

**CHALLENGES FACED BY WOMEN EMPLOYEES IN CAREER
PROGRESSION IN MOBILE TELEPHONY INDUSTRY IN KENYA**

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DECLARATION

This research project is my original work and has not been presented for the award of degree in any other university or institution for any other academic purpose.

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This research project has been submitted for examination with my approval as University supervisor.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this project to my family for unfailing encouragement and love. To my dear husband and best friend James, and to my loving daughter Marie and son Michael.

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I wish to thank most sincerely all those whose contributions have made this project a success. To my supervisor Florence Muindi for her assistance and advice all through making this project a success. To my wonderful family for their support both morally and financially. Most of all I thank God for the gift of wisdom and strength to complete this project.

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ABSTRACT

In recent years, women as well as gender issues have turned into a major area of concern. Seminars and workshops are being held over the world to discuss women issues and women progression in all areas of life. That is because of the most significant features of the global labour market in the last half of the twentieth century, which is increasing the participation of women. Now more than ever, women are competing for managerial positions, however, they are limited in their development. The emergence and determined survival of women in high flying jobs today in corporations and organizations depends on their own willingness to confront and fight strong barriers and hurdles that stand their way, some too grave to confront and others less weighty. The objective of the study was to determine the challenges faced by women employees in career progression among the mobile telephony companies in Kenya. The research design used was descriptive cross sectional survey design. The population of the study was 604 managerial employees in the three mobile companies in Kenya. The study used stratified random sampling. The sample comprised of 10% from each stratum of the target population. The study used primary data which was collected through self-administered questionnaires. The data collected was analyzed using statistical package for social sciences based on the questionnaires. Results will be presented in tables and figures. The study found out that work life balance, discriminatory culture, stereotyping, glass ceiling, and chauvinism and sexual harassment. The company's management was found to be committed to promoting gender equality though lack of technical expertise by the women contributed to underrepresentation of women. Work life balance challenge was through employees reacting employees react negatively to women in management positions as compared to men, assertive behavior of women in the company makes them to be seen as being counter to their social roles as women and women traits and behaviors exhibited being not conducive to being promoted. Stereotyping in the mobile firms affected women progression through limited access to informal interaction networks in the company, and that women who are assertive are viewed negatively in my organization. Glass ceiling hindered women progression through choices made by women regarding their careers affect their career progression and that women in the company are prejudiced and discriminated in the workplace. The study recommends that having noted that organizations incorporate the art of appreciation and acknowledgements in their value systems so that stereotyping is done away with. It is important to understand that the experience of women in organizations situated in an unequal society have not been pleasant.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

In recent years, women as well as gender issues have turned into a major area of concern. Seminars and workshops are being held over the world to discuss women issues and women progression in all areas of life. That is because of the most significant features of the global labour market in the last half of the twentieth century, which is increasing the participation of women (Black and Gregerson, 2009). Morley, Bellamy, Jackson and O'Neil (2012) noted that male dominance in the workplace has forced a number of women to adopt a more aggressive model. The constantly reinforced message is that women succeed only if they become more assertive, competitive, dressed for success and more politically and socially astute. This places women in a disadvantaged position because they tend to lose sight of other responsibilities and they sacrifice their personal lives. Ilagan-Bian (2004) argues that female managers have to work harder in order to be noticed and to prove that they can handle the job, the family as well as everything else. Sujatha (2008) observes that the number of women in administrative and managerial occupations has increased over decades, but the proportion of women employed and moved as top level managers still remains small. This indicates that there may be some inherent as well as external factors that "lock out" or disadvantage women from growing their careers to top management positions.

The study will majorly be based on the Rawls' theory of justice (1995). According to this theory, every person has a right to have the most extensive basic liberty compatible with the liberties of others. The second principle states that social and economic positions, including career position, are to be to everyone's advantage and open to all (Nussbaum, 2010). The two basic principles of justice states that: each person should get an equal guarantee to as many different liberties and as much of those liberties as can be guaranteed to everyone else at the same time. Principle two states that, inequalities in society are okay only if they are arranged so that the inequalities actually help out the least fortunate persons in society. The inequalities are connected to positions or offices or jobs in society that everyone has an equal opportunity to attain.

The telecommunication industry in Kenya like any other environment continues to transform with changes such as new taxation laws, innovative products and services, political shifts, stabilities and instabilities among others. The telecommunication sector and other corporate in Kenya has seen more women who hold senior executive positions and sit on corporate boards, and with the introduction of various forms of legislation protecting women's rights, for example pay protection, maternity leave and employment rights, the future looks promising for senior women executives. In some spheres these drives have been successful and the demographics within the telecommunication business have changed with more women in employment than before. But this is far from the case, because women have been slow in career progression and this affects their participation in the company decision making. The reasons for this difference are varied in nature and these barriers are often based on the factors of gender, and not aspects such as the lack of ability to handle jobs at higher institutional levels.

1.1.1 Career Progression

Career can be identified as a sequence of work roles of an individual, an occupation undertaken for a significant period of a person's life and with opportunities for progress (Metcalf, 2006). Brown and Ridge (2012) noted that career progression is a linear upward movement through a series of job positions in an organization that involves an increase in more job responsibilities and salary. The progression of individuals within an organization in accordance with assessments of organizational needs and the performance, potential and preferences of individual members of the enterprise is shaped by career planning. Career development includes advancement or growth and extension within the job itself, lateral moves and development of portfolio work. It can also be looked at as the individual's development in learning and work throughout life and thus includes voluntary work and life experiences.

The primary goal of career development is to meet the current and future needs of the organization and the individuals work which means developing employability. Black and Gregerson (2009) noted that individuals need to make themselves knowledgeable about market trends, understand skills and knowledge needed in the area and anticipate future needs, beware of their strengths and weaknesses, have a plan for increasing their employability and move from their current employer when a win-win situation is no longer possible. Although career development has been identified as the responsibility of the individual, the organization needs to play a facilitating and supporting role. This is because career development has benefits for both the individual and the organization. It makes an organization attractive to potential recruits and encourages employee commitment, motivation and job performance as they see possible progress in their work.

1.1.2 Challenges Faced By Women Employees In Career Progression

Women at the work place do have qualifications and experiences similar to those of their male colleagues. A general observation however indicates that women have to satisfy other subtle requirements or conditions for their organizational career progress over and above the stipulated policy requirements for career progression (Baker and Mckenzie, 2011). Baker and Mckenzie, (2011) noted that some of the challenges facing women include; one having to be on the right side of organizational politics, the need to have the right networks or connections with top management officers, personal attributes of resilience and outstanding aggressiveness, outstanding performance in previous tasks, among others. Many corporate executives and managers, almost all men, argue that women have not made significant progress because they do not have the required educational backgrounds, skills, and work experiences. These executives view the slow rise of women as an unbiased fact rather than discrimination (Fernandez, 2001). Although most young men and women are promoted based on performance, a gender gap still exists in the rate of promotions and women are at a disadvantage (Cobb and Dunlop, 2013).

Wentling and Thomas (2007) noted that women face many challenges in moving up such as non-supportive bosses or colleagues, sexual discrimination and male chauvinism. To achieve equal status, the requirement level for women to achieve in the workplace, is set at a much higher standard, they are required to work harder, be more qualified, more ambitious and competent than their male counterparts. However, they do not reach authoritative positions with the same ease as their male counterparts with similar positions, backgrounds and qualifications as themselves. Socially and culturally, women

and men have tended to assume different roles, duties, and identities in their respective organizations and they often encounter different challenges. Despite having entered the workforce with credentials and expectations similar to those of men, women encounter many obstacles as organizations reflect diverse and gendered realities of life. Their marginal status has led to the endemic problems of their roles in organizations being constrained and strangled by gender role stereotyping (Domenico and Jones, 2006). The persistent stereotyping that associates management with maleness contributes to the resistance of female leadership, discrimination, and a host of other challenges. Women in management positions are therefore held back in terms of exercise of duty and performance.

1.1.3 Telecommunication Industry in Kenya

Telecommunication is communication at a distance by use of technological means. Early technologies included use of smoke signals, signal flags, heliographs, telegraph, radio telephone among others. The telecommunication industry in Kenya has grown tremendously. In the past years communication in Kenya encompassed use of messengers, smoke signals, postal services to a recent rise of satellite phones, desk phones, and mobile phones. For purposes of effectiveness, this study will limit itself to the mobile phone industry.

The mobile phone industry in Kenya has grown over the years beginning at a few thousand subscribers in the 90's to millions of subscribers currently. The types of mobile phone services available have also changed drastically. There are currently four main players in this industry in Kenya; these include Safaricom, Airtel, Yu, Orange/ Telkom Kenya. Licensing of these operators has seen the government make good of its promise to

Kenyans to grow this sector. The overall government objective for this industry is on course as the industry optimizes its contribution to the development of the Kenyan economy, through ensuring availability of efficient, reliable and affordable communication services throughout the country.

1.1.4 Mobile Phone Companies in Kenya

The mobile phone industry in Kenya was transformed by the enactment of the Kenya communications act in 1998. As a result the communications commission of Kenya was established in February 1999. Its function is to license and regulate telecommunications, radio communication and postal services in Kenya. The industry has experienced an extensive growth in the number of subscribers as well as geographic expansion of cellular mobile services in the country (cck.go.ke). Since inception, mobile penetration in Kenya has grown dramatically and stood at 78% as at 31st March 2013 (CCK quarterly sector statistical report January-March 2012 Pg. 6). Much of the growth has come from the expansion of a single company Safaricom, which began as part of the state owned telecommunications monopoly Telkom Kenya but was partially privatized in 1997 and became a public company in 2002 (World Development indicators. The World Bank Group, 2009). Kenya had over 30 million subscribers as at 31st December 2013, with Safaricom enjoying 66.5% market share, followed by Airtel Networks Kenya Limited's 17.6%, while Telkom Kenya, under the brand name Orange, and who formerly gained entry into the market with CDMA technology, but later adopted the GSM technology due to changing technology and market demand, share stood at 7.1%. Econet Wireless, formerly owner of the brand name Yu, and who was the last GSM entrant stood at 8.8% market share. Yu now operates under the umbrella of Essar Group (CCK, 2013).

The Mobile Network Operators have developed new products and services and changed the lives of Kenyans and the rest of the world in leaps and bounds. At some point opportunities were lost through inefficiencies and sheer malpractices and neglect. For instance in 1999 Telkom Kenya Limited had a subscriber base of only 260,000 out of a population of 28,000,000 (a penetration rate of 1%). Mobile telephony has improved the face of communication and changed the basic role of mere communication to include making contacts, interaction and exchange of ideas, mobile banking, mobile money transfer, which have opened up opportunities for previously unbanked Kenyan and internet access among other forms of transmission of business and social information and services.

Kenya's mobile market has changed significantly over the last few years with the entry of the third and fourth Mobile Network Operators (MNOs), Yu and Orange. MNOs' networks coverage now stands at 96%, and intense price competition has seen prices fall by over 70% in the last four years, leading to a significant increase in usage levels in the recent past. The competition in the sector has resulted in Safaricom and Airtel buying out YuMobile in a deal which will see Safaricom buy Essar-owned YuMobile infrastructure and retain about 130 employees in the technical department while Airtel acquires the 2.7 million subscribers by taking over the mobile number prefix, thus allowing the customers to migrate to its network without having to change their identities.

1.2 Research Problem

The advent of globalization and the intensity of competition have changed the way of how business is conducted. This change has influenced the labour market in general and the recruitment of women in particular, as women now play a larger role in the

development of the economy. Therefore, women are entering the labour market and many are starting their own business, and society is gradually accepting women as an economical force (Ghimire, 2006). Now more than ever, women are competing for managerial positions, however, they are limited in their development. The emergence and determined survival of women in high flying jobs today in corporations and organizations depends on their own willingness to confront and fight strong barriers and hurdles that stand their way, some too grave to confront and others less weighty. They range from male chauvinism, corporate cultures/traditions organizational politics among many others. In their quest to climb up the corporate ladder, women are facing many challenges (Evertson and Nesbitt, 2004). Some barrier set up women for defeat; sluggish upward motion that drag them down in their pursuit to progress in their careers. Such pose as huge barricades, tests and trials for women employees.

The mobile service industry is the fastest growing sectors and at the same time witnessing high level of competition. The customers have at the same time become quite enlightened and demand better services than before albeit at a lower prices. This necessitates the involvement of both male and female employees' involvement in decision making so that the companies can compete effectively with other firms. There is still however some deep-rooted mindsets that women are not capable to be placed at the top of corporate ladder. Women in the mobile telephony companies continue to face obstacles in their career advancement as many positions are still dominated by males. An example is Safaricom Limited which has 60:40 women to men ratio in total number of employees. However the number changes as they grow the corporate ladder. The women become less than the men. The percentage of women in leadership from senior to executive

management in Safaricom compared to men is 38:62. The same trend is similar in Airtel where the ratio is 64:36 women to men and 23:77 in senior leadership. Although many females are performing outstandingly as compared to men in the companies, this does not increase women's participation in business world and achieve managerial position, thus the need to undertake the study in order to determine the challenges faced by women in career progression.

International studies that have been undertaken on challenges faced by women in career progression include Ali (2011) study on the challenges facing women in career development. The study established that most of the women employees were dissatisfied with career development programmes and women were discriminated against in career development opportunities. Ming (2012) researched on the relationship of self-efficacy, work family conflict, social support, gender role attitude, role model and career aspiration to top management among women in middle management at the manufacturing line. The study found that self-efficacy; social support, gender role attitude and role model were significantly related to career aspiration. Specifically, self-efficacy and gender role attitude were the most significant antecedents of career aspiration among women in middle management in manufacturing line. Tinklin, Croxford, and Frame (2011) study on barriers to Malaysian women career progression established that gender discrimination, work related experience, family barriers, organizational culture and leadership style were barriers to women progression.

Local studies that have been undertaken on challenges faced by women in career progression include Mwangi (2012) study on challenges facing women in managerial positions at the Standard Group Limited. The study established that glass ceiling, work

life balance and discriminatory culture and myth were the challenges encountered. Njiru (2012) researched on the factors affecting career progression of women at Standard Chartered Bank in Nairobi. The study found out that credibility of fellow staff, management style, chauvinism, organizational structure and organizational culture were noted as factors affecting women progression. Wambua (2013) study on employee perception of the challenges facing women's career growth in Teachers Service Commission Secretariat, Kenya established that work-life balance, favoritism, the leadership style within the commission and organizational politics are the major challenges that moderate the career growth of most female employees. From the studies above, challenges faced by women progression have been undertaken on different sectors but not on the telecommunication sector which is among the fastest growing sectors. This study therefore attempted to fill this gap by answering the question; what are the challenges faced by employees of mobile telephony companies in career progression?

1.3 Research Objective

The objective of the study was to determine the challenges faced by women employees in career progression among the mobile telephony companies in Kenya.

1.4 Value of the Study

Theoretically, this study is important to amend the balance of the study in women career progression in the telecommunication sector as there are limited studies concerning the relationship between women's perception on career barriers and their career progression in telecommunication sector, especially between the components of women's perception on career barriers and career progression. Moreover, this study also presents evidences

for comparison and understanding into perception of women toward career barriers and their mobile telephony industry career progression.

The findings of the study will be important to human resource managers as it helps them to add more insight into factors that inhibit their women employees' career progression. This, in turn would enhance their women employee's developmental opportunities. Moreover, human resource managers can base on this study as a guideline to help them to identify and develop necessary as to help their talented women employees to overcome the barriers in career development. These will allow the human resource managers to optimize the potential of their women employees that will help the organization to retain the talented women and thus enhance its competitiveness. Thus, this study will result greatly benefit human resource managers in term of management of human resource as the organization's most valued asset because the contribution of women employees are valued and recognized.

The findings of the study will also benefit researchers in telecommunication field. The researchers can use this study as guideline for them to develop necessary career strategies that can be used by employer to help women employees minimize or overcome the barriers that are faced in career development.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter is structured based on the research objectives. It reviews the relevant literature available that focuses on the theoretical framework, effectiveness of digital marketing strategies and the effect of digital marketing strategies on performance.

2.2 Theoretical Foundation of the Study

A theoretical framework is a collection of interrelated concepts, like a theory but not necessarily so well worked-out. Theoretical frameworks are obviously critical in deductive, theory-testing sorts of studies. A theoretical framework is used by scientists when performing research studies to formulate a theory. The theoretical framework is a foundation for the parameters, or boundaries, of a study. This study is grounded on Rawls' theory of justice and the social cognitive career theory.

2.2.1 Rawls' theory of justice

Rawls(1995) theory of justice revolves around the adaptation of two fundamental principles of justice, which would, in turn, guarantee a just and morally acceptable society. The first principle guarantees the right of each person to have the most extensive basic liberty compatible with the liberties of others. The second principle states that social and economic positions are to be to everyone's advantage and open to all (Nussbaum, 2010). The two basic principles of justice states that: each person should get an equal guarantee to as many different liberties and as much of those liberties as can be guaranteed to everyone else at the same time. Principle two states that, inequalities in

society are okay only if they are arranged so that the inequalities actually help out the least fortunate persons in society. The inequalities are connected to positions or offices or jobs in society that everyone has an equal opportunity to attain.

Suppose all the political doctrines teach, as some do today, that men and women are fully equal as citizens (Piccard, 2004) then that means, according to the theory, all people must be treated equally not only in such matters as voting and political participation, but must also be treated equally in distributing all primary goods and secondary goods. But that still does not mean that men and women are equal in some ultimate metaphysical sense, though each person possesses an inviolability founded on justice that even the welfare of society as a whole cannot override. Rawls believes that political actors in a liberal society should not directly contradict the views of religions that posit inequalities between men and women. For instance, it was suggested that a Supreme Court of Justice, in an opinion on sex discrimination, should say only that all people are equal as citizens and not that men and women are equal by nature. In other words, there should be no differences except those that can be justified on grounds of efficiency (Piccard, 2004).

This theory is therefore applicable to this study in that it advances that all people are equal as citizens and not that men and women are equal by nature. There should be no differences in recruitment except those that can be justified on grounds of competence. This theory advances that inequalities in society are acceptable only if they are arranged so that they actually help out the least fortunate persons in society. Affirmative action is a practice that redresses inequality in society and is therefore meant to promote justice.

2.2.2 Social Cognitive Career Theory

Social cognitive career theory emphasizes an approach to unify personality and environmental perspectives. By incorporating the predictions of the model of proactive behaviours, and the extended social cognitive career theory model (Lent and Brown, 2006), this study will also explore whether career management behaviours mediate the relationship between proactive personality and career satisfaction. Greater understanding about the mediating mechanisms by which environmental and personality variables impact career satisfaction will contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of career satisfaction and support the development and testing of the extended social cognitive career theory.

Organizational career management is a risk management process (Baruch, 2006). Therefore, examining the relative contribution that social cognitive career theory makes to employee career satisfaction can assist organizations in determining whether investment in supporting employee career development will derive adequate benefits and enable organizations to better design career development strategies to achieve desired outcomes. From an employee perspective, understanding how personality, behavioural and environmental factors function together may offer the opportunity to assist people to become as satisfied with their careers as nature and environmental factors support (Lent and Brown, 2006).

2.3 Challenges of Women Career Progression

Women generally continue to perform primary care-giving to children and dependents while simultaneously juggling the demands of their workforce participation. Their career development issues, concerns, tasks, and responsibilities, molded by the work-family

pressures they experience, may be distinctly different from those of men. Thus, on account of family responsibilities, women's careers may take on forms, continuity and advancement patterns, and directions substantially different from those of men. In this regard, this section looks at the factors affecting the career development of women. It first looks at gender inequality, chauvinism and sexual harassment, organizational structure, the glass ceiling effect and discrimination at the workplace.

2.3.1 Work Life Balance

In a society filled with conflicting responsibilities and commitments, work/life balance has become a predominant issue in the workplace. Work/life Balance of women employees has become an important subject since the time has changed from men earning the family living in today's world where both men and women equally share the responsibility of earning for the betterment of their family life. Hence it is for the betterment of their family life. Ezzedeen and Ritchey (2009) observe that gender role socialization literature shows that men are socialized to give priority to the bread-earner role, whereas women are socialized to give priority to the home maker and motherhood roles. While balancing their work and family roles, women tend to assign greater priorities to, and spend more time in their family responsibilities, independent of their work demands, while men try to trade off family responsibilities against work responsibilities.

Mooney and Ryan (2008) state that the main concerns in the women's perspective were the duration or working time that is required longer than they expected in addition to the organization anticipating its managers to be flexible to the needs of the business. When demands of the job increasingly encroach into family life, women experience conflict

which affects their career outcomes. Black and Gregerson (2009) stated that work-life balance is very difficult for women with young children especially when they try to balance their role as the primary caregiver with additional responsibility in the organization. In other circumstances, women also enhance their personal domain resources by relying on spousal support, for example dividing house responsibilities and taking care of their children. However, in certain cases such couple-level adaptive strategies, even though packaged as a couple's collective decision, do not necessarily promote women's work-life balance (Baker and Mckenzie, 2011).

Unlike male managers, the female managers are faced with the challenges of resolving inevitable conflicts between the traditional female and family roles and the role of managerial leadership Ezzedeen and Ritchey (2009) posit that an aspect of these role conflicts is the problem of balancing time between the traditional family role and the managerial role. Both male and female senior managers are subject to this conflict, but because women traditionally bear the heaviest load of family work in most cultures, men face fewer and different role incongruities and conflicts than women. Women must resolve these conflicts in several contexts: preserving the degrees of career and geographic mobility that the path to top leadership may require sorting priorities at different points in time between careers as one tries to balance their career and their family unit.

2.3.2 Discriminatory Culture

Culture may be seen as one of the subtle forces that influence people's behavior, conduct and even the manner of doing things to a great extent. It implants general ways of conduct and orientations among the members of the society and even at the work place.

Some of the challenges facing women career growth emanate from outside the organizational structures and provinces. Smith and Sheridan (2010) point out the importance of supportive workplace cultures that mitigate the likelihood of sex discrimination. They argue that given an organizational culture that ensures that all genders are treated equally and fairly in all the interactional aspects within the organization, concerns about discriminatory culture would be minimal or not arise at all. They see the organization as the context within which a culture exists and thrives. It is therefore paramount to consider its important influence of employees' experiences especially regarding discrimination across the genders. One possible explanation for this observation would be that as employees perform their roles within an organization, they have to conform to the preexisting ways of doing things as well as the organizational policies and practices.

Mayhew (2013) posits that working women are sometimes subjected to bias because of sex, in spite of numerous laws and regulations that prohibit employment discrimination targeting women. Schinnar (2011) argued that the discriminatory culture may have persisted within organizations due to the persistent practice over time without there being raised a serious concern over the same practice by relevant stakeholders within the workplaces. This may be attributable to arguably, their diminished access to the experience that builds social capital which in many organizations includes access to appropriate education, training and even exposure. As a result, women have continuously faced some considerable degree of discrimination in their quest for their career advancement within organizations.

Petersen, Saporta, and Seidel (2010) noted that despite their increasing numbers, women have tended to enter the workforce in lower-status; lower-paying jobs, and remain clustered in a limited number of conventional careers in recent past. Low-paying traditionally female careers, including administrative support, sales, service, nursing, teaching, social work, and clerical jobs, reflected society's persistent attitudes regarding stereotypical occupational roles for males and females (Watson, Quatman, and Elder, 2012). According to Smith and Sheridan (2010), the exogenous barriers stem from social, political, and cultural factors that mediate the gender role. These factors are not easily affected by the firm, but the firm may accommodate or adjust to these issues in order to have an efficient and productive workforce. In particular, women may have diminished access to the experiences that build social capital which in many organizations includes access to appropriate education. Many jobs and career paths are segmented into those which are feminine and those which are masculine. In society there is a belief that a good mother must give less effort and priority to work demands, she is therefore seen as less committed worker. Furthermore, Ridgeway (2001) added that this biased belief is likely to create barriers to women advancement in the workplace. These barriers make women lack opportunities to present their ideas, therefore reducing their influence over group decisions.

Slow progression of women in management has been blamed on factors internal to the female gender. This means that certain traits and behaviors exhibited by women are not conducive to being promoted. Armstrong (2007) noted that women reported struggling with being able to feel like themselves in leadership roles in which they might have felt like they had to act against deeply held values. For instance, women tend to value

compassion more highly than do men, which can be in direct conflict with a highly competitive culture. Therefore, to be successful in that culture, women may have to act against their own deeply held values. People in organizations also often react negatively to women who are in management positions, because they see their assertive behavior as being counter to their social roles as women (according to society, women are supposed to be caring and supportive of others). Thus, women not only have trouble determining what is expected of them in their roles, but they also have difficulty determining what feedback they receive is biased and what feedback they receive is accurate. This makes it very difficult for women to develop a clear sense of their strengths and weaknesses (Brown and Ridge, 2012).

2.3.3 Stereotyping

Gender stereotyping is a problem that working women must deal with. Stereotypes are shared beliefs held by one group of people about another group of people and are widely known, but oversimplified, descriptions of people from particular social or demographic groups (Heilman, 2012). Gender stereotyping of the managerial role arises when the attributes regarded to be necessary in order to fulfill the role are attributed to one sex. Many companies associate masculine characteristics with success and achievement. These include assertiveness, aggressiveness, and task-oriented leadership abilities (Armstrong, 2007). Other stereotypes of women include the expectation of being modest, quiet, selfless, and nurturing. These simple characteristics may be seen as non-executive material. Entities desire a leader who will execute, take criticism, and do what is best for the company at all cost (Ghimire, 2006).

Gender role stereotypes have major impacts on selection and promotion procedures as well as evaluation of managerial performance. The typical good manager is still described in traditionally masculine terms (Sujatha, 2008). This bias (think manager, think male) can lead to differential treatment of women in more than one way; because they are expected to be less effective managers anyhow. They are expected to want a family and therefore will drop the career path; and because gender role incongruent behavior is generally evaluated more negatively than gender role congruent behavior. Myers and Pringle (2009) analyzed the main barriers to upward mobility faced by women in hierarchical bureaucratic organizations. These are stereotypes which see women as properly in the home rather than the office. Women in periphery functions removed from the core firm limits career opportunity for women. The education systems prepare women for female dominated jobs usually involving short career ladders, women lose out of the political nature of the internal promotion system in hierarchical organizations.

2.3.4The Glass Ceiling

The metaphor of the “glass ceiling” has been used to describe an invisible but very real barrier that prevents women from moving up the career ladder beyond a certain point. According to Brown and Ridge (2012) the glass ceiling is a concept that most frequently refers to barriers faced by women who attempt, or aspire to attain senior positions (as well as higher salary levels) in corporations, government, education and nonprofit organizations Mayroher, Steyrer and Strunk (2011) posit that the scarcity of female leaders is linked to ongoing prejudice and discrimination against women in the workplace. It is observable therefore from works of the above scholars and researchers that the glass

ceiling dilemma is not only an artificial facet but also a systemic constraint against the career progression of women.

Lent, Brown and Hackett (2003) observe that even though the provision of equal opportunities for men and women has been a priority in many countries, large gender differences prevail in competitive high-ranking positions. They note that possible explanations include discrimination and differences in preferences and human capital. Differential movement along job ladders entails comparative advantage, so the ability standard for promotion is higher for women. This implies that more able women will be passed over in favor of less able men. Brown and Ridge (2012) observe that competitive high ranking positions are largely occupied by men, and women remain scarce in engineering and sciences. This imply that in addition to labor market discrimination that exists within organizations and industries, the choices that women make regarding their careers and their career progression initiative does contribute to their actual career state and positions within their organizations.

Heery and Noon (2008) contend that the metaphor of the glass ceiling conveys the idea that although women can see the opportunities and positions at the higher levels of the organizational hierarchy, there is a barrier denying them these positions. The reasons for this barrier can range from outright prejudice (direct discrimination) against women to unintentional discrimination where unnecessary conditions or qualifications are being used to decide on promotions. The glass ceiling may be seen as the barrier of negative attitudes and prejudices that prevent women from moving beyond certain levels in corporate hierarchy. In general, the glass ceiling may be seen to represent the invisible and intangible factors and forces that restrain or bar women from advancing beyond

certain career positions/ limits. These barriers may be effectively handled by a congruent application of efforts by the individual taking the appropriate initiatives, the organization implementing the right policies and practices, as well as the society providing the appropriate orientations within its culture.

2.3.5 Chauvinism and Sexual Harassment

Ilagan-Bian (2004) notes that male chauvinism still accounts for a significant part of the obstacles women faced in the corporate world. There seems to, be no middle ground between these two choices thus resulting in a fragmented sense of their own identity. Gender sensitivity and sexual harassment concerns both men and women. Women generally bear the brunt of male chauvinism as well as sexual harassment. Some women just tolerate it as they find it difficult or embarrassing to speak out, those who do speak out may not get the support and in turn are further victimized or ostracized at work. Issues such as gender bias, gender sensitivity and sexual harassment concern both men and women in working towards a nation that is committed to rights. Sexual harassment stands out as the key contemporary site of gender struggles over gender norms, sexuality, power and gender equality, as well as legal and organizational norms (Metcalf, 2006).

McLaughlina *et al.* (2012) observe that while popular characterizations portray male supervisors harassing female subordinates, power-threat theories suggest that women in authority may be more frequent targets. They argue that men in authority find it easy to seek sexual favors from their subordinates. This may be attributable to the fact that in the organizational set up, these women employees are answerable to the men that they are responsible to, at least, at the work place. McLaughlina *et al.* (2012) further posits that even women in authority are not prone to sexual harassment. They argue that sexual

harassment may also happen to women in power as a way of equalizing against their power conferred to them by their occupational career positions. It is evident that from these observations above, sexual harassment has a great manifestation of the exercise of power by the persons who execute it. Sexual harassment in the workplace is often a distorted effort to women back into their place, to remind them that they are unequal and that they are just women even though they are in the workplace. It allows men to maintain their sense of entitlement and the illusion that the public sphere really belongs to men. It is a way to remind women that they really do not belong in the workplace.

2.3.6 Leadership Style

Adler and Izraeli (2003) noted that the notion that women follow a different path to leadership. In business, they tend to transfer laterally into the most senior positions, building a career in one organization before going to the top of another. They often go around the glass ceiling rather than trying to break through it. Women are different in other aspects. They don't have a desire for power per se, but rather are committed to bettering society. Many are "drafted" or shaped by those who see their potential and they tend to draw their support from the public, not the corporate or political power structure.

Price (2007) contends that the low level of women in management provides a case for special consideration to be given to the development needs of female managers. He argues that a special attention ought to be given to top leadership positions in organizations. He argues that things like the provision of career breaks, refresher training, job-sharing and extended childcare facilities can make a considerable difference in career progress for women. Tinklin *et al.* (2011) identifies three artificial stages in women's careers; viz, joining organizations, establishing competence in management jobs, and

strategies to progress up the management ladder into more senior jobs. They noted that in comparison to men, women learn more from others and from facing up to hardships. Conversely, men say they gain more from assignments, but it seems that men tend to be given more challenging assignments.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The chapter describes the proposed research design, the target population, data collection instruments and the techniques for data analysis.

3.2 Research Design

A research design was a strategic blueprint for the collection, measurement and analysis of data whose choice is dependent on the stage to which knowledge about the research topic has advanced (Sekaran & Bougie, 2010). The study adopted a descriptive cross sectional survey design. A survey was deemed appropriate as it enabled the researcher to collect data by obtaining opinions, attitudes, behaviors, beliefs or answers from selected respondents in order to understand the group or population represented. A descriptive cross sectional study is concerned with determining the frequency with which something occurs or the relationship between variables (Bryman and Bell, 2003). Thus, this approach was appropriate for this study, since the study was intended to collect detailed information through descriptions and was useful for identifying variables.

3.3 Target Population

A population is a large pool of cases of elements from which the researcher draws a sample and results generalized from the drawn sample (Neuman, 2006). A research study's target population should be clearly defined and the unit of analysis should be identified, which is not easy sometimes. The target population consisted of all the units

being studied. The unit of analysis was the entity or who was being analyzed. The population of the study comprised of employees in managerial level in the three mobile companies in Kenya since they are in direct communication with the employees and have in-depth knowledge on the company approach towards career progression of women.

Table 3.1: Population of the study

Company	Population	Percentage
Safaricom	276	45.7
Airtel	157	26.0
Orange	171	28.3
TOTAL	604	100.0

3.4 Sampling Design

Sampling is the act, process, or technique of selecting a suitable sample, or a representative part of a population for the purpose of determining parameters or characteristics of the whole population (Salant and Dillman, 2010). The researcher used stratified random sampling because of ease of classifying the population into strata. The sample comprised 10% from each stratum of the target population. According to (Mugenda and Mugenda, 1999) a sample of 10% was considered representative. This approach was considered appropriate since it ensured a representative sample. The sample from each stratum was picked randomly. This approach was appropriate since it ensured a representative sample.

Table 3.2: Sample size

Company	Population	Respondents (10%)
Safaricom	276	28
Airtel	157	16
Orange	171	17
TOTAL	604	61

3.5 Data Collection

The study used primary data which was collected through self-administered questionnaires. The structured questionnaires were used to collect data. The questionnaires consisted of both open and closed ended questions designed to elicit specific responses for qualitative analysis. The questionnaire comprised of two sections. Section A comprised of demographic information while section B dealt with women career progression challenges.

3.6 Data Analysis

The data collected was analyzed using descriptive statistics (measures of central tendency and measures of variations). Once the data was collected, the questionnaires were edited for accuracy, consistency and completeness. However, before final analysis was performed, data was cleaned to eliminate discrepancies and thereafter, classified on the basis of similarity and then tabulated. The responses were coded into numerical form to facilitate statistical analysis.

Data was analyzed using statistical package for social sciences based on the questionnaires. In particular mean scores, standard deviations, percentages and frequency distribution were used to summarize the responses and to show the magnitude of similarities and differences. Results were presented in tables and figures.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS, RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

The research objective was to establish the challenges encountered by women employees in career progression in mobile telephony industry in Kenya. This chapter presents the analysis, findings and the discussion with regard to the objective. The analysis was presented in mean and standard deviations while the findings were presented in frequency distributions and tables.

4.2 Demographic Information

The demographic information considered in this study included the duration of mobile phone company operation, company ownership structure and number of employees in mobile phone companies. A total of 61 questionnaires were issued out. The completed questionnaires were checked for completeness and consistency. Of the 61 questionnaires distributed, 48 were returned. The returned questionnaires' represented a response rate of 78% and this response rate was deemed to be adequate in the realization of the research objectives. This response rate was adequate for data analysis and conforms to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) stipulation that a response rate of 70% and over was adequate.

4.2.1 Duration of Mobile Phone Company Operation

The duration of mobile phone company operation was important for the study as the companies that have been in existence for a longer duration of time understands the customers' behaviour thus come up with policies that are favourable to both customers and employees. The results are presented in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Duration of Mobile Phone Company Operation

Years	Frequency	Percent
0 – 5	10	20.8
6 – 10	10	20.8
11 – 15	20	41.6
16 – 20	8	16.8
Total	48	100.0

Source: Author (2015)

The results indicate that 41.6% of the mobile phone companies have been in operation for a period ranging between 11-15 years; 20.8% of the companies have been in operation for less than 5 years; another 20.8% of the companies were indicated as having been in operation for between 6 and 10 years while 16.8% of the companies have been in operation for a period of between 16 and 20 years. The results indicate that majority of the mobile phone companies have been in operation for more than 10 years and therefore they understand the challenges that women encounter in career progression in the company and thus put in place measures that support their progression in the company.

4.2.2 Ownership Structure

The respondents were requested to indicate the ownership structure of the mobile phone companies in order to determine the shareholders of the company as shown in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2: Ownership Structure

Ownership Structure	Frequency	Percent
Local	20	41.6
Foreign	17	35.4
Both local and foreign	11	23.0
Total	48	100.0

Source: Author (2015)

The findings in Table 4.2 indicates that 41.6% of the mobile phone companies were locally owned; 35.4% of the companies were indicated as being foreign owned while 23% of the companies were both locally owned and foreign. The results indicate that the ownership of the mobile phone companies differed and therefore the external influence on career progression for different gender differs.

4.2.3 Number of Employees

The respondents were requested to indicate the number of employees in mobile phone companies. The number of employees in the companies indicates the size of the company as presented in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3: Number of Employees

Number of employees	Frequency	Percent
500-1000	8	16.7
1001-2000	24	50.0
Over 2000	16	33.3
Total	48	100.0

Source: Author (2015)

The findings on the number of employees in mobile phone company indicates that 50% of the mobile phone companies have between 1000 and 2000 employees; 33.3% of the mobile phone companies have over 2000 employees while 16.7% of the companies indicated that the number of employees in the companies was 500 to 1000. The results indicate that the numbers of employees in the mobile phone companies were many and therefore there is need for career progression for both genders in order to ensure the employees are committed to the organization although women mostly face more challenges in progression than men.

4.3 Women Employees Career Progression

Women career progression in an organization is important to the organization as they do not only fulfill gender balance but also give women an opportunity to actualize their qualifications and experiences similar to those of their male colleagues. In the study, women employee career progression was analyzed in a five point Likert scale. The range was ‘very low extent’ ≤ 1.5 , ‘Low extent, $1.5 \leq L.E. < 2.5$ ’ Great extent took the scores, $2.5 \leq G.E. < 4.0$ while the scores of very great extent took the scores > 4.0 . A standard

deviation of >0.9 implies a significant difference on the impact of the variable among respondents.

Table 4.4: Women Employees Career Progression

Women Employees Career Progression	Mean	Std. Deviation
Work related experience is a valuable asset to woman when it comes to promotion	4.0714	.2672
Mentoring help woman in their career progression	3.9348	.5891
Self-improvement in related industry will help in career progression	4.0261	.7319
Work related experience plays an important role in a woman career progression compared to men	3.7857	.4258
Man and woman with similar work related experience normally are given same promotion opportunity	2.8714	1.3280

Source: Author (2015)

From the results, women career progression is influenced by work related experience which is a valuable asset to woman when it comes to promotion (M=4.0714). The respondents further indicated that self-improvement in related industry help in career progression (M=4.0261) and that mentoring help woman in their career progression (M=3.9348). The low standard deviation variation indicates that the respondents were in agreement on the influence of the factors on women career progression. In addition, the respondents said that work related experience plays an important role in a woman career progression compared to men (M=3.7857).

The respondents disagreed that men and women with similar work related experience normally are given same promotion opportunity (M=2.8714). The high standard deviation of 1.3280 indicates that the respondents were not in agreement on existence of equality in promotion as a result of similar experience. From the results women career progression is influenced by experience, mentoring and self-improvement whereas similar work related experience among the men and women in the organization did not occur to influence women employees' career progression.

4.4 Factors Affecting Women Progression

The progression of women within an organization in accordance with assessments of organizational needs and the performance, potential and preferences of individual members of the enterprise is shaped by several factors that inhibit their progress.

4.4.1 Work life balance

Work life balance for women involves balancing the family duties and work related duties and this was important for the study in order to determine the extent to which it affects their progression in their places of work.

Table 4.5: Work life balance

Work life balance	Mean	Std. Deviation
Balancing their role as the primary caregiver with additional responsibility in the organization affect women progression in the company	4.1682	.2672
Women in the company do not like working for long hours	4.0793	.5547
Women in the company give more priority to their family responsibilities than their work demands	3.9284	.6629
Self- improvement in related industry will help in career progression	3.8571	.5345
Women opt out of careers to build families and attend to family responsibilities	3.8571	.3631
Women in the company are not flexible to the needs of the business as they focus on family matters	3.7857	.6992

Source: Author (2015)

The results indicate that the respondents were in agreement that balancing the role of primary caregiver with additional responsibility in the organization affect women progression in the company (M=4.1682). They further indicated that women do not like working for long hours (M=4.0793) and women giving more priority to their family responsibilities than their work demands (M=3.9284). The least work life factor that affect women progression was indicated as women being non-flexible to the needs of the business as they focus on family matters (M=3.7857). The results show that women progression was affected by work life as they tend to concentrate more on building their families through giving more priority to family matters than the employment tasks. Unlike male managers, the female managers are faced with the challenges of resolving inevitable conflicts between the traditional female and family roles and the role of managerial leadership. Both male and female senior managers are subject to this conflict,

but because women traditionally bear the heaviest load of family work in most cultures, men face fewer and different role incongruities and conflicts than women.

4.4.2 Discriminatory Culture

The culture in the organization that discriminate one gender affects the progression of that gender and therefore the study looked at the extent to which culture in mobile telecommunication companies affects women progression.

Table 4.6: Discriminatory Culture

Discriminatory Culture	Mean	Std. Deviation
Employees in the company often react negatively to women in management positions as compared to men	3.7143	1.2666
Assertive behavior of women in the company makes them to be seen as being counter to their social roles as women	3.4286	1.2225
The women traits and behaviors exhibited are not conducive to being promoted in the company	3.3571	1.0271
The company has supportive workplace cultures that mitigate the likelihood of sex discrimination	2.2143	1.1883
My organization has a different promotion standard for evaluating a man and a woman	1.6429	.7449

Source: Author (2015)

The above findings shows that in mobile telecommunication firms, employees react negatively to women in management positions as compared to men (M=3.7143). They further moderately agreed that assertive behavior of women in the company makes them to be seen as being counter to their social roles as women (M=3.4286) and that women traits and behaviors exhibited are not conducive to being promoted (M=3.3571). The respondents disagreed that the firms has supportive workplace cultures that mitigate the likelihood of sex discrimination (M=2.2143) and that the firms have different promotion

standard for evaluating a man and a woman ($M=1.6429$). The more than 1.0 standard deviation variation indicates that the influence of culture on women progression varied to a great extent among the respondents. The results shows that the culture being practiced in the firms was not conducive for women progression as they are viewed differently when they hold management positions and that lack of sex discrimination culture gives room for gender discrimination. However, the respondents appreciated the positive steps being spearheaded by the management in reversing this culture by availing the same opportunities to women in leadership positions and adoption of affirmative action on some of the managerial positions.

4.4.3 Stereotyping

Stereotyping is the beliefs being held by one group of people about another group of people and are widely known, but oversimplified. Stereotyping was implicated as a major culprit in instances where female authority was demeaned and devalued. The study thus was important for the study in order to establish the influence of stereotyping on women career progression.

Table 4.7: Stereotyping

Stereotyping	Mean	Std. Deviation
Limited access to informal interaction networks in the company has hindered women career growth	3.9351	.9749
Female employees in the company are respected as career women by their male colleagues	3.7857	.5789
Women who are assertive are viewed negatively in my organization	3.5935	.9749
Corporate practices at the company favor recruitment, retention and promotion of males over females	2.9538	1.3587
The women in the company are seen as being modest, quiet, selfless, and nurturing	2.5392	.8548
Gender role stereotypes have an impact on evaluation and promotion procedures in my organization	2.5000	1.0190

Source: Author (2015)

The results in Table 4.7 show that in the mobile firms, limited access to informal interaction networks in the company has hindered women career growth (M=3.9351); respect for women as career women by their male colleagues (M=3.7857) and that women who are assertive are viewed negatively in my organization (M=3.5935). The respondents disagreed that women in the company are seen as being modest, quiet, selfless, and nurturing (M=2.5392) and that gender role stereotypes have an impact on evaluation and promotion procedures in my organization (M=2.50). The results show that in the mobile phone companies stereotyping has resulted in limited access to informal interaction networks by women thus affecting their progression.

4.4.4 Glass Ceiling

The existence of glass ceiling in an organization hinders employees from attaining senior positions. This study sought to establish whether glass ceiling affected women career progression.

Table 4.8: Glass Ceiling

Glass Ceiling	Mean	Std. Deviation
Choices made by women regarding their careers affect their career progression in the company	3.9286	.2672
Women in the company are prejudiced and discriminated in the workplace	3.3429	1.1673
In the company, there is equal opportunity for men and women in all employment cadres	2.1753	1.3008
Unnecessary conditions or qualifications are being used to decide on promotions and lock out women	1.5714	.8516

Source: Author (2015)

From the findings, the respondents indicated that choices made by women regarding their careers affect their career progression (M=3.9286). The standard deviation of .2672 indicates that the respondents were in agreement on the effect on women career progression. The respondents further indicated that women in the company are prejudiced and discriminated in the workplace (M=3.3429). The respondents disagreed that there was equal opportunity for men and women in all employment cadres (M=2.1752) and that unnecessary conditions or qualifications are being used to decide on promotions and lock out women (M=1.5714). The results indicate that glass ceiling in the

telecommunication firm's affect women progression as they are discriminated and at the same time there is no equal opportunity for men and women in all employment cadres. This imply that in addition to labor market discrimination that exists within organizations and industries, the choices that women make regarding their careers and their career progression initiative does contribute to their actual career state and positions within their organizations.

4.4.5 Chauvinism and Sexual Harassment

Male chauvinism and sexual harassment affects women employees as it intimidates women into taking a back seat in day to day activities for they fear victimization or ostracized at work.

Table 4.9 : Chauvinism and sexual harassment

Chauvinism and sexual harassment	Mean	Std. Deviation
Male chauvinism hinders women progression in the company	3.7429	1.1673
Women communication style affects their promotion in the organization	3.6192	1.3008
Women in the company are hesitant to work with male colleagues because they may sexually harass or underestimate them on the basis of gender	2.1429	1.5118
In the company men in authority find it easy to seek sexual favors from their subordinates	1.9286	.2672
Women in the company are sexually harassed	1.5714	.8516

Source: Author (2015)

The results show that in the mobile telephony companies male chauvinism hinders women progression in the company (M=3.7429) and that women communication style affects their promotion in the organization (M=3.6192). The respondents disagreed that women in the company are hesitant to work with male colleagues because they may sexually harass or underestimate them on the basis of gender (M=2.1429); men in authority find it easy to seek sexual favors from their subordinates (M=1.9286) and that women in the company are sexually harassed (M=1.5714). The chauvinistic technique of delaying the promotion of women into senior management was most detrimental to female managers' career progress. When promotion fails to materialize, some become demotivated, while others lose hope and move out of organizations.

4.4.6 Leadership Style

Leadership is the key to employee commitment and increased productivity. Leadership style is very crucial during employee development and this can be achieved through participation by all groups and individuals. In the study leadership style was important in order to determine its influence on women career progression.

Table 4.10: Leadership Style

Leadership style	Mean	Std. Deviation
Lack of technical expertise contributes to underrepresentation of women in senior leadership positions in the company	4.2857	.7262
There is acceptance of women as supervisors and managers	3.3571	1.1507
The management of the company are committed to promoting gender equality	2.6429	.6333
There is a great deal of resistance to promote women to positions of higher responsibility even though qualified	2.3143	.9944

The findings strongly acknowledged that lack of technical expertise contributes to underrepresentation of women in senior leadership positions in the company (M=4.2857). The respondents further indicated that there is acceptance of women as supervisors and managers (M=3.3571). The respondents disagreed that management of the company was committed to promoting gender equality (M=2.6429) and that there was a great deal of resistance to promote women to positions of higher responsibility even though qualified (2.3143).

4.5 Discussion

The challenge of women career progression is symptomatic of every known existing organization, and this is a matter of concern, at least when considered in the context of the equal opportunities discourse. Historically, females and males have had different jobs and experiences in almost every society. Everywhere in the world, the workplace is segregated by sex. Gender occupational segregation is one reason why women are not

found in significant numbers at the apex of organizations. Notwithstanding the fact that women are making substantial progress within the ranks of management, they are still largely prevented from accessing power and influence at the highest levels.

The study established that by balancing the role of primary caregiver with additional responsibility in the organization, women disliking work for long hours, giving more priority to their family responsibilities than their work demands and women being non-flexible to the needs of the business as they focus on family matters affected women progression in the mobile phone companies. The findings of the study was in agreement with Black and Gregerson (2009) findings that work-life balance is very difficult for women with young children especially when they try to balance their role as the primary caregiver with additional responsibility in the organization. When demands of the job increasingly encroach into family life, women experience conflict which affects their career outcomes.

The research also made a pertinent observation that jobs are generally seen as masculine or feminine. In this context, women's predispositions are antithetical to managerial roles since they lack the traits associated with management, that is, ambition, aggression, competitiveness, and authority. The result is that women are not comfortable in conventionally defined roles and some men have trouble-accepting women as managers. It was noted that jobs are generally seen as masculine or feminine and that job applicants are seen as more or less suitable for different jobs, depending upon the applicant's sex. Liberal feminists explain this inequality in terms of differential opportunities between these sexes. This can be attributed to the patriarchal nature of society that has been transferred from wider society into organizations. O'Donnell (1993) supports this notion

by arguing that the organizational culture is usually a mirror of the dominant culture in mainstream society. Because female employees found themselves working in a masculine environment, they felt the pressure to adopt a more masculine role in an attempt to become more credible.

Most recurring challenges faced by women in the telecommunication sector are those posed by the context within which women operate. Women career progressions are stereotyped as a male domain and, as part of gender conformity; men are more likely to pursue managerial oriented tasks compared with their female counterparts. Most respondents pointed out that the realm of management was generally male in orientation insofar as it was premised on masculinity assumptions and customs, such as aggressiveness, selfishness, discrimination, and domination.

The study established that in the mobile telephony firms women encounter limited access to informal interaction networks hindered women career growth and that women who are assertive are viewed negatively in my organization. The results concurred with Heilman (2011) study which indicates that the scarcity of women at upper levels of organizations is a consequence of gender bias in evaluations. He argues that being competent did not ensure that a woman would advance to the same organizational level as a performing man.

While the presence of women in management ushered in some feelings of hope and recognition of women's capabilities and acceptance of women leadership in society, collective assumptions and male customs, such as aggressiveness, domination, discrimination, and selfishness, which seem to inform and dictate practice in

management, implied that women operate below the men. Owing to the fact that male chauvinism resists adamantly, the autonomous status of women in relation to career progress, managerial women are likely to face a multiplicity of challenges which might include resistance, strained social relations, devaluation of assertive female behavior, sexual harassment, career stagnation, and isolation. Female managers might have to work twice as hard as their male counterparts and contend with glass ceiling. This concept of 'glass ceiling' refers to the various barriers that prevent qualified women from advancing upward in their organizations into management positions. For the few lucky ones who successfully forced their way into management positions, they might also be discriminated against. Heery and Noon (2008) contend that the metaphor of the glass ceiling conveys the idea that although women can see the opportunities and positions at the higher levels of the organizational hierarchy, there is a barrier denying them these positions. The reasons for this barrier can range from outright prejudice (direct discrimination) against women to unintentional discrimination where unnecessary conditions or qualifications are being used to decide on promotions.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The chapter is outlined into summary of the findings, conclusions, recommendations, limitations of the study and suggestions for further research.

5.2 Summary of Findings

The study findings were that majority of the mobile phone companies sampled had been in operation for more than ten years with an ownership structure that is majorly locally owned. In addition, most of these mobile telephony firms had more than 1000 employees and this was explained by the extensive coverage of their services in Kenya and in the East African region. With this high number of employees, it is imperative that the mobile telephony firms need to come up with an effective career progression policies that will be guide their operations and also not affect the performance of some gender of their staff.

Women have become key players in globally developed economies due to changes over recent years. The study found out that women career progression was as a result of work related experience, self-improvement and mentoring. Work life balance was found to have hindered women progression. Balancing the role of primary caregiver with additional responsibility in the organization, women disliking working for lone hours and women giving more priority to their family responsibilities than their work demands were found to have affected women progression in the mobile telephony firms.

The persistent stereotyping that associates management with maleness contributes to the resistance of female leadership, discrimination, and a host of other challenges. Owing to the fact that male chauvinism resists adamantly, the autonomous status of women in relation to career progress, women are likely to face a multiplicity of challenges which might include resistance, strained social relations, devaluation of assertive female behavior, sexual harassment, career stagnation, and isolation. People in organizations also often react negatively to women career progression, because they see their assertive behavior as being counter to their social roles as women. Thus, women not only have trouble determining what is expected of them in their roles, but they also have difficulty determining what feedback they receive is biased and which one is accurate.

5.3 Conclusion

Women are a very important component in the society. Their contribution to the society, in terms of reproducing the society, biologically and socially, as well as their contribution to the economy, directly or indirectly, should not be overlooked. This study revealed that women in the mobile telephony sector indeed contend with a host of challenges which, if not interrogated and addressed would militate against the attainment of organizational goals. Gender discrimination is a serious impediment to the career progression of women, in general, and national development, in particular. This needs to be done away with by having a high assessment of women's values and mainstreaming gender issues into organizational policies so as to reform some aspects of organizational culture. This could help the corporate culture to create conducive environments, which minimize its potential of being a performance barrier while maximizing the culture's potential of enhancing performance.

The incorporation of women, in all spheres of development, is a noble idea and right step towards fulfilling the major tenets of sustainable development, especially its requirement for gender parity as espoused in the Beijing protocol of 1995 and the two thirds gender rule in the recently enacted constitution. The holding, in relation to gender state that all human beings are equal, must live and be respected equally with equitable access to all resources and opportunities that society offers. This calls for the creation of equal opportunities for both women and men at all levels of decision making, more importantly in the upper echelons of organizations. In addition, the study concludes that the mobile firms does not encourage a balance between work and family responsibilities on employees' lives and consequently as it is felt that this doesn't allow enough room for female employees to attend to their office duties. The difficulty of balancing work and family life also results in a higher degree of stress related, among other things, to the feeling of not having enough time.

5.4 Limitations of the Study

It should be noted that these limitations are acknowledged and they do not divert the significance of findings. They merely provide platforms for future studies.

Larger samples tend to generate better outcome and minimize the error probability. The sample size of only employees working in the companies' managerial position may be insufficient to give overall perspective of women working in the mobile telephony sector. The result drawn from this study, therefore may have limited application i.e., it cannot be assumed to provide information, capable of generalization over other regions and could

have regional biasness, but surely the broad similarities specific to a particular gender, will provide some insight to the study.

The study focused only on six factors that affect women career progression in the mobile telecommunication sector. However, there could be other important barriers which could also have the impact on women career progression or developmental opportunities, which were not considered in this study. The study used only questionnaires to collect data, but researcher admits that the use of qualitative data through interview can help the researcher gain more additional data or information from respondents.

5.5 Recommendations

This study recommends that all female employees become or remain solvent and sovereign by maintaining their competence and professionalism in order that they deconstruct male chauvinism in organizations. Having noted that, stereotyping has been largely implicated as the prime cause of the challenges faced by female employees. This study recommends that organizations incorporate the art of appreciation and acknowledgements in their value systems so that stereotyping is done away with. It is important to understand that the experience of women in organizations situated in an unequal society have not been pleasant. This necessitates societal restructuring and, for this to be effective, meaningful, and sustainable, there is need to go back to basics. This study recommends that the adult generation embrace a paradigm shift in the socialization of children. Rather than perpetuating inequality through the separate spheres ideology, it would be preferred if they were taught that boys and girls are equal. This is the only hope for a cultural transformation.

The job environment in Kenya is very competitive and with the rising literacy levels women occupy more senior management positions in the civil service. There is need for policies and programs that deal with sensitizing employees against gender role stereotypes and blocked promotions which are still the norm in the civil service. Women should be encouraged to pursue management as a career by availing in service training and opportunities for women to further their education. Women should be given special training on how to deal with the challenges that are unique to their gender so that they can develop their careers and rise to management levels and to the levels of senior management.

Organization should give chances to women in their organization so they can gain precious experience that can help them advance further. Job related knowledge such as ability and skill gain from doing a particular job will be develop if organization were to give them a chance. Furthermore working women should take opportunity of learning new skill when given the chances and not hesitate. This will not only boost employee morale but also improve the organization as a whole.

There is need for the management of the mobile telephony firms to have a critical review of their organizations and how the female employee is treated and fits into the current organization structures and culture. A broad strategic campaign to change the attitudes in the workplaces towards women is also required. The sensitization should aim at emphasizing the importance of addressing the stereotypes on women managers and leaders. The study also recommends that as a first step toward achieving gender equality and promoting the career progression of women, organizations can encourage the hiring,

retention, and advancement of women by adopting work/life policies such as daycare centers for new mothers, work adjustments hours for new mothers to mention a few.

5.6 Suggestion for Further Research

The study was undertaken on the challenges encountered by women employees in career progression among the mobile telephony firms in Kenya. Further research need to be undertaken on how women can overcome the challenges that they face in career development. The focus should be on women in top management and how they have been able to overcome the challenges to career development and occupy such positions.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

University of Nairobi

School of Business Studies

Dear Respondent,

I am a postgraduate student in the School of Business Studies, University of Nairobi, conducting a human resource research paper on challenges faced by women in career progression in mobile telephony industry in Kenya.

In order to undertake the research, you have been selected to form part of the study. This letter is therefore to request your assistance giving me information to the attached interview guide. This information will be treated with strict confidence and is purely for academic purposes. A copy of the final report will be availed to you upon request.

Your assistance and co-operation in this exercise will be highly appreciated.

Yours faithfully,

Lucy Wanjiru Ngunyi

MBA student

APPENDIX II: QUESTIONNAIRE

Please give answers in the spaces provided and tick (✓) in the box that matches your response to the questions where applicable.

Section A: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

1. Name of the mobile phone company (Optional).....

2. How long has your mobile phone company been in operation?

- a) Under 5 years () b) 6 – 10 years ()
- c) 11 – 15 years () d) 16 – 20 years ()
- e) Over 25 years ()

3. What is the company's ownership structure?

- a) Local ()
- b) Foreign ()
- c) Both local and foreign ()

4. How many employees are there in your mobile phone company?

- a) Less than 499 ()
- b) 500 - 1000 ()
- c) Above 1000 ()

Section B: Women Employees Career Progression

5. To what extent do you agree with the following regarding women progression in your company? Use 1- Very low extent, 2-Low extent, 3-Moderate extent, 4- Great extent, 5- Very great extent

Women progression	1	2	3	4	5
Work related experience plays an important role in a woman career progression compared to men					
Work related experience is a valuable asset to woman when it comes to promotion					
Man and woman with similar work related experience normally are given same promotion opportunity					
Previous work experience is a requirement for woman to be promoted					
Mentoring help woman in their career progression					
Self improvement in related industry will help in career progression					

6. To what extent do you agree with the following factors as having affected women progression in your company? Use 1-Strongly disagree, 2-Disagree, 3-Moderate extent, 4-Agree and 5-Strongly disagree.

Work life balance	1	2	3	4	5
Women in the company give more priority to their family responsibilities than their work demands					
Women in the company do not like working for long hours					
Women in the company are not flexible to the needs of the business as they focus on family matters					
Balancing their role as the primary caregiver with additional responsibility in the organization affect women progression in the company					
Self- improvement in related industry will help in career progression					
Women opt out of careers to build families and attend to family responsibilities					
Discriminatory Culture					
The company has supportive workplace cultures that mitigate the likelihood of sex discrimination thus hindering career progression					
Employees in the company often react negatively towomen in management positions as compared to men					
My organization has a different promotion standard for evaluating a man and a woman					
The women in the company traits and behaviors exhibited are not					

conducive to being promoted					
Assertive behavior of women in the company makes them to be seen as being counter to their social roles as women					
Stereotyping					
The women in the company are seen as being modest, quiet, selfless, and nurturing					
Gender role stereotypes have an impact on evaluation and promotion procedures in my organization					
Women who are assertive are viewed negatively in my organization					
Limited access to informal interaction networks in the company has hindered women career growth					
Female employees in the company are respected as career women by their male colleagues					
Corporate practices at the company favor recruitment, retention and promotion of males over females					
Glass Ceiling					
Women in the company are prejudiced and discriminated in the workplace					
In the company, there is equal opportunity for men and women in all employment cadres					

Choices made by women regarding their careers affect their career progression in the company					
Unnecessary conditions or qualifications are being used to decide on promotions and lock out women					
The company policies and practices contribute to women discrimination					
Chauvinism and sexual harassment					
Male chauvinism hinders women progression in the company					
Women communication style affects their promotion in the organization					
In the company men in authority find it easy to seek sexual favors from their subordinates					
Women in the company are sexually harassed					
Women in the company are hesitant to work with male colleagues because they may sexually harass or underestimate them on the basis of gender					
Other women employees welcome women advancement in the company					
Leadership style					
Lack of technical expertise contributes to underrepresentation of women in senior leadership positions in the company					

The management of the company are committed to promoting gender equality					
There is a great deal of resistance to promote women to positions of higher responsibility even though qualified					
There is acceptance of women as supervisors and managers					