) in the appropriate box or fill in the empty spaces. Kindly respond to all questions freely and honestly. All the information you give will be treated confidentially. The information will be used to prepare an academic report and will not include any specific names.*

### Section A: Demographic Information

1) The distribution of the respondents by Gender

Male:  Female:

2) What is your age? (Years)

18-25  26-35

36-45  46 and above

3) Highest Level of education

a. Primary Level  b. 'O' Level

c. Certificate/Diploma  d. Degree

e. Postgraduate

4) How long have you worked in this organization?

a. Less than 5 years  b. Between 5 and 10 years

c. Between 10 and 15 years  d. Between 15 and 20 years

e. More than 20 years

### SECTION B: MAIN ISSUES

#### Personal Factors

5) To what extent do personal factors influence women participation in decision making in the hotel industry?

Very great extent  Great extent

Moderate extent  Low extent

Not at all

6) What is the extent to which the following influence women participation in decision making in the hotel industry?

|   | Very great extent | Great extent | Moderate extent | Low extent | Very low extent |
|---|-------------------|--------------|-----------------|------------|-----------------|
| Lack of self confidence and self esteem |                   |              |                 |            |                 |
| Lack of assertiveness and aggressive    |                   |              |                 |            |                 |
| No networking after work                |                   |              |                 |            |                 |
| Fear of what others think               |                   |              |                 |            |                 |
| Level of education                      |                   |              |                 |            |                 |

**Institutional factors**

7) To what extent do institutional factors influence women participation in decision making in the hotel industry?

- Very great extent                    [ ]    Great extent                                    [ ]  
 Moderate extent                    [ ]    Low extent    [ ]  
 Not at all                                    [ ]

8) What is the extent to which the following influence women participation in decision making in the hotel industry?

|   | Very great extent | Great extent | Moderate extent | Low extent | Very low extent |
|---|-------------------|--------------|-----------------|------------|-----------------|
| Working hours   |                   |              |                 |            |                 |
| Corporate culture   |                   |              |                 |            |                 |
| Corporate policies (institutional framework guiding the gender division of labour, recruitment and upward mobility) |                   |              |                 |            |                 |

**Socio-Cultural Factors**

9) To what extent do socio-cultural factors influence women participation in decision making in the hotel industry?

Very great extent                    [ ]      Great extent                                    [ ]  
 Moderate extent                    [ ]      Low extent    [ ]  
 Not at all                                    [ ]

10) What is the extent to which the following influence women participation in decision making in the hotel industry?

|                                     | Very great extent | Great extent | Moderate extent | Low extent | Very low extent |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------|--------------|-----------------|------------|-----------------|
| Social gender roles and stereotypes |                   |              |                 |            |                 |
| Societal norms                      |                   |              |                 |            |                 |
| Attitudes, ideals and aspirations   |                   |              |                 |            |                 |
| Beliefs and myths                   |                   |              |                 |            |                 |

**Professional Factors**

11) To what extent do professional factors influence women participation in decision making in the hotel industry?

Very great extent                    [ ]      Great extent                                    [ ]  
 Moderate extent                    [ ]      Low extent    [ ]  
 Not at all                                    [ ]

12) What is the extent to which the following influence women participation in decision making in the hotel industry?

|  | Very great extent | Great extent | Moderate extent | Low extent | Very low extent |
|--|-------------------|--------------|-----------------|------------|-----------------|
| Employee coping with the specific hours worked |                   |              |                 |            |                 |
| Level of productive rate expected              |                   |              |                 |            |                 |
| Expectancy of the work desired by management   |                   |              |                 |            |                 |
| Level of education                             |                   |              |                 |            |                 |

**Women participation in decision making**

13) What is the trend of the following in your hotel for the last five years?

|   | Greatly Improved | Improved | Constant | Decreasing | Greatly decreased |
|---|------------------|----------|----------|------------|-------------------|
| Number of female in management position   |                  |          |          |            |                   |
| Level of involvement in running the hotel |                  |          |          |            |                   |

**THANK YOU**