THE CELLPHONE GENDER DIVIDE: ANALYSIS OF THE USES AND GRATIFICATIONS OF THE CELLPHONE AMONG THE KIANDUTU SLUM WOMEN RESIDENTS, THIKA, KIAMBU COUNTY IN KENYA
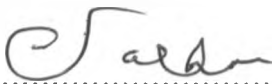
BY

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K50/76103/2009

A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF MASTER OF ARTS IN COMMUNICATION STUDIES OF THE SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM AND MASS COMMUNICATION UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

2012

DECLARATION

I certify that this research project is my original work and has not been presented to any examination body before.

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This research project has been submitted with my approval as the supervisor on behalf of the School of Journalism, University of Nairobi.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

To God Be All the Glory. I recognize that it is God's grace that has enabled me do everything in my life, without God I can do nothing. I believe our future is more blessed than our past. Amen.

I am deeply indebted to many people whose support was instrumental in the completion of my project. I give special acknowledgement to my supervisor Dr. Tom Kwanya a real gentleman always friendly yet firm and professional. I appreciate his immense advice and patience from the beginning to the end of my project.

I greatly appreciate the love and support from my much-loved husband Eng. Francis Muriithi Mwangi who has always stood with me. I thank our children Steve Mwangi, Martin Kibet and Trevor Maina for always encouraging me.

I also recognize the important role of my late father John Kiptalam who encouraged me to seek excellence as well as my mother Mary Toroitich for her undying love.

I am also grateful to my research assistant Douglas Omwenga for his support with handling the data as well as Helen Wairimu for her invaluable assistance in manoeuvering Kiandutu slums.

My former colleagues Joseph Muuthuri, Chacha Shadrack, and Lameck Kimani, you are my true friends, thank you for keeping track of my progress and encouraging me to finish.

To all of those who in any special way gave me support I remain humbly grateful.

All errors and omissions, views and interpretation however remain mine and should not be attributed to any one of the above mentioned persons.

DEDICATION

This project is foremost dedicated to my wonderful family: Muriithi, Mwangi, Kibet and Maina whom I adore.

Secondly: to all the women in Kenya for their amazing resilience and strength.

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CCK	Communication Commission of Kenya
DFID	Department for International Development
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women
CGAP	Consultative Group to Assist the Poor
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HDI	Human Development Index
SIM	Subscriber Identity Module
SMS	Short Message Services
MTSO	Mobile telephone switching office
PC	Personal computer
SPSS	Statistical Packages for Social Sciences
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programm
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to investigate the uses and gratifications of the mobile phone by slum women of Kiandutu and to determine whether this communication device contributes to the gender divide there. The study was conducted in Kiandutu slums, Thika, Kiambu County. Using both quantitative and qualitative methods the study used the survey approach to collect data through questionnaires which were distributed to 100 respondents. Critical Theory paradigm was used for the study. The study was also guided by the uses and gratification theory to understand the needs and gratifications of the slum women. The research design was descriptive and the data analysis method used in the study was the thematic analysis method.

The findings of the study revealed that although women in Kiandutu slums do have mobile phones there is a gender divide. The women use them mainly for calling and some little financial transactions as well as short message service. The access to phones is low and the women do not entirely understand how to use them. The women therefore cannot fully benefit from the wide array of features offered on the phone and therefore their gratification is poor. Reasons for this include poverty, low literacy levels, and apathy towards the mobile phones due to feelings that this device is suited and meant more for the men. It can as a result be concluded that unsatisfactory access, use and benefit from the mobile phones in Kiandutu slum is a contributory factor to the gender divide. Solutions to this challenge could be for the relevant government ministries and the various development bodies to avail training, cheap loans to women groups and individuals in respect to mobile phones. Telecentres or mobile phone booths could also be set up. Women must be empowered in order to be equal partners in communication to reduce the gender divide. More research is also needed on this subject to fill the existing literature gap.

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CHAPTER ONE - INTRODUCTION

1.0   INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the background of the study, statement of the problem, purpose or objectives of the study, the justification and significance of the study, limitations as well as definitions and meanings of key terms. The following background gives an overview of key areas of importance.

Women are described as the missed potential or enormous unexploited potential to development, according to the World Bank (2000:24). "Africa has huge potential and its economies can perform much better because it has hidden growth reserves in its people – including the potential of its women, who now provide more than half of the region's labor but lack equal access to education and factors of production" (World Bank 2000:12). Today the mobile phone is an important communication devise and factor of production. It being a basic gadget for communication has permeated every aspect of life and is no longer a luxury but a basic necessity. Therefore it is important to study the uses it is put into, the needs it satisfies as well as the important aspect of the gender disparities. Such a study is likely to generate solutions on how best mobile phones can be used to promote the wellbeing of a society.

The digital divide is a common discussion in scholarly discourses and according to Mack (2001:xiii) basically refers to the technological gaps between the haves and have-nots. Technology is drawing some parts of the world closer together but as it continues to advance it is leaving others in an ever increasing gap. The fact that nation states have varying levels of technology whether the difference, "divide" is economic, infrastructural, usability, empowerment or gender, leads to negative difference. Fidler (1997: 264) too notes that whereas previously people spoke of the haves and have- nots in terms of financial wealth, now it is often in terms of information access. Perrons (2001:193) suggests that the digital divide is as a result of history and is not of a recent origin. The

gap can be attributed to the societal partitions that exist such as socioeconomic standing, race, ethnicity, class, social or professional status, gender, and patriarchy. Black Americans may blame the digital divide on racism, South Africans may blame it on apartheid, and the other Africans may blame it on colonialism whilst Kenyans even on historical injustices; so the gender divide is then created. The disparities between men and women constitute the gender divide. This research concentrates on the gender divide in relation to communication.

In cognizance of the fact that the gender divide does exist in the communication sphere Girard (2003:11) portends that it exists because communication technology is never gender neutral and is critically responsible in gender relationships, whether reinforcing traditional roles, introducing socio-cultural or economic changes. In respect to their human rights, the attainment of democratic participation as well as equal voice women's access to information sources and communication channels is crucial. This is in order for them to compete equally and thus be relevant in the public sphere.

Kwanya (2009:20) acknowledges that society derides the contribution of women in the development of science and technology and perceptions and stereotypes are rife about inability or "fear" that are prejudicial towards women. Kwanya (2009:21) goes further to recognize women such as Ada Byron, Grace Hopper, Florence Seriki, Njeri Rionge, Dr. Catherine Adeya and Carol Sawe who have immensely contributed towards technology.

The Constitution of Kenya recognizes women as sovereign individuals, equally not through their male kin or spouses. But in regard to basic communication technology, are women marginalized by gender? For a society to achieve better lives nowadays, the development of women in technology is paramount. This cannot be gainsaid and to achieve this communication has to take the center stage; taking cognizance of the fact that the most basic communication tool is the mobile telephone.

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Urban slum environments such as Kiandutu have rampant poverty. Most women in Kiandutu although poor most likely have had some contact with the cellphones, but it is necessary to understand realistically through scientific research their relationships to these cellphones; needs, access or lack thereof, inability to fully utilize or apathy towards because then solutions can be sought to reduce inequalities.

1.1 BACKGROUND TO PROBLEM

The cellphone or mobile phone is one of the most successful communication devices ever invented and has become a fundamental part of everyday living. Further Grant & Meadows (2002:307) state that mobile telephones are today so ubiquitous or ever-present that it is difficult to imagine life without them. Even walking down streets in all but the remotest parts of the world will include seeing someone using a mobile phone. In a brief time period they have become an indispensable tool for conducting business, saving lives in emergencies through the rapid response of communicating to and from almost anywhere in the world. The authors posit that through the cellphone time waiting; say in airports, riding in trains or queues "...has been transformed from a nuisance to a productive time."

According to Mack (2001:32) "the cellphone revolution" appears to have infiltrated and crossed boundaries such as geographical, race and class of modern society. Therefore the cellphone has revolutionized society, benefiting people globally in many ways as seen by the subsequent examples given by the author. The ability to easily communicate with people anywhere, anytime instantly is valuable to all sectors of society because it eases the logistical complexities of life making them manageable, the cited author portends. Other uses for mobile phones are the Short Message Services (SMS). Mobile phones are also used as entertainment devices offering such functions as radio, music, camera, access to the internet, Personal Digital Assistant (PDA) utilities as well as video conference ability. Consumers continue to use mobile phones to pay for goods and

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services through such financial transactions as mobile money transfers (M-Pesa), online shopping, banking, to hold money, ticketing, loyalty point holding and even for medical record keeping among other uses.

Advances in this technology have been in incremental terms, and have greatly changed the world. Regrettably though, on the transverse side Girard and Siochru (2003:18) argue that women are particularly marginalized because the majority has no access to such modern means of communication. Additionally this means that women are in deepest end of the digital divide and for gender advocates this disadvantage of the gender divide continue to be their main message. These growing inequalities continue to widen putting a social and economic strangulation further on such underprivileged groups. Women in slum environments are one such disadvantaged set. There is little research concerning the reality of women and technology in slum environments in Africa.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Various initiatives have been rolled out with regard to the use of the mobile phone, such as those aimed at providing financial services to people who do not have the access to the traditional banking systems. However, there is comparatively little scholarly research that explores cellphones in relation to the gender divide and none in this respect has addressed their effect on the socio-economic status of poor women in urban slums such as Kiandutu in Thika, Kiambu County in Kenya.

This research calls attention to this knowledge gap as can be seen from scarce literature. It emphasizes the need for research focusing on this topic.

Implication of the study is to assess to what extent do Kiandutu slum women use and benefit from mobile phones. The research will determine the media's missed opportunities through possible undeserving this important segment of its audience.

Kiandutu, an informal settlement presents a unique environment due to its location on the peripheries of Thika town as well as the fact that the population is of low socio-economic status therefore a marginalized segment of the media's audience. Kiandutu has rampant poverty, insecurity and access into the slum is a challenge due to poor infrastructure. The inhabitants are from different ethnic backgrounds.

1.3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Aims and objectives are the indicators that reflect the intention and direction of the study articulate Kombo et al (2006:36). Goals or aims are also referred to as long-term objectives and written as statements that the research aspires to finally accomplish. Objectives are also the purpose of the study but differ from the aims due to being specific and measurable terms. Usually aims are written in general terms that are not easily measurable. Thus, basically the aim is what the researcher wants to achieve and the objectives describes how they are going to achieve these aims.

The study seeks to examine the role the cellphone has played in the lives of women in Kiandutu slums. It further aims to ascertain whether the cellphone has contributed to the further marginalization of Kiandutu slum women. Notably the study concentrates on the communication aspect of the uses and gratifications achieved by women through cellphone use. The specific objectives of the study are:

a) To establish whether women in Kiandutu use cellphones and for what purpose;

b) To investigate what features of the cellphone are most beneficial for the women in Kiandutu;

c) To explore the benefits women in Kiandutu have realized by using cellphones; and

d) To ascertain whether the cellphone perpetuates gender divide in relation to communication.

1.3.1   Research Questions

a)   Do women in Kiandutu use cellphones and for what purpose?

b)   What features of the cellphone are most beneficial for the women in Kiandutu?

c)   Have the women in Kiandutu benefited from cellphones and, if so, how?

d)   Does the cellphone perpetuate gender divide in respect to communication?

1.3.2 Hypothesis

The study proceeded on the hypothesis that Kiandutu women face marginalization in usage and gratification of the cellphone due to gender. This research study is based on the following assumptions:

- Cellphone use is desirable in order to achieve gender equality and parity;

- Women in Kiandutu slums face gender divide; and

- Sample respondents of Kiandutu slums will be willing to answer questions for data collection purposes.

1.4 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Fourie (2007:103) explains that theories teach us how to describe, interpret, understand, evaluate and predict phenomena, as well as giving us an overview of development in the discipline. Therefore it is a set of scientific and practical prepositions that are rooted in ontology, epistemology, purpose, as well as focus. A theoretical framework is hence a collection of ideas based on theories. This study is grounded on the Uses and Gratification Theory.

The Uses and Gratifications Theory was proposed by Katz and Blumer in 1970, and concerns how people use media for gratification of their needs. Before World War II (which began in 1939) there was relatively little empirical research conducted to learn about the effect of mass communication on media audiences asserts DeFleur (2010:184). However, radio was under scrutiny as can be seen from the widely read study on how millions of Americans panicked when a radio broadcast *War of the Worlds* (1938) was heard. It was from such ideas that the Uses of Gratification Theory was developed.

DeFleur (2010:185) goes further to report the 1942 summary of four studies by psychologist Herta Herzog about soap operas which clearly proved that radio soap operas did have a truly massive audience. This study was on housewives and compared regular listeners and non- listeners. The early focus was on psychological factors (personality) that played a role on the later emerging theory. These being: enthusiasm and active selection, personality characteristics, income and education, and interest in public affairs. The major conclusion was that "gratifications" which was some sort of *fulfillment of basic needs* fell into such categories as: emotional release, wishful thinking and getting advice. The clear conclusion was that the women needs for which they used media to fulfill.

Another study reported by DeFleur (1962:94), is the famous and fundamental milestones of mass communication research. This was done by university researcher Wilbur Schramm and his associates from 1958 to 1960, in order to understand the impact and effect of television on the lives of children the scholars replaced the question of "what does television do to children," with the more realistic query, "what do children do with television?"

Consequently Lowery and Defleur (1995:22) pointed out that the scholars had replaced the question 'what do media do to people?' with 'what do people do with media?' It was found that media is used by individuals- to meet specific needs. These specific needs include cognitive needs to

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acquiring information, knowledge and understanding; affective needs for emotional, pleasurable experiences; personal integrative needs to strengthening self image; social integrative needs to strengthening image and tension release needs in order for escape and diversion.

Likewise DeFleur (2010:183) points out that people use media to obtain different types of gratification for their personal needs - cognitive purposes, diversion or distraction, social utility, surveillance, entertainment, esteem, identity, building relationships and other ways of filling a niche either to withdraw into or to socialize with others. He posited that just before World War II early researchers of mass communication had identified two principles. Firstly the audience was *selective* due to differences in tastes and interests based on cultural and social identities and due to these differences *not all members attended equally*. The audience was not identical or passive as previously thought. This idea stemmed from the selective and limited influence theory proposed in the 1940s by Bernard Berelson.

The second principle was that media audiences *actively select* the content to which they were exposed. The audience was not passive but knew what they wanted. Therefore, there was more focus on the consumer who is an active selector of media communication rather than a passive receiver who shows no initiative. In this regard, there is no assumption of a direct relationship between a message and its effects but rather the audience selectively puts the media into use to achieve specific predetermined goals.

According to this theory, media consumers have a freewill to decide how they will use media and how it will affect them. People choose what to listen to, see or read and the different media compete to satisfy individual needs. It focuses on what people do with media rather than what media do to people. Mobile phone users utilize the phone to fulfill a variety of needs. This desire to achieve different gratifications led to the development of most of the tools or applications on the mobile phones.

Using the principles of the uses and gratification theory this study therefore sought to establish how useful mobile phones are to women in Kiandutu slums and what satisfaction they derive from using the mobile technology. In essence, the study is an exploration of how useful mobile phones are in assisting women in Kiandutu slums meet their specific cognitive, affective, personal integrative and social integrative needs.

Uses and gratification theory presupposes that media use is goal directed and that the audience is fully aware of its needs. As such, just as the theory poses the question 'what do audiences do with the media?' this study similarly poses the question 'what do women in Kiandutu slums do with their mobile phones?'

Ultimately key point in theory is the effect of media on its audience, whether positive or negative. Therefore this theory is appropriate in bringing out the central component of the research which is the effect of the mobile phone on women. This is where the gender divide question falls; as a possible effect. Although the women may be aware of their mobile phone needs, the question is whether these needs are being met or whether the mobile phone has the effect of further marginalizing women by the perpetuating gender divide. The study sought to investigate whether there is a possibility that Kiandutu slum women could be at a disadvantage in areas of uses and gratification. The uses and gratification theory was applied to answer these questions.

1.5 JUSTIFICATION AND SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY

This study will enable further insight into the situation and understanding of gender disparities in area of communication using the cellphone. It is interesting to know what the Kiandutu women find most beneficial as regards to cellphone use and what key functions they utilize to find solutions.

There is little research done on the relationship between the gender divide and low economic status of women in the third world. Much of the research is not completely relevant to the study. There is

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no study done on Kiandutu slums, Thika, Kenya. This the researcher suggests could be due to Kiandutu not being widely known, possibly due to being on the outskirts of a smaller town.

A case in point is the study by Cho et al (2003:46-72) which explores the relationship between the Internet and gratification gained within the context of the digital divide. The emphasis is on age and different socio-economic status; mobile phones and women are not researched. Another example is Synder (1995:143-187) which discusses women and development in various parts of Africa and Asia funded by United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM). Concerning women in Kwale, Kenya, Synder (1995:186) discusses a village water project. Subsequently there are facts on many successful projects in the developing world, such as the Greenbelt Movement initiated by Nobel Prize Laureate Professor Wangari Muta Mathai, but none is in the context of the mobile phone and its uses or gratifications.

According to Seelos and Mair (2006:3) "mobile communication services are considered a powerful driver of development that goes hand in hand with increased income". That research was on women in India whose lives have been improved by microfinance through financing by Grameen Bank. It discussed village phone women and their generation of income from microenterpreneurship; and not much reference to their uses or gratification. Another research by Lim et al. (2008) discusses mobile telephony in relation to how it offers empowering opportunities for women in respect of their sexual health. SMS is used to get information on health issues. Donner et al (2008:1,2,4), a Microsoft research group, conducted an information and communication technology project designed to cost-effectively impact the world's poorest communities and share their experiences and lessons learnt implementing various ICT initiatives in Bangalore, India. However the concentration is on the Personal Computer (PC).

This research therefore calls attention to this information gap. Consequently this study will add value to academia because it looks into real effects in order to understand trends through the uses

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and gratification of the respondents. The information received will yield more refined understanding of situations; the causal sequences and thus assist society better understand subjects as well as additional unchartered areas to explore. Analyzing trends leads to other aspects which may require further understanding in the field, hence avenues for other projects to be initiated.

Uses and gratifications approach reminds us that people use media for many purposes. As cellphones have become a necessity this approach directs our attention to such populations as the slum women of Kiandutu. What are their needs? Are they being met in order to have a level field as members of the world in the 21st Century?

The data will benefit, among others, public policy makers such as the government, civil society, governmental organizations, and the media. This is a communication topic that is of relevance to today because gender, poverty due to slum environments, and technology are realities in our world.

1.6 LIMITATIONS OF STUDY

Limitations underlying this study arose because of the inadequate time available to the researcher to conduct the study on relatively broad section of the slum population. The research is personally funded thus financial constraint is another limitation. The other major bottleneck is the availability of relevant and adequate secondary material covering the topic. There is scanty literature on the subject.

The researcher strove with utmost ability to deal with these challenges. The issue of limited time was dealt with by enlisting the assistance of a research assistant who was familiar with Kiandutu slum to distribute and collect data. The sample population was not too large to mitigate the cost and eased the collecting of the information. The inadequate literature was dealt with by widening the scope to include western literature of any relevance which is plentiful in libraries and on the internet.

1.7 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This research was conducted in Kiandutu slums in Thika, Kiambu County, Kenya. The study was concerned with women living in Kiandutu and if they used cellphones, how it has either negatively or positively affected their lives.

1.8 PROJECT DISSEMINATION STRATEGY

Disseminating information is about getting data to the right audience in a manner that they can use. If results are not easily accessible then they are of limited practical use. The findings from the research will be disseminated through library placement. Since this is an academic project study the findings will be for scholarly purposes. The researcher will also write further academic papers based on this research as well as make conference presentations to defend this research. The final research findings will be placed in the University of Nairobi Library for academic purposes.

1.9 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

In the entire research ethical considerations were borne in mind at all times. Respondents as well as data were treated truthfully and with dignity. To ensure voluntary and informed consent during the collection of data the research respondents was informed clearly of the purpose of the information and their rights as respondents. The respondents or participants were free to answer questions they wanted and to quit participation at any time without any consequences. All information was confidentially and sensitively handled. To ensure privacy and confidentially all respondents remained as anonymous as possible. No names were used in the questionnaires.

CHAPTER TWO - LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 INTRODUCTION

Literature review, states Kombo (2006:62), is an account of what has been published on a topic by accredited scholars and researchers and encompasses a critical scrutiny of existing books, magazines, journals and dissertations that have a bearing on the study being conducted.

A literature review is undertaken in order to gain clarity, better understanding of current trends in the field as well as deepen the theoretical framework. It contributes to a well designed methodology. This is important to avoid failed methods and adopt newer approaches. It enables the researcher to understand what has already been done to address knowledge gaps and guides in the formulation of theory. It aids in avoiding duplication of work and enables the researcher to develop a significant problem to study.

This literature review discusses scholarly discourse on communication, uses and gratification, cellphones, women in a slum environment, and the gender divide.

The major issues of this study are how the women of Kiandutu slums use and are impacted by mobile phones and whether this technology may be marginalizing them further. The issue of gender divide, poverty, urbanization, mediated communication, mobile telephony in Kenya, and Kiandutu slum are main discussions in this research project. Brief reviews on these topics set the stage for the subsequent analysis of scholars' thoughts thereof.

2.1 TECHNOLOGY GENDER DIVIDE; THE STATUS OF WOMEN IN AFRICA

According to Kenya's Ministry of Planning and National Development (2005:5) poverty can be engendered, the majority of households are male headed but where females head it is likely to be

poorer, albeit there are many factors to consider such as if widowed, divorced or temporary heading. Taylor (1999:14) argues that it is logical to assume that if women constitute the poorest, are the most subordinate and are consistently denied access to the rights, services and benefits of society then these causes need to be addressed. Women are often classified as the face of poverty, hunger, targets of rape, brutality and most vulnerable during conflict. In times of hardships feeding or educating the males is sometimes given preference. Women also face unfair constrained distribution of resources such as land, credit, training and technology. In addition economic, cultural and religious beliefs result in unequal power relations, which may not be recognized as discrimination but due to patriarchy as the norm. Poverty is the biggest impediment to gender equality. In Africa the girl child is often expected to remain at home to care for younger siblings and household chores. When resources are scarce the males go to school as it is assumed that employment and better pay is for them.

World Bank (2000:13) argues that empowerment is necessary for the progress and stability of Africa and it is imperative and critical in civil society, the poor and the excluded, producers, and governments. Further they stress that women fall in the poor and excluded due to deep deprivation and systematic exclusion. For gender discrimination to be corrected these "pervasive inequalities" must be addressed.

Beyond education, a lower status for women is perpetuated by economic, legal and political policies. Women settle for and grow up in a world of wage disparities, unequal protection and inequitable laws such as the denial of the right to inheritance. Women's labor is sometimes undervalued because it often occurs in the non-wage economy. Since labor within the home is unpaid, it is increasingly devalued, while income-earning activities in the public sphere are given greater status and prestige. When they are employed, women are at a distinct disadvantage in the labor market because of their triple roles of production, reproduction and care giving. They are also

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subordinate to their men folk portends Quoting World Bank (2000:85) *"Women are beaten at the house for any reason...They may also be beaten if the husband comes home drunk or if he simply feels like it."*

World Bank (2000:86) continues to posit that sub-Saharan community has clearly failed to reach the benchmark of 2005 for ensuring primary education access to all. . Uneducated women who seek work outside of the home are at greater risk of being overworked, underpaid, physically abused, or forced into sexual labor. In addition, an educated or literate woman is less likely to die in childbirth, more likely to have fewer and healthier children, and more likely to be able to provide access to education for her children. Among other priorities, young women need access to higher education, increased political participation, reproductive health education, access and ability as well as appreciation for technology, micro credit and ICTs. Despite this there are common adages such as, "Educating a woman is like educating a whole village." "Women are the backbone of the economy" which reflects the central role those females play in communities.

In respect to technology and communication women often face various challenges such as Governments and development agencies treating technologies as neutral, value-free tools and assume that the adoption of these technologies will naturally lead to development.

In cognizance of this Girard & Siochru (2003:11) portends that it exists because communication technology is never gender neutral and is critically responsible in gender relationships, whether reinforcing traditional roles, introducing socio-cultural or economic changes. In respect to their human rights, the attainment of democratic participation as well as equal voice women's access to information sources and communication channels are crucial. This is in order for them to compete equally and thus be relevant in the public sphere.

The Beijing Platform for Action (1995:133) discusses women and the media and acknowledges that the media have the potential to make far greater contributions for the advancement of women.

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This is due to the fact that media can be used as a tool to bridge the gender divide as media is a powerful platform and can be used to set agendas to give women more voice because they are frequently overlooked, isolated and invisible. The Government of Kenya, it portends, has a duty because it has signed a number of agreements to ensure women are not discriminated upon. Kenya is a signatory to a number of international instruments meant to address the disadvantaged status of women in order to bridge the gender divide. Among these the 1979 Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the 1994 Dakar African Platform for Action and the 1995 Global Platform for Action from the 4th UN Conference on Women.

2.1.1 The divide

The digital divide is a common topic of discussion in scholarly discourse and basically refers to the technological gaps between the *haves* and *have-nots*. Technology is drawing some parts of the world closer together but as it continues to advance, it is leaving others in an ever increasing gap. The fact that nation states have varying levels in technology whether the difference or "divide" is economic, infrastructure, usability, empowerment or gender divide, leads to a negative difference.

Evidently the digital divide is as a result of history and is not a recent origin. The gap can be attributed to the societal partitions that exist such as socioeconomic standing, race, ethnicity, class, social or professional status, gender, patriarchy. Black Americans may blame the digital divide on racism, South Africans may blame it on apartheid, and the other Africans may blame it on colonialism whilst Kenyans even on historical injustices. So the gender divide is then created. The disparities between men and women constitute the gender divide.

2.1.2 Poverty Measurement

The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995:37-38) acknowledges that more than 1 billion people in the world are poor, the majority being women who live in unacceptable conditions

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mostly in the developing world. Poverty is complex, multidimensional and a great problem in both national and international domains.

Moss (2007:163-8) explains that data on poverty is collected from census, household surveys and health surveys. He posits that defining poverty is difficult and words such as capabilities, opportunities can point to some underlying causes they often fail to gauge precisely. However, the simplest way to evaluate poverty is income which is directly related to welfare. Another indicator is "quality of life" for example life expectancy, literacy levels, calorie intake. The UN's annual Human Development Index (HDI) scores countries giving them a poverty index. These scores are based on life expectancy at birth, gross school enrollment rate, adult literacy rate, and Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita.

2.1.3 Urbanization

Urbanization notes Bhasin (2001:xi) is one of the most significant demographic phenomenon of the 21st century due to industrialization and technological advancement. As the world is increasingly becoming more urban, the spatial landscape of poverty becomes more urban. Thika is an industrial driven town and owing to its industrial status is sometimes referred to as the Birmingham of Kenya. However, the collapse of its major industries in the 1990s led to high unemployment contributing to the escalated poverty and the growth of the slum of Kiandutu. The nexus of urban poverty is that it is a major cause and also a consequence of poverty. Bhasin (2001:45) concurs and cites Lewin (1968) when discussing the culture of poverty, the author states that from the beginning slums and urban poverty have been considered as synonyms. Kiandutu is consequently a slum plagued by poverty. According to Mills et al (1994:8) in similar circumstances economic growth can result from the adoption of new technology as well as human and physical capital accumulation, which create employment opportunities and raise workers productivity and therefore wages. At the same time it must be noted that not all groups benefit equally from economic growth. Such a group could

be women. Slum residents comprise of a large number of poor women; new technology such as the mobile phone could be studied as a medium to close the gap of gender differences. Firstly, though the women's needs, uses and gratifications from mobile phones must be understood for them to be effective as means of empowerment.

2.1.4 Mediated communication

Dey (1993:20) explains that traditionally levels of communication comprised of three broad categories:

(1) Print – newspapers, books, magazines, pamphlets etc.

(2) Electronic – radio, television, cinema

(3) Traditional media – folk dance, folk drama, puppetry, folk song, etc.

But according to Dey (1993:20) a fourth category was "conceived namely medio communication". Medio a Latin word meaning middle or intermediate level which has characteristics of mass communication and interpersonal communication because the receiver is usually one, often known to the communicator but do not communicate face to face such as in a telephone or cellphone conversation. Members can be heterogeneous and separated by space when receiving the rapid message and it can be the same message in different physical locations. The cellphone falls into this category because it is very personal and has become almost an appendage to the user. The women of Kiandutu and their use of cellphones is an example of this type of medio communication because it is both personal but also mass communication due to its diversity.

2.1.5 Mobile telephony in Kenya

According to Grant & Meadows (2002:308) the mobile phone has become indispensable today but this is not to say that everyone is enjoying this revolution. A cellphone also called a mobile phone

or a handphone, is an electronic device or tool which uses mobile telecommunication technology. The technologies today are wireless telephony that includes cellular phones, PCS, and satellite service. Each may use a different technology and spectrum but in common they have an important feature in the heart of the network. This is sometimes known as the mobile telephone switching office (MTSO) which is an intelligent switching system automatically assigns slices of the spectrum to individual telephone calls, switching frequencies and transmitting towers as user moves around from one service area to another and interconnecting the mobile phone call with the public switching telephone network (PSTN).

The cellphone invention is attributed to Martin Cooper, a Motorala researcher, in 1978. It uses a combination of hardware, operating systems, networking and software. Hardware includes PDAs, like Palm Pilot or Handspring, mobile phones, and video game players. Applications are the programs, like phone books and calendar programs. Currently, there are many competing operating systems leaving the market with no clear market leader. Networks are the infrastructure that supports the transfer of information. It is powered by cell technology. Apart from the voice function cellphones offer a myriad of other functions depending on the type of cellphone. These may include short message services for text messaging, email, internet access, gaming, camera, radio, video recording, other multimedia messaging services such as infrared, Bluetooth, MP3 player, and global positioning system – these depending on the type of mobile phone.

The Communication Commission of Kenya (CCK) states that in Kenya the cellphone subscription increased to 22 million between July and September last year up from 20.1 million in June 2010. This was a 9.5 percentage growth and was the highest over the last three quarters and thus a teledensity of 56.9 percent. The CCK Quarterly Sector Statistics Report of July to September 2010/2011 attributed the growth to lower tariffs and promotions. During the quarter, pre-paid and post-paid mobile tariffs went down by 33.4% and 55.5% respectively, following an interconnection

determination by CCK that saw mobile termination rates reduced to Kshs2.21 from Kshs4.42. There was nonetheless, a total of 6.63 billion minutes of local calls made on mobile networks. This was up from 6.06 billion during the previous year representing an increase of 9.6%

The mobile telephone services in Kenya started in 1992 with the analogue system that was widely known as the Extended Total Access Communication System (ETACS), which was commercially launched in 1993. During this entry period the services were so expensive that it was only a few people within the upper rank of the society that could afford them. The cost of owning a mobile handset was as high as Kshs.250, 000.

The Communication Commission of Kenya indicates that liberalization of telecommunication in 1998 was aimed at providing greater choice: for customers, suppliers' service, price, quality and competition as well as to open up markets. Cellular telephone licensees comprise: Safaricom, Kencell later Celtel then Zain and currently Airtel, Telkom (Orange) and Econet Kenya (Yu). The enactment of the Kenya Communications Act, 1998 led to the introduction of competition in the cellular mobile industry. On subscribers, at the end of the second quarter of 2009/2010(Q2 09/10), the four licensed operators had a combined subscriber base of 19.4 million mobile subscribers, a 7.9 per cent increase in the total number of subscribers compared to the previous quarter and a 11.9 per cent compared to the same quarter of the previous year. The growth experienced in the mobile subscribers is attributed to the continued increase of prepaid subscribers. This trend can be explained by among other factors, the reduction in the cost of mobile handsets as well as the presence of low value prepaid calling cards.

Mobile banking services were launched in 2009 by Kenyan mobile operators. Safaricom launched M-Pesa and Zain launched ZAP mobile money service and, Econet launched its YuCash mobile money. This was destined to drive e-commerce in Kenya.

Mobile phones acknowledge Batchelor (2009:13) are an important tool for development because of their ability to easily leapfrog infrastructure barriers especially in remote parts of Africa. They are adaptable and appropriate tools to bridge the digital divide sometimes. They are ideal for commerce and trading, m-banking, m-payments especially for the low income populace.

With this background it is interesting to study the mobile phones impact on the gender divide in such a scenario as Kiandutu slum area.

2.1.6 Profile of Kiandutu Slum

Kiandutu is the largest slum in Thika located within the vicinity of Thika Town. UN-Habitat (2003b:8) defines slum households as a group of individuals living under the same roof that lack one or more of the following conditions: access to safe water, sanitation; secure tenure; durability of housing, and sufficient living area.

Kiandutu inhabitants, live in small shacks about three square meters, made out of any material they can find: mud, sticks, cardboard and tin sheeting. Most of the homes have no water, electricity, toilets or sanitation. Even though they have very few belongings, their homes are under constant threat from gangs. The environment is consequently characterized by high levels of poverty, insecurity, illegal groups such as mungiki, illicit brews, prostitution and appalling living conditions with dark, narrow dangerous alleyways and few latrines. According to Kiandutu Residents Association (2008) the poorest inhabitants of Thika live in Kiandutu where unemployment is high and life difficult. Rural to urban migration to Kiandutu is especially from the rural areas of Muranga, Maragua Kiambu and Nyeri counties.

Kiandutu according to information from Kiandutu Residents Welfare Association (2008:1) is a settlement that started in 1968 and was as a result of compensation by the government to the Kianjau co-operative farmers for the land. Residents constructed temporary shelters and were later

joined by displaced internally displaced persons from the Rift Valley mainly Molo. Thika during the 1990s faced closures of coffee plantations, textile and other industries rendering many employees jobless.

Residents constructed their own temporary shelters. The slum occupants engage in petty jobs and many are jobless. There is abject poverty and the community consist of orphans, hawkers, blind, street urchins, single mothers, prostitutes, grass sellers, illicit brewers. 75% of street children in Thika town are from Kiandutu.

For a study on slum women and uses and gratification of mobile telephony Kiandutu, with the characteristic slum environment, is ideal for such a study due to being populated by both men and women in a low economic status neighbourhood.

2.2 LITERATURE REVIEW

A review on literature on the subject showed scholarly discourse both supporting and contradicting the researchers' supposition. Subsequently experts have valuable views on the issues under evaluation useful to lead the research.

In an analytic study of cellular phone use among women in developing countries, Sithole & Schofield (2001:66) contend that the high level of illiteracy in slum areas has not deterred women from using mobile phones because they are easy to use even for a novice. Contrarily, Wajcman (1991:113) asserts that women have over the few years of mobile revolution been excluded from the connection between men and communication technology, and that its usage and production is premised on satisfying male interests, This has largely been as a result of high degree of technology apathy that is exhibited by majority of slum women and the deeply entrenched stereotypes regarding gender roles in most of developing countries.

In her study on how women in African slums utilize mobile phones, Sarah (2010: 89) posits that the past five years have seen a phenomenal increase in the adoption of mobile phones by slum women. The study attributes this wide usage to the affordability of mobile phones, which was not the case at the onset of mobile telephony a decade ago. In the view that women play a pivotal role in controlling both social and economic life in slum areas, mobile phones have helped facilitate communication on a considerable scale. Researchers are reaching common ground pertaining to the impact of mobile phones among women in the developing world and it has been lucidly shown that mobile phones are helping increase individual productivity and enhance social structure on a considerable scale (Rodgers, 2004:3).

A survey conducted in Mathare Valley by Consultative Group to Assist the Poor (CGAP 2011) showed that at least one in every seven women in this slum owned a cellphone. Of great significance in this study is how small women entrepreneurs in these areas use mobile phones not only to access banking services but also for social integration. According to Jacobson (2009), the low level of education and the subsequent high level of illiteracy among slum women are likely to hinder the use of mobile phones by these women, especially when it comes to money-saving and performing varied business transactions.

The CGAP report (2011) slum women in Kibera prefer using mobile phones for money transfer services simply because it is cheaper, safe and easy to access when compared to traditional banking. With the introduction of services such as M-Kesho the women living in slums are using mobile phones to save money instead of using banking services because they find this option less burdensome. M-Kesho is a money transfer service launched by Safaricom in collaboration with Equity Bank on March 18 2010. M-Kesho is fully integrated into Mpesa user interface on customer's mobile phone and is also accessible through Equity bank's own mobile banking service.

Chant (2006:113) argues that with all the economic benefit wrought by the onset of mobile phone banking, the services are yet to be fully implemented largely because of the high level of illiteracy among the slum women. The author argues that a huge percentage of slum women are mainly in small businesses that are for sustaining their families and as such the use of mobile banking may not be in favor of many of them.

With regard to the cellphone features that are mostly preferred by women in developing countries, Ling (2006) in his study of Bangladeshi women living in the inner city found out that most of the prefer text messaging as opposed to making a voice call. Similarly, Ling et al (2005:16) found a stark difference in the way men and women use cellular phones, whereby women tend to be enthusiastic text message users than women. In conclusion, the author indicates that women are more likely to use the text messaging feature, mainly because of its privacy, cost effectiveness and the level of social presence they give. This idea is supported by Sun (2007) who avers that urban women tend to have a more elaborate attachment with their mobile phones than men do, especially when it comes to using the text messaging feature.

However, Sun (2008) subscribes to the school of thought that the majority of slum women do not fully grasp the many features that they can utilize in their cell phones and that they only come to learn about them after prolonged use. The features, the author says, include radio, internet, text messaging and mobile phone cameras. Short et al (2006:65) is of the idea that voice calls tend to create a higher degree of social presence since they feel that they are being engaged in constructive communicative interaction.

According to Scotchfield (2006), the occupation of slum women tends to create a huge disparity in mobile phone usage. For example less educated women are mostly motivated by social reasons, whereby they want to keep in touch with friends and family. The ownership of mobile phones has

also made slum women feel safe since they can call for emergency at any time, especially in view of the insecurity that is rampant in these areas.

There has been an extensive body of knowledge with regard to how mobile phones benefit the people in the informal settings. Silarszky et al (2008) discusses some of the benefits accrued by the use of mobile phones and these include job creation, GDP growth, productivity through new business start-ups, tax revenue and market efficiencies. Banks (2008) however points out that many books do not lay emphasis on how mobile phones are impacting the lives of slum women in developing countries. An example being is in the provision of health services whereby women are able to seek immediate information about health services from nearby health facilities, or to call for help especially when it comes to emergency cases or to seek help in rape cases that are ever present in majority of slum settings.

The above notion is reinforced by a study conducted by the Department for International Development (DFID:2000) whose findings indicate that women in Kibera slums have a high tendency to use mobile phones not only to communicate with relatives residing in countryside, engage in organization activities and also to take care of health issues on a considerable scale. This, the study notes, is mainly due to the high prevalence of HIV/AIDS, where majority of women are involved in taking care of the next of kin who are infected with the disease.

Schofield & Sithole (2006) aver that the cell phone has been an instrumental tool in social change for people in rural and marginalized urban areas. The authors posit that it has now become much easier to stay in touch with family and friends. They say that of great significance is how women are able to contact their adolescent sons and daughters, especially when out in the evenings and during weekends.

According to a report by United Economic and Social Forum (2009), mobile phones are crucial ICT tools for development in least developed countries primarily because of their ability to go beyond infrastructure barriers in slum areas in Africa. McCoy and Smith (2007) provide an analysis of how mobile phones have been embraced by women in developing countries, whereby they cite a case in point where fish mongers in India use mobile phones to call different market in a bid to enquire about the current market prices. They also cite hairstylists in Ivory Coast's inner city where they use mobile phones for immediate contact with customers, which go a long way towards enhancing effective customer scheduling.

Norrin (2006:77) asserts that the onset of ICT- mobile phones in particular- has helped slum women take their businesses to the next level of efficiency and productivity through the use of money transaction features offered by mobile phone service providers. According to Porteous (2010:18), women in slums, particularly those in small businesses are now able to transact and save money with a great deal of convenience through mobile banking applications like MPESA and ZAP. The author notes that the mobile phone is creating a level ground where the women in business can compete with men, with regard to sourcing for new customers and ordering market products from rural areas.

UNDP (2010) shows that at least 80 percent of people living in slums in least developed countries do not subscribe to any banking services due to factors such as illiteracy and the high fees involved. Under these circumstances, many women in slums, most of which fall under the informal sector have always resorted to using conventional banking options that are not always secure and therefore they have found the use of mobile banking quite beneficial. The report indicates that the onset of mobile phone banking is transforming the way slum women transact and save their money. Mwaura, (2009) reinforces the findings of this report by asserting that the introduction of mobile

banking services is potentially capable of creating substantial leaps the informal sector, under which slum women fall.

According to Castel (2005:95), cellular phones are playing a pivotal economical role for women running small business in small towns and rural areas. These include businesses such as shops and open air markets where the business people are able to place orders and contact customers. Even with the impressive findings on how slum women are adopting new communication technologies, Rodgers (2010:13) says that women in developing countries are yet to be fully empowered in order for them to take advantage of these technologies for the purposes of taking their small businesses a notch higher.

According to Sen (1999:34), enhancing women's access to technology plays a significant role in spurring economic growth. Sadly, technology has been underutilized with regard to helping women unlock their economic potential and as a result gender divide is still palpable both in the use of traditional and modern technologies. To support this argument, Joseph (2008) avers that the notion of sharing mobile phones is still prevalent among slum women, largely because of financial inadequacies and technology apathy.

In cognizance of the fact the perpetuation of gender in the use of mobile phones, Costa & Silva (2008) assert that increased gender inequalities in many African countries-both in short run and long run-have great consequences on both human development and economic growth since the situation only serves to lock out women with great potential from exploring their abilities. The authors posit that some of slum women may not be economically active if they do not get the opportunity to embrace new technologies.

Stark (2010:97) underscores the fact that cultural societal attitudes play a significant role in sidelining women with regard to the use of mobile since it is believed it is only men who have the

right to maintain contact with people outside the family circle or community. Further they argue women in poorer communities are expected to sacrifice most of their lives in order to take care of the family and ensure the home affairs are intact. Chant (2008:191) reinforces this argument and terms it the feminism of responsibility. The researcher says that women in marginalized societies have the sole responsibility of taking care of their dependent children and therefore they do not have the ability to cater for their self-oriented pursuits such as the acquisition of a mobile phone.

In the study of gender difference in the use of mobile phones in rural Uganda, Scott et al (2004:184) found out that the majority of the women were not using a cellular phone, not because of the lack of money but because they lacked the basic knowledge on how to operate the device. In this research, men were more likely than women to use cell phones for business purposes. In the same vein, women were more likely to use mobile phones for the sole purpose of maintaining kinships. Therefore, the lack of necessities such as a mobile phone is not by will but due to lack of choices and opportunities, a trend that has been perpetuated for centuries within African societies (Scott et al 2004:66).

A World Bank report (2012) shows that only a significantly lower number of women in slums own mobile phones. The report indicates that at least 77 percent of women living in rural and slum areas had a likelihood of using a mobile belonging to another person, especially a member of the household. The report further indicates that there is a thin line between mobile phone usage between men and women in slum areas. It also shows that differences by gender in terms of mobile phone usage in these areas for exacting functions are quite tiny and that this trend is likely to be maintained in the near future.

According to World Bank Report (2012) the number of women who receive or make a voice call on a daily basis is almost the same, which is 80 and 82 percent respectively. The gender gap is however faintly higher when it comes to the use of text messages, whereby 58 percent of women

use this service compared to 65 percent of men. Lisa (2010:56) contradicts these findings by saying that majority slum women in developing countries are yet to reap the maximum benefit of mobile phone technology, whether for voice calls or texting. According to the author, this has been as a result of the social inhibitions that are still prevalent in many African and other developing countries in the world. She concludes that men are still expected to remain quite ahead with regard to technological knowhow and interest in new communication technologies than women.

In conclusion the material indicated that there has been a phenomenon increase in the use of mobile phones by slum women with such gratifications as increased productivity and enhanced social integration. Women individually and as enterprises have benefitted in mobile money transfers for example M-Pesa to send and receive money in business transactions due to being cheaper, faster, convenient and easy to access. Also women feel safer as they can call in emergencies such as health reasons or rape cases. Mobile phones have benefitted women to communicate with relatives, friends, community groups, especially those residing in the countryside. Also area where the phone has been identified as gratifying as a means of communication is in cases where women are care givers especially for relatives infected with HIV/Aids. Another benefit is to inquire about the price of commodities for those doing business or to contact consumers and for customer scheduling such as in a case of hairdressers.

On the other hand contentions were that women in slum areas faced such impediments such as high levels of illiteracy which deterred them from using mobile phones fully. These women had a general apathy and were less confident in using phones as mobile phones were generally produced to satisfy male interests and not in favour of women. The women tended not to grasp the many features and took longer to learn after prolonged use. They lacked the basic knowledge to operate the device and although they may have adopted the phone they are yet to be fully empowered to take the use to a satisfactory level. Women's economic disadvantage hinders their opportunities to

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embrace new technology. Their triple roles and responsibilities is another reason because they lack time and ability to acquire the mobile phone. Conclusively social inhibitions in Africa means that men are expected to be ahead in the technological know-how and interest in communication technologies such as the mobile phone over the women.

This body of literature clearly proves the knowledge gap that exists as can be seen from the scarce material on slum women in the developing world in relation to mobile phones. As Banks (2008) points out there is absence of material that lays emphasis on how mobile phones are impacting the lives of slum women in developing countries. There is little research done on the relationship between the gender divide and low economic status of women in the third world. Clearly this subject in respect to Kiandutu slum is nonexistent. Therefore the usefulness of the study in ascertaining whether the mobile phone has contributed to further marginalizing slum women cannot be gainsaid. The research will determine the media's missed opportunities through possible undeserving this important segment of its audience. It will answer to what degree Kiandutu slum women own and use phones and give insight on the type of gratifications they gain. Notably it will also conclude whether they face any gender disadvantages owing to the mobile phone. The study will also add to academia since literature on this topic in respect to the uses and gratification theory is unique.

CHAPTER THREE - RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0   INTRODUCTION

Gravetter et al (2003: 409) articulate that the third major section of the research report is the method section which provides a detailed description of exactly how the study will be conducted. With these details other researchers should be able to duplicate the methodology.

This chapter will therefore, present in detail the research methodology that was adopted in this research. It will cover the following areas: study locale, population under study, research design, sample and sample procedure, data collection, instruments used and the procedures for collecting, analyzing and presenting findings.

3.1   RESEARCH APPROACH

The research type used in this study was the survey approach. Survey type is chosen because although much data is required from many separate respondents, this approach is uniform and standardized since it gives the same questions to each participant. It is also a quantifiable, systematic and economical approach as compared to other types. The study used the survey approach and followed these basic stages: conceptualization of the problem, choosing the survey method, preparation of the survey instruments, selection of the target population, determination of the sampling procedures and techniques, then deciding upon the methods of data analysis and interpretation. These steps are discussed in this subsequent discourse.

As the research instrument or tool the questionnaire was used, this is a set of questions designed to collect data in a uniformed manner. The questionnaire being the most visible tool of this approach was prepared by the researcher to ask questions that sought to answer the research questions and test the hypothesis as well as fulfill the aims and objectives of the study.

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The questionnaires was distributed directly to the respondents in Kiandutu slums using the direct distribution technique with the aid of a research assistant who was fully briefed on the project expectations. This was due to limited time, as well as the fact that in Kiandutu slums is difficult for one person to find ones way around due to crowded, dark and restricted alleyways. The research assistant, a University of Nairobi undergraduate was involved in administering and collecting of the questionnaires.

The data was collected using questions and the questions were both open-ended and close- ended ones. The questions were 19 in number and categorized in two sections; bio-data followed by data concerning uses and gratification. The questionnaire respondents were anonymous and revealing identity was not mandatory so to assure respondents of confidentiality of their personal information and thus solicit more candid replies. The questionnaire incorporated the likert scale as it was ideal for the investigation because as Rubin (1999: 91) portends the likert scale which is a design of questionnaire questions is the most common form of attitudinal scale in use today and is based on an underlying psychological model of how the human mind operates. The scale consists of a series of opinion statements or items such as strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree, and strongly disagree. The language in the questionnaire was simple to understand and concise. Instructions used short precise sentences that were clear, focusing and limited to one idea. Each item had a specific contribution and purpose and the questions were balanced per topic. All these were to avoid misinterpretation.

The study was undertaken using qualitative and quantitative methods. Quantitative research employs statistical analysis and a structured approach whereas a qualitative method is descriptive of attributes or properties that an object possesses. These properties are classified into classes that were assigned numerical values but of no significance to data value themselves.

According to Mugenda (2003:155) qualitative research includes techniques, designs, and measures that do not produce discrete numerical data. Commonly the data is words rather than numbers and grouped in categories. Qualitative methods usually used to collect data are observation, participant observation or interview. Such examination of human behavior is best suited for this method and the study. On the transverse quantitative research produces discreet numerical or quantifiable data. Here stratified sampling is ideal to remove bias from sampling.

Using both quantitative and qualitative approaches benefit this study because the methods supplement each other holistically and each method becomes a check on the other. Qualitative methods are subjective and quantitative techniques aim to be objective. This ensures that the methods provide statistical data and in-depth explanations as well as descriptions of the information under review.

3.2   RESEARCH PARADIGM

There are different schools of thoughts or paradigm's that theory can follow in communication research such as normative theory, hermeneutic theory, post-positivist theory but this study was guided by the Critical Theory research paradigm. It takes cognizance of the appropriateness of this paradigm through ontology, epistemology, and axiology. Critical theories consist of a loose union of ideas held together with commonalities in the interest of in the quality of communication and thus human life.

The nature of reality or what is knowable is ontology. Therefore their ontology is the goals or views of the nature of reality, what is knowable. Critical theories assumptions and claims are appropriate as well as consistent for the research questions and methodology used in this study. This is because although its ontology is a little complex they argue that what is real, what is knowable, in the social world is the product of dialogue or interaction between structure (the social

world's rules, beliefs and norms) and how humans behave and interact in that world (agency). Thus reality in this case is constantly changing and reshaping due to the ongoing struggles or dialectic between the two. Whoever controls the struggle thus defines reality. So in this investigation men are the elite so have the upper hand. They are emancipated so control the structures and define what is knowable whereas the women are subordinate. Research can therefore use the critical theory ontology to gain knowledge which is a step towards assisting the Kiandutu slum women to attain the same status as their men. Media in this paradigm is an essential tool employed by the powerful to constrain social worldviews and limit their involvement in it. This is similar to the hypothesis of the study thus the research subsequently benefits from the critical theory as its ontology is apt.

How knowledge is created and expanded is a theory's epistemology. So its epistemology is their view of how knowledge is created and expanded. Critical theories epistemology argues that knowledge is advanced only when it serves to free people and communities from the influence of those more powerful than themselves. This is study seeks knowledge in order for the Kiandutu women to be empowered in the use and benefits of the mobile phone at par with the men. This study upholds open embrace of values, employ high epistemic value, and advocate change and highest standards of enquiry of inquiry within the conventions of research and theory development. Therefore critical theory paradigm claims, assumptions are in tandem with the beliefs and methodology of this study because through gaining knowledge the hypothetically disadvantaged women can attain equality and empowerment.

Axiology is their view of the proper role of values in research and theory building. According to Littlejohn (1996:17) these not only define the different types of theory, but help make it obvious why the definition of social science in mass communication theory is so unsure or ambivalent. Critical theory is therefore openly political because it challenges existing ways of governing the

social world and the people and organizations that exercise power in it. Therefore critical theory's axiology is aggressively value-laden. It assumes that by reorganizing society we can give priority to the most important human values. It is especially concerned with inequality and aggression. This is apt for this study since it concerns disparities; that probably exists of mobile phone use and gratification of Kiandutu women. By correcting the gender divide women can be emancipated and society a better place. Critical theory does not only observe but goes further in criticizing it because it concerns how communication perpetuates divide for example in this case gender divide. Sometimes through culture, tradition, laws, norms women are subjugated and this theory recognizes that it is possible to reorganize society so as remove bias and be fair to all irrespective of gender, class, race or creed and so echoes the desires of this research study.

Validity in this study is very important because there is truth in all the data and truth is of utmost importance at all stages of the research. Therefore the critical theory paradigm applies because it has validity of theory. This is basically the truth value of a theory. Truth is not always easily defined because truth is not always absolute or single minded fact but there must be a variety of truth value to a theory. Validity in critical theory is worth or value; thus the question of importance, utility conceptual or pragmatic value. Secondly, validity of correspondence or fit; can the theory be seen in observation or ongoing life. Gender differences in mobile phone use and gratification can be seen in Kiandutu as well as other parts of the world and is a part of reality; so this fits or corresponds. Thirdly, generalizability this refers to the extent of which the theory tenets can apply across situations. The theory tenets can certainly apply across other situations such as conflict, unequal power or dominance especially concerning gender matters in respect of discrimination.

This study is simple to understand, the problem can be seen in everyday life and further research can be generated suggestions being mobile phone usage and gratification in respect to men, youth, rural or urban inhabitants. A study on uses and gratification of the mobile phone in respect to

gender divide among university students would also add value to academia. All that applies to critical theory paradigm helps the researcher decide what to observe and how to observe it. It gives heuristic value for this study because it has the potential to generate further research and adds value to theory. It has the test of parsimony; logical simplicity. A theory with the simplest logical explanation is desirable because one with a high parsimonious theory can be difficult to understand and thus needs more effort so can be faulted

Conclusively critical theories are the best suited paradigm for this study because they do not merely observe they also criticize. This means in the case of the Kiandutu women they not only view their situation but also go deeper to study if they face negative gender divide and argue or disapprove it to point out the injustice, if any. This is proactive and awakens society to this realization in order to generate solutions. Gender divide is a conflict of interest in society between men and women and an injustice. Most critical theories are concerned with such conflicts of interests and delve into the ways in which communication perpetuates such domination. Critical theories are based on Marxist thought and are a key branch of theories that examine as well as question the divisions within gender matters. This research deals with women in Kiandutu slum and their problems and critical theories is equipped to deal with such subjects involving the distribution of power in society; such as the hypothesis under investigation that Kiandutu women face gender divide in the use of the mobile phone. This being unfair distribution of power. Because critical theories paradigm borrow heavily from other genres and although they reject functionalism and cognitivism many of these theories are highly structural in orientation meaning they research for the underlying social structure that- affect groups and causes discrimination. Thus in this research the structures that impede equality in gender relations as well as socio-economic class. Such a paradigm can lead to results about institutional changes that can aid in the reduction or elimination of oppression to such a group

as the Kiandutu women. This is because critical theories can be powerful agents of change as they stress values of interests for judging situations, events and institutions.

3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

This is the plan, scheme or strategy for conducting the study and it outlines the nature or pattern the researcher intends to follow. This study is a descriptive survey aiming to determine if the usage of mobile phones has caused gender divide in slums. A descriptive study is undertaken in order to ascertain and to describe the features of variables in a situation. A descriptive design explains why things happen the way they do, showing clearly how the variables are related. The objectives of descriptive study is to learn how, who, when, where and what of a topic. In this case the study was designed to study the use of mobile phones among Kiandutu slum women.

This design although descriptive described the facts as they exist but also analyzed them. This strategy is advantageous since it is a technique that is used to summarize large numbers of values about trends, areas and fluctuations and ideal for this study. It provides accurate descriptions as well as analyses on differences and similarities which eventually drew conclusions. Tables, graphs, charts to display information were used to explain to ensure clear understanding. It was not only restricted to fact finding but ideal in providing solutions to the problems under review and could result in the formulation of principles of knowledge. This study used questionnaires as a central data collection tool. This design ensured the questions on the questionnaire were constructed to seek answers to the research questions, the Kiandutu slum women were clearly identified as the sample to be surveyed, as well as presented the data in an appropriate manner.

The uniqueness of this study relating to uses, gratifications, and needs of women in Kiandutu meant that it was beneficial to use this design because it can illustrate the existence of relationships, themes or issues related to horizontal inequalities stressing in this case gender inequalities. Tan

(1985:46) illustrates how mass communication is also concerned with attitudes, comparisons and how people feel about issues; for example when describing attitudes in this case how the women feel about the usefulness or absence thereof of mobile phones in comparison to men so as to fully understand the effect of the media in a slum community such as Kiandutu it would be necessary to use a design that holistically brings out complex issues such as feelings or sentiments that are perhaps not easily manifest due to the complexity of the subject.

3.4   STUDY LOCALE

The study was conducted in Kiandutu in Thika, Kiambu County. Kiandutu is the largest slum in Thika and is located within the peripherals of Thika town.

3.5   POPULATION UNDER STUDY

A population is a complete set of individuals or objects with some common or observable characteristics. In this study the selection of the sample to be observation was by probability sampling technique using stratified sampling. The criteria used were based on gender. According to statistical abstract of 2010, Kiandutu has about 10,000 women. Consequently the study sample comprised 100 women who are residents of Kiandutu slums. The questionnaires were distributed to 100 respondents. Due to literacy and clarity issues a research assistant aided respondents to answer the questions where necessary.

3.6   SAMPLE AND SAMPLE PROCEDURE

Sampling means selecting a portion that is representative to the population under study. In this case, the study sampled 100 respondents from the targeted population. The sample size was due to the fact that since Kiandutu slum accommodates approximately 10,000 women, it is time consuming and costly to obtain the required information from the whole population.

To sample the 100 respondents, the researcher used a research assistant to obtain information from the respondents. To obtain information, the study used stratified sampling techniques where only those women who are living in Kiandutu slums were requested to respond to the questionnaire. The sample will be stratified because not all the woman who were found in the slum were interviewed; only those who live in the slum were respondents. Further the sample was stratified because only the females were interviewed.

A sampling frame is a list of all the women in Kiandutu. It should contain all the women on to be sampled, be free of duplicates, and be up to date. Since such a list does not exist and there is no telephone or electoral roll containing this. The researcher assigned chronological numerical numbers to each respondent. When the sample size was established it took into account the sampling error (the difference between population parameters and sample statistics) through the use of confidence intervals to make inferences from a sample statistic to its population parameters.

Sampling procedure begins with the description of the target population to ensure a complete and correct sampling frame; the results were generalized on the whole population. The population is accordingly the complete set of individual cases of objects with some common observable characteristics so in this case the population therefore simply refers to the total number of the Kiandutu slum women and the sample then refers to a subset of the whole population which were investigated. Due to literacy and clarity issues the research assistant aided respondents to answer the questions where necessary.

Sampling was chosen due to its advantages of saving time as well as costs. This is as a result of working on a smaller sized population and so less cost as compared to the whole population. This study is self sponsored and so the researcher is constrained in both the resources of time and money. Also a sample may be more accurate and reliable than studying a whole population due to easier

and careful coverage of a smaller area, to avoid a haphazard and sloppy research. This study used a probability sampling technique so that every member of the population had an equal chance of inclusion in the sample to avoid bias.

Sampling theory is used in scientific research and probability sampling remains the primary method for selecting samples for social science research. Each element has an equal chance of selection. Using probability sampling enhances the likelihood of accomplishing this selection process and provides methods for estimating degree of probable success of this study.

3.7   DATA COLLECTION

The study used both primary and secondary data. Primary data was collected through using questionnaires. The questions included both open-ended and closed-ended ones. Due to low literacy where need be the respondents were assisted to fill the questions by a research assistant. The research assistant, a University of Nairobi, Bachelor of Commerce undergraduate, only administered and collected the questionnaires and was fully briefed on the project expectations.

Secondary data was obtained from documentary sources. These are any publication written by an author who has not directly observed or participated in the phenomenon described. Their advantage is that they are time economical and cheaper to use as well as they usually give honest pictures of the phenomenon under study. Documentary sources in data collection can include data from websites, company websites which may include company reports, press releases, yearbooks, speeches on the subject of interest to the researcher. Academic publications and journals were also included. All data was accurate through thorough verification.

3.7.1 Preparation of instruments and procedures for data collection

Before data was collected the researcher sought written permission in the form of a research permit for the study from Nairobi University School of Journalism. Then proceeded to identify participants, initiating correspondence; assure participants of high ethical standards as well as ensured the tools such as the questionnaires questions were ready before administering the questionnaire to the respondents.

3.7.2 Pretesting of instruments

Once the questionnaire was finalized it was pretested to a selected sample of five respondents, in the same way as the real study. However, respondents in the actual sample were not used in the pretest stage. The reason for was to give the researcher an opportunity to gauge the response, clarify any queries, and deal with any unforeseen issues so as to improve reliability of the study.

3.8 DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION

The data analysis method used in this study is the thematic analysis method. This is because information from the key informants is easy to organize into related topics of major themes and concepts and was clear to understand. The researcher began by scrutinize the raw data, picking the data relevant for the research questions and objectives. Then the researcher developed a coding system from information received, followed by the classification of the major issues. After that reread the text highlighting key points while indicating the key themes in the margin. After placing coded material into major themes, all the materials was put together. Next a summary report identifying major themes and their association was prepared. Graphs, tables, charts as well as prose were used to present the findings. Finally intensity was reported. This is the frequency of which

words, ideas, descriptions are used in the discussion and interprets the emphasis, attention or importance.

The qualitative data was obtained from the key informants then analyzed manually. The data was first coded and organized into themes and concepts. Generalizations and differences will then be formulated. Data was then analyzed immediately after collection of the questionnaires.

The quantitative data from the survey questionnaires was analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences Version 17 (SPSS). The analysis employed descriptive statistics such as frequency distribution tables, percentages and pie charts. The descriptive statistics was used to summarize and organize the data in an effective and meaningful way.

The importance of using a data analysis method was to ensure all the information needed had indeed been collected, and in a standardized way and that unnecessary data was not analysed. Data analysis involved examining and scrutinizing what has been collected in the survey and making inferences and deductions.

Data analysis and presentation considered the objectives of the study and the tools developed to meet these objectives, this provided better insight into the feasibility of the analysis that was performed, the resources needed, as well as an important review of the appropriateness of the data collection tools. During the pre-testing any gaps and overlaps were spotted and corrected and appropriately changes in the data collection tools.

Analysis of the data was based on the responses from the completed questionnaires, observation and secondary sources. Data was collected, coded, edited and uploaded onto a computer for final analyses and was used to draw final conclusions. The data was presented professionally and clearly in the form of tables, bar charts, graphs and percentages as well as written data analysis explaining the findings and as well as the conclusions drawn from the results. The actual process

was to ensure raw information was well organized to become relevant facts able to answer the research questions. Unusable data was discarded. Ambiguous answers were interpreted and contradictory ones were verified, wrong answers were rejected. Development of a coding system that is unambiguous was undertaken after removing errors. A coding system where codes were assigned to each likely answer as well as specifics to other responses such as: challenges such as cross-referencing missing answers to related questions, interpolate from other answers to creating a pattern for the respondents, look at the distribution of answers, give missing data a code of "did not answer", unreliable or empty forms were excluded as will questions that were left out by a significant number of respondents. Upon completion of coding the data was stored electronically as it can then be transferred easily to long term storage. The statistical data analysis package that was used is SPSS version 17 because it is popular due to requiring less statistical knowledge and it can be read by the other packages.

3.9 RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY OF DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS AND PROCEDURES

The questionnaires were distributed to the actual population targeted to ensure reliability of information. The study also ensured that information obtained was kept confidential unless the parties request for the results of the study. The respondents were not forced to give their names in the questionnaire to conceal their identity. This was to enable them give information in detail without necessarily divulging the source. The questionnaires were administered to the respondents together with introduction letter from Nairobi University School of journalism to assure the respondents that the required information was for academic purposes only. To minimize random error the study ensured the coding was made as accurate as possible by making sure the data was cleaned before it was analyzed. The researcher was only required to assist the respondents in cases where the respondent fails to interpret or understand properly the question asked. The research

instruments were direct to information required. The questionnaire was pre-tested and if possible upon completion post-test.

The whole research was ethical and did not deviate from the objectives of the study. All procedures and tools were of reliable and satisfactory standard, measurement procedures measured what they set out to measure with consistent result each time. In the study results were therefore consistent over time and a correct representation of the whole population and any errors were corrected. The decision to reject and or accept the study hypothesis was based on testing the significance of correlation coefficient. The correlation coefficient was tested at a significance level of 0.05 with a 99% confidence level.

Integrity was maintained and findings as well as interpretations were honest, objective and any bias, doctored or untrue results avoided. The sample was representative of the population and statistical procedures were as accurate as possible and where issues admitted and corrected. Plagiarism was avoided and all information was truthful. All information was available for scrutiny with privacy safeguards. Since this is an academic project report it will be disseminated by placement in University of Nairobi library. This is because it is for scholarly purposes and should be accessible to the right audience.

3.10 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The researcher had difficulty obtaining the information from the slums because of insecurity and language barrier. But the researcher overcame this limitation by training an assistant who is familiar with the slums to collect data. There were questions that were difficult for the women to understand an example was question 12 concerning cognitive, affective, personal integrative, social integrative and diversion needs. But the research assistant and the researcher took time to clearly explain to the respondents till they understood. Question six was how long do you spend on phone in a day? This

question raised some concerns that in a day even the minimum 30 minutes translated to too much money on airtime for the women, thus the time was changed to indicate in a week. Another barrier was the request for incentives to fill the forms but the researcher explained the study was for academic purposes. Time and resources was another limitation but this was overcome by having the sample size small. The research assistant was invaluable in time management and manoeuvring the alleys of Kiandutu.

CHAPTER FOUR - DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATIONS

4.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the results and findings obtained from the respondents of the study. The data is presented using thematic analysis as well as in the form of tables, graphs and pie charts. As noted by Stone (1977:36) measuring theme involves noting recurrent information embedded in the text. He contends that a thematic analysis of a text is quite informal and involves more or less judgments rather than precise numerical measurements. A theme is a pattern found in the information which describes and organizes the possible observations as well as interprets aspects of the phenomenon.

4.1 PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

4.1.1 Response Rate

The researcher issued 100 questionnaires to the female residents of Kiandutu slums Thika. Out of these 90 questionnaires were fully responded to and returned to the researcher. Figure 4.1 represents this response rate.

Figure 4.1 Response rate
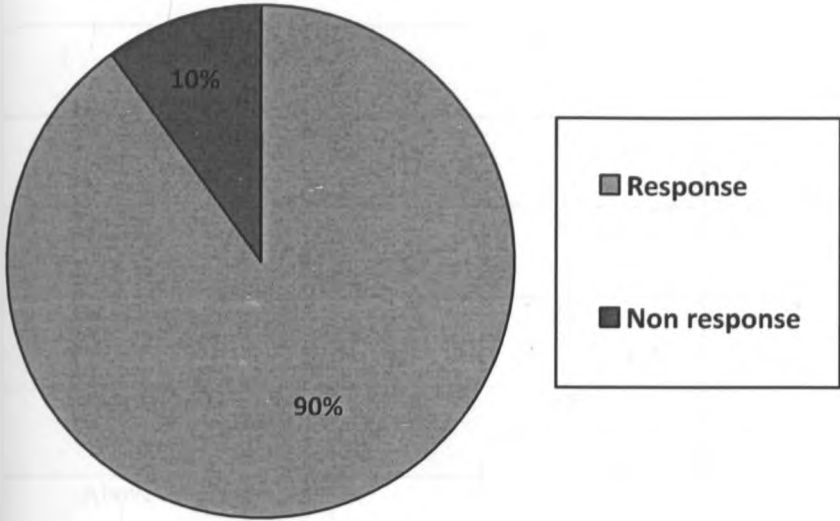
An analysis of Figure 4.1 above indicates that there was 90% response rate and 10% non response rate.

4.1.2 Age group of respondents

Table 4.1 analysis on age group of respondents

Age	Frequency	Percentage
Below 25 years	18	20
26-35 years	31	34
36-45 years	23	26
46-55 years	12	13
Above 55 years	6	7
Total	**90**	**100**

The age distribution of the respondents indicate that 20% of the respondents were below the age of 25 years; 34% 26-35 years; 26% 36-45 years;13% 46-55 years; and 7% above 55 years.

4.1.3 Marital status of the respondents

Figure 4.2 Analysis on the marital status of respondents
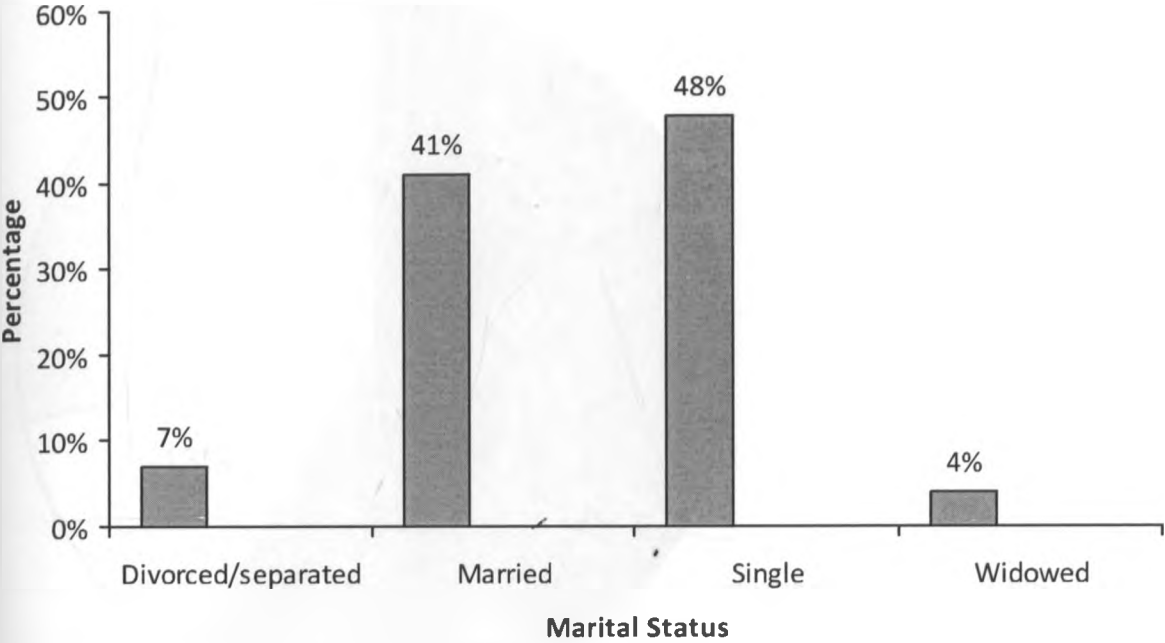
From the analysis the researcher noted that Kiandutu slums has single women with the highest percentage of 48%, followed by married women with 41%, with 7% for divorced/separated and only 4% for widowed women.

4.1.4 Level of education

Figure 4.3 Analysis on the level of education
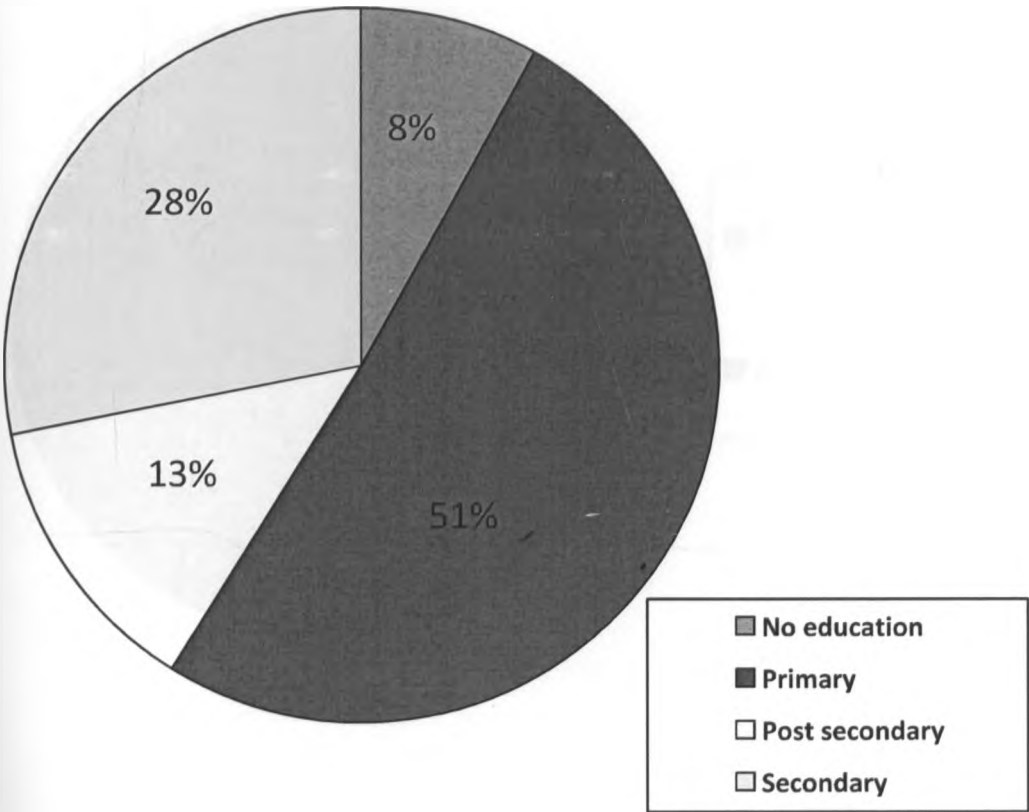
The findings indicated that 8% of the respondents had no education, 51% primary education, 28% secondary and 13% post secondary education.

4.1.5 Phone ownership

Figure 4.4 Analysis on Ownership of phone
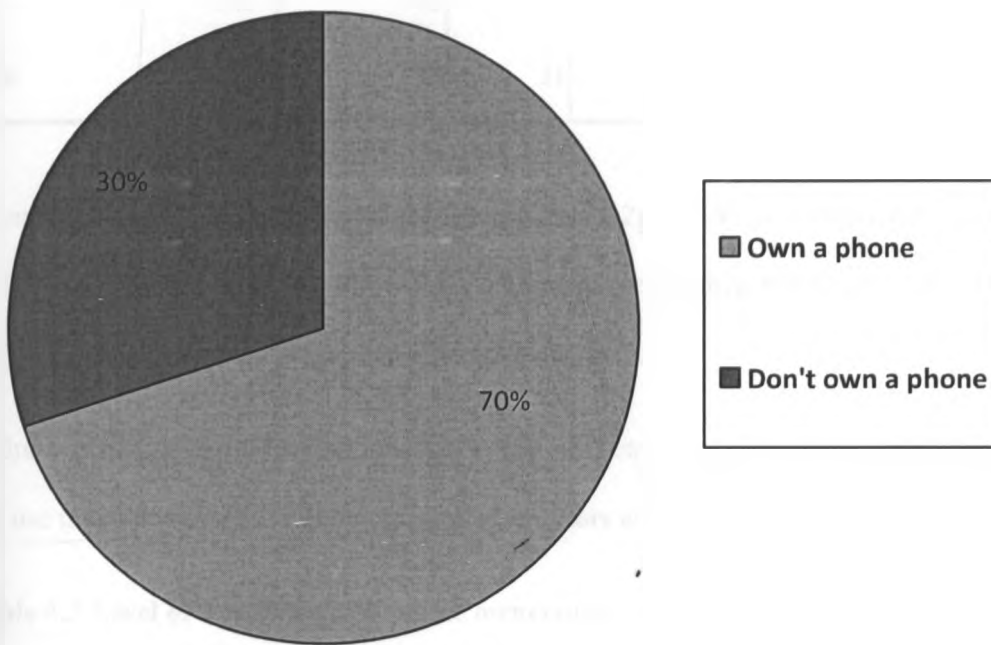
The findings indicated that 70% of the respondents own a phone whereas 30% of the respondents responded that they did not own a phone.

Table 4.2 Age group and ownership of phone

		Age group					
		Below 25yrs	26-35yrs	36-45yrs	46-55yrs	Above 55yrs	Total
Ownership of phone	No	3	8	5	6	5	27
	Yes	15	23	18	6	1	63
Total		18	31	23	12	6	90

The findings indicate that those women between the ages 26 and 35 years have the majority ownership of cell phones, followed by those between 36 and 45 years, then below 25 years, 46-55 years and finally with those above 55 years with the least ownership.

The findings also indicate that respondents below 25 years of age use their phones frequently. 26-35 years use theirs occasionally, as do those of 36-45 years and 46-55 years.

Table 4.3 Level of education and phone ownership

		Level of education				Total
		No education	Primary	Post secondary	Secondary	
Ownership of phone	No	4	4	3	16	27
	Yes	3	21	9	30	63
Total		7	25	12	46	90

Analysis from the above figure indicated that respondents with secondary school education have the majority ownership of cell phones, followed by those who have primary school education, and then post secondary education whilst those with no education were the least to own a phone.

Figure 4.5 Period of owning a phone
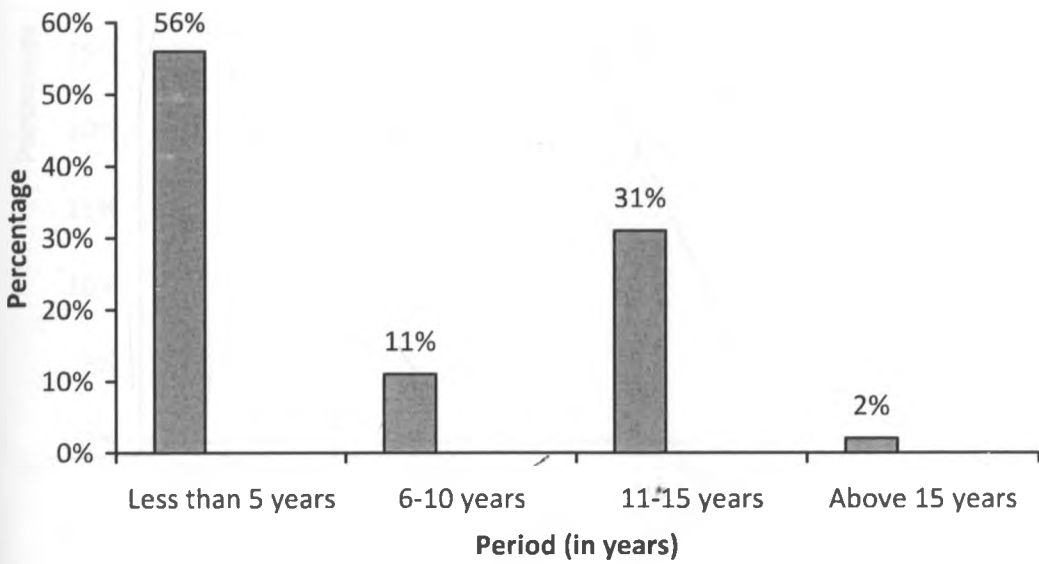
The findings show that 56% of the respondents have owned a phone for a period of less than five years; 11% between 6 and 10 years; 31% between 11 and 15 years; and 2% for a period of above 15 years.

Figure 4.6 Frequency of using the phone in a day
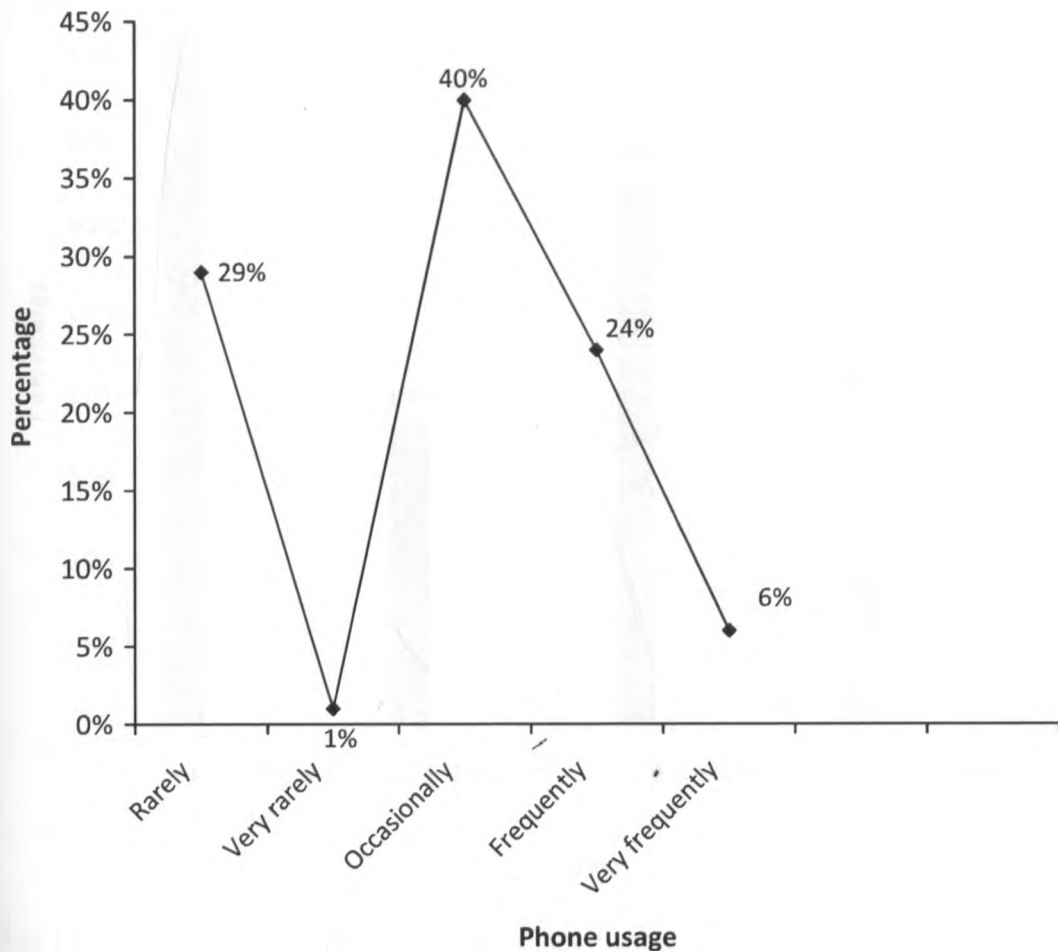
An analysis from Figure 4.6 above indicates that 24% of the respondents use their phones frequently, 40% occasionally, 29% rarely, 6% very frequent and 1% very rarely. This can be interpreted that the majority of Kiandutu women use their phones occasionally.

Figure 4.7 Time spent on phone in a week
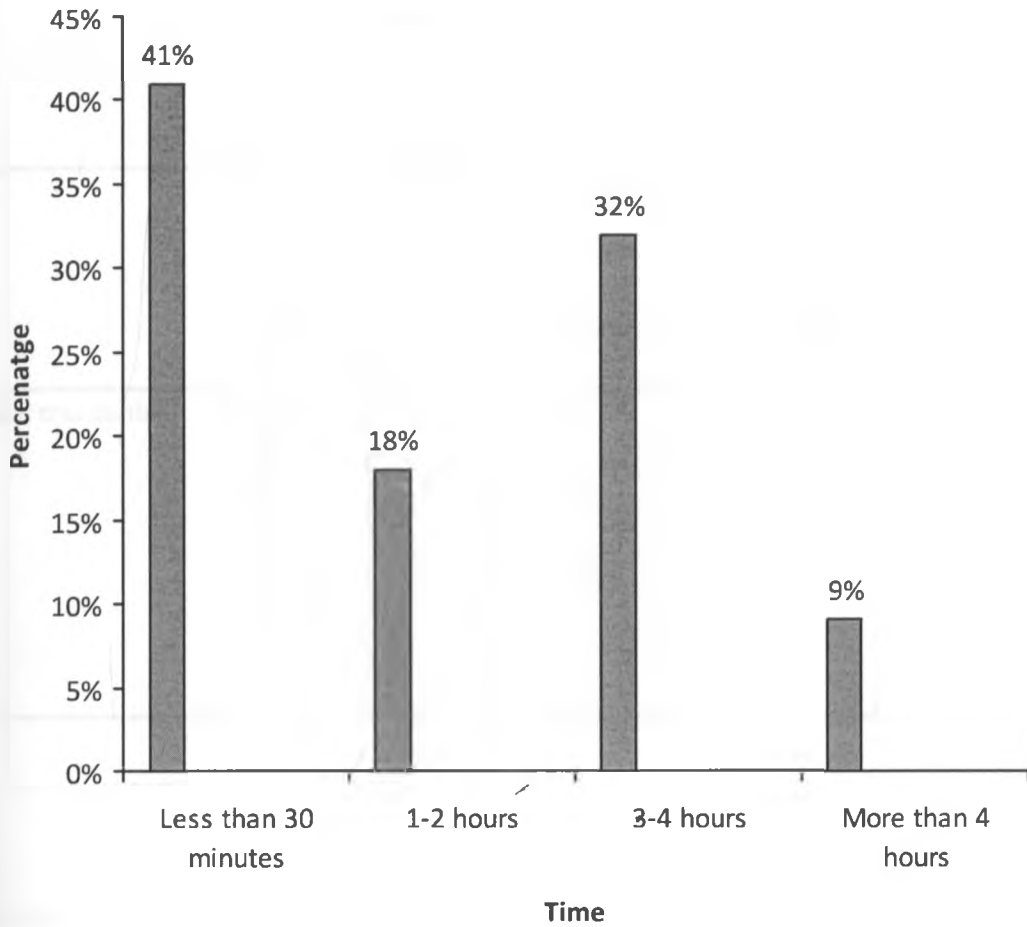
From Figure 4.7 above, the findings indicate that the majority of the women in the slums use their phones for less than 30 minutes with 41.1%, followed by those of 3-4 hours, then those of 17.8% between 1 and 2 hours and finally 8.9% for those more than 4 hours.

This question raised some concerns that in a day even 30 minutes translated to too much airtime for the women, it was explained that it included more than just voice but all the amenities on the mobile phone. However, the question was changed to a week to reflect the reality and concerns of the respondents.

Table 4.4 Analysis on use of mobile phone for financial transaction

        & financial transaction per day

		(Yes) Financial transaction per day					
		Never	Very rarely	Occasionally	Frequently	Very frequently	Total
Financial transaction	No	2	1	5	18	0	26
	Yes	3	4	36	15	6	64
Total		5	5	41	33	6	90

From table 4.4 above findings indicates that 74% of the women use their phones on financial transactions whereas 26% of the respondents do not.

For those who do use their phone for financial transactions - frequent transaction per day were 37%, 45% occasionally and 7% very frequent and 6% very rarely. This showed that 7% used their phones most.

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Figure 4.8 Phones with entertainment features
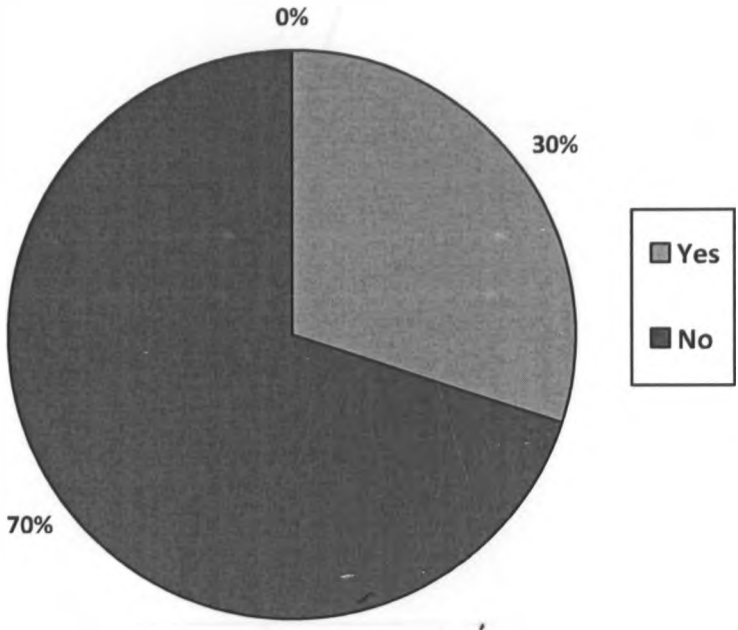
From figure 4.8 above findings shows that those women in Kiandutu slums who have got phones with entertainment features were 30% and those who did not were the majority at 70%. This can be interpreted that majority of women in the slums own cheaper phones with no entertainment features.

Figure 4.9 Overall usage of phone
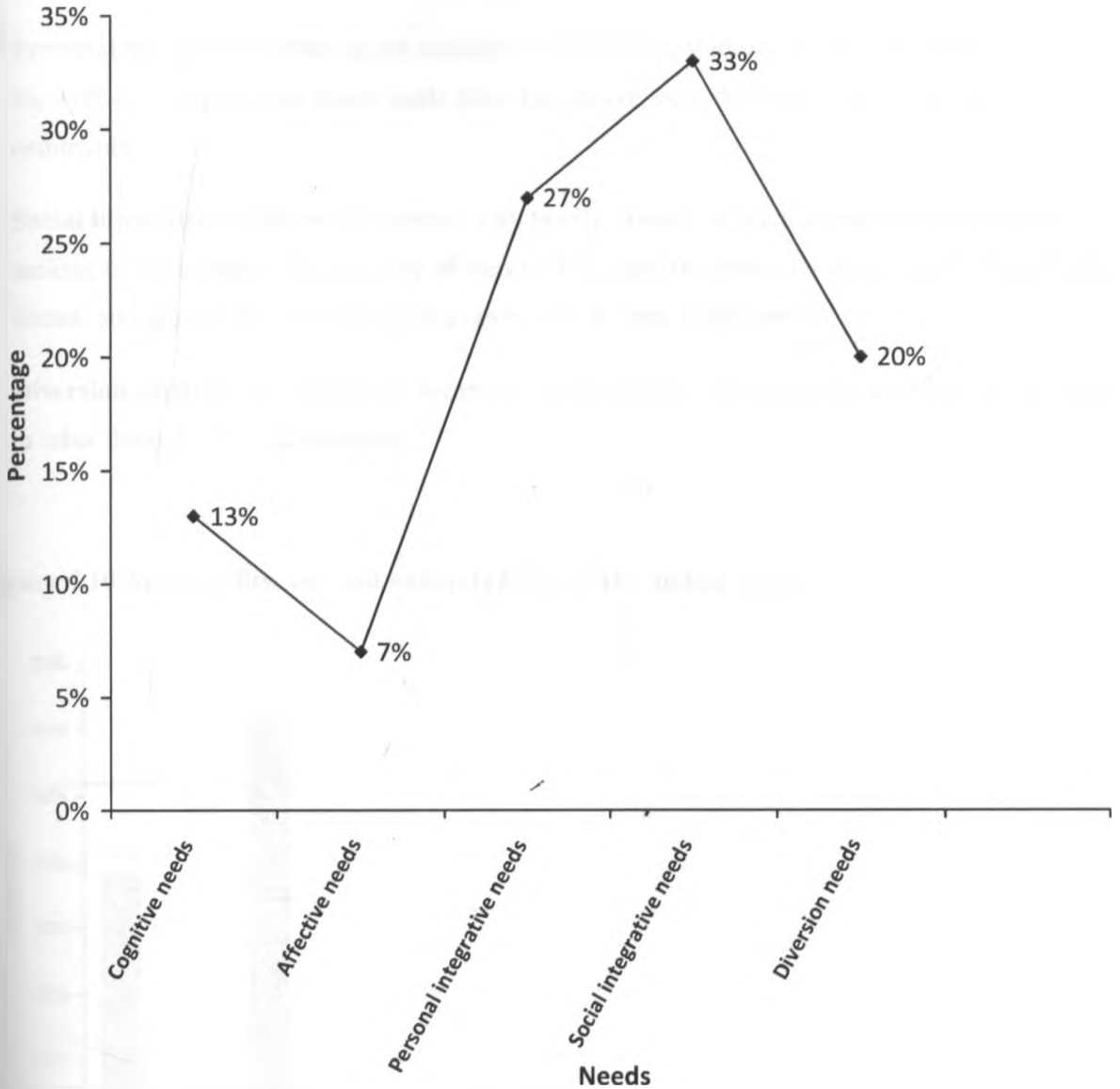
From figure 4.9 above analysis shows that 13% of the women in Kiandutu slums use their cell phone for cognitive needs, 7% for affective needs, 27% for personal integrative needs, 33% for social integrative needs and 20% for diversion needs.

Cognitive needs are for news, information, knowledge, or understanding of our environment. Here 13% of the women mentioned communicating to seek news of occurrences in the country.

Affective needs are for fun, aesthetic, pleasurable, or emotional experiences. Here 7% of the women mentioned listening to radio.

Personal integrative needs are for credibility, confidence, stability, or personal status- Here 27% the women mentioned the phone made them feel secure, confident and someone of worth in the community.

Social integrative needs are for contact with family, friends, women groups, church members, job seeking or community. The majority of women 33% used the phone for voice and SMS to family, friends and groups that they belonged to as well as to seek employment.

Diversion needs are for relaxation, escape, or stress release. Here 20% the women used the phone to relax through listening to music.

Figure 4.10 Accessibility, use and understanding of the mobile phone
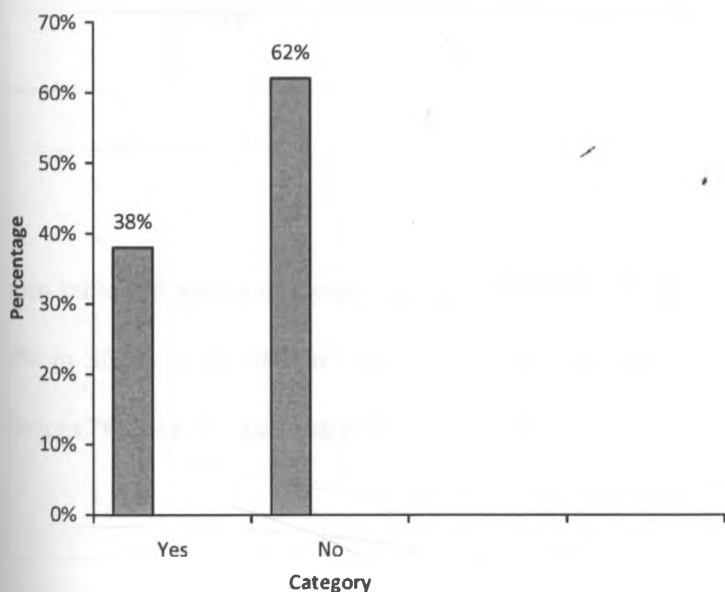
From Figure 4.10 above findings indicates that 38% of Kiandutu women felt they have same access, use and understanding of the mobile whereas 62% felt they do not have same access, use and understanding of the mobile phone. This can be translated to that the majority of Kiandutu slums women feel they do not have access usage and understanding of the mobile phone equal to the men.

Table 4.5 Areas respondents use most in their phones

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Voice call	44	49%
SMS	17	19%
Social sites	9	10%
Multi media	1	1%
Internet	6	7%
Financial services	13	14%
Total	**90**	**100%**

From table 4.5 above analyses indicates that 49% of the respondents use their phones in voice calls, 19% in SMSs, with 10% in social sites and1% in multi-media, 7% in internet and 14% for financial services. This shows that majority use their phones for voice calls, SMSs and financial services.

Figure 4.11 The benefits of mobile phones to the women
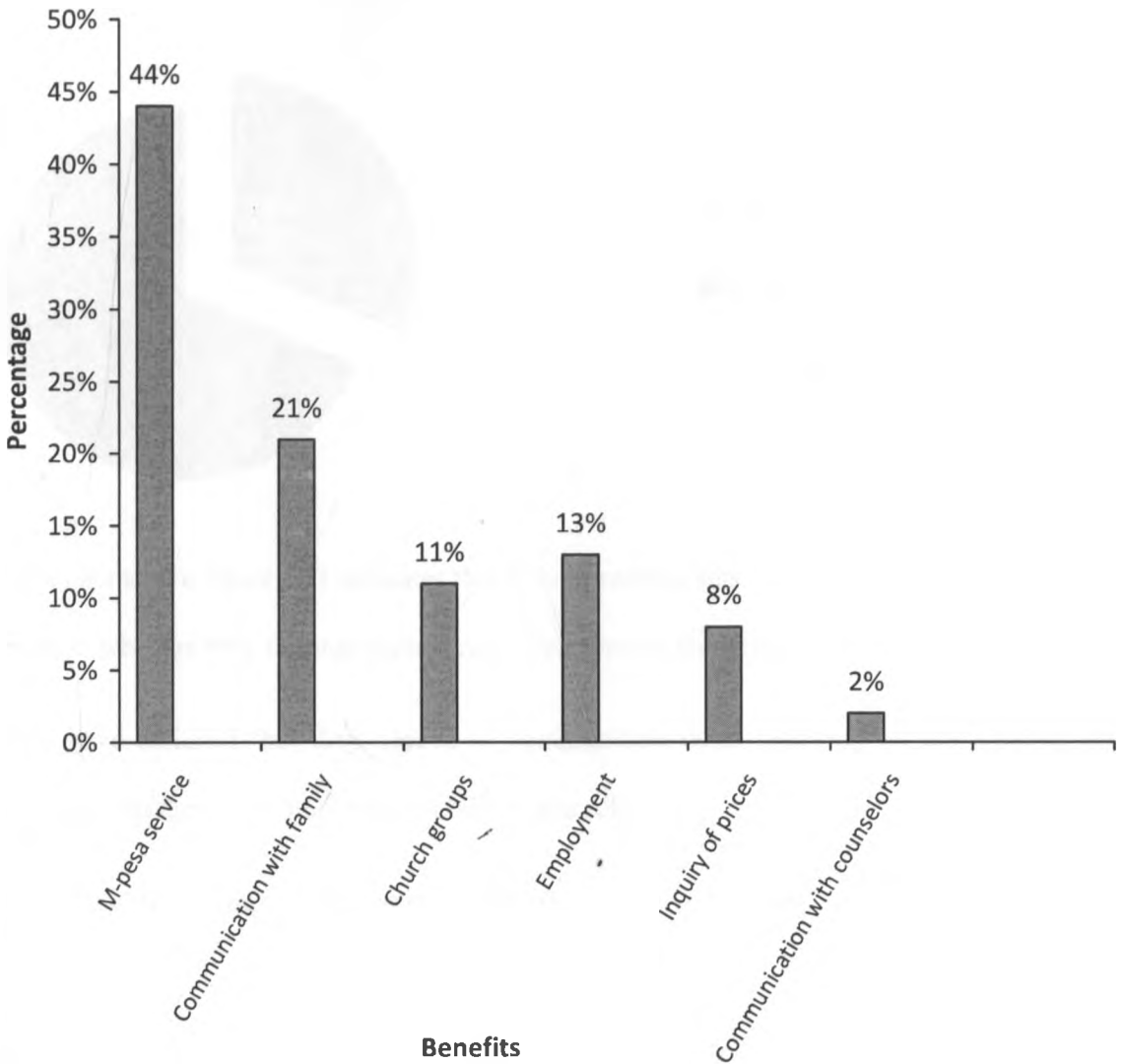
Analysis from figure 4.13 above shows that the respondents indicated that the benefits they receive from cell phones includes the mobile money services such as M-Pesa with 44%, 21% of the women use the phones to communicate with family, friends and to monitor their children when away, 11% communicate with women or church groups, 13% seek employment such as washing clothes, 8% of women who sell foodstuff in the Kiandutu market use the phones to inquire market prices of the products they sale and only 2% use their cell phones to communicate with HIV/Aids agencies that provide them with drugs, counseling or foodstuffs.

Figure 4.12 According to the women who needs a phone most between men and women
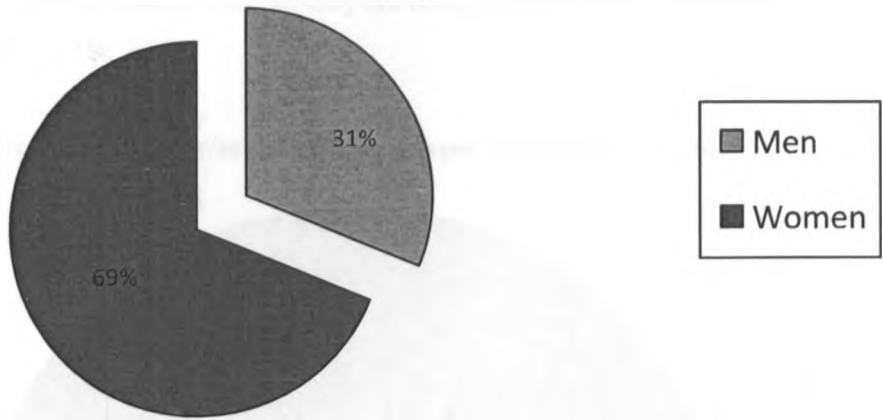
Analysis from the above figure 4.11 indicates that 31% of respondents felt that men need phones more than the women whereas 69% felt that women need their phones more than men.

Reason they gave included that they needed to communicate when checking on the children and family more and that they have more responsibilities and roles.

Figure 4.13 Marginalization in usage and gratification of the cell phone
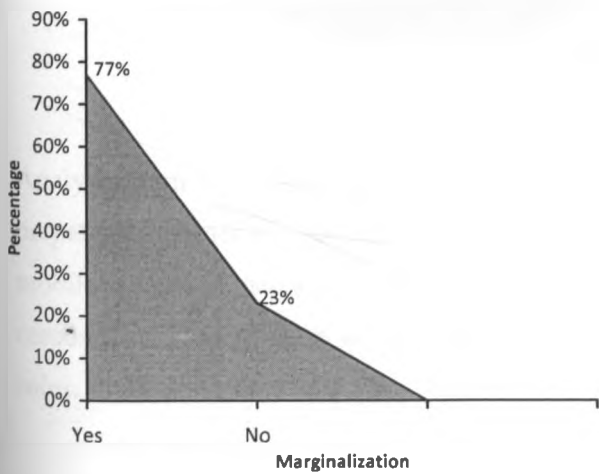
Analysis from figure 4.12 above indicates women felt that there is marginalization in Kiandutu slums in respect to mobile phone usage access and understanding or gratification. This was represented by 77% of the respondents who felt they are marginalized whereas 23% felt they are not.

Figure 4.14 Whether mobile phone perpetuates gender divide
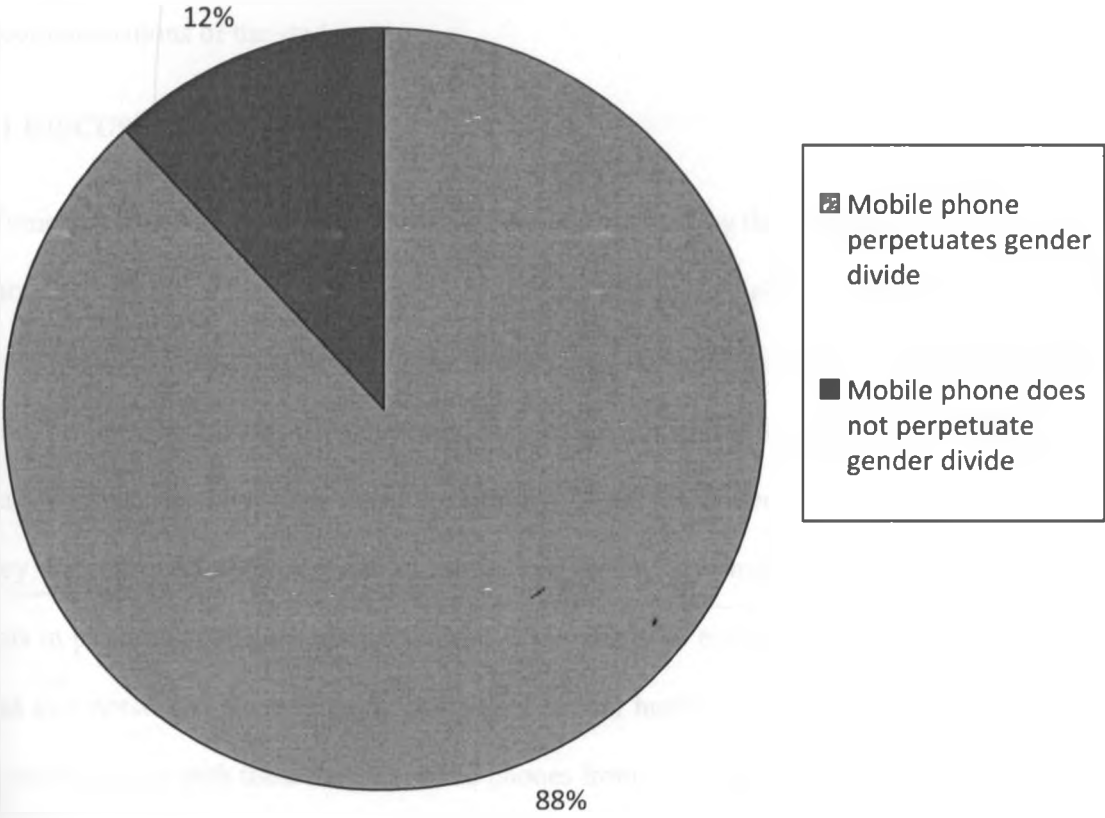
Analysis from figure 4.14 above indicates that majority of the respondents felt the mobile phone perpetuates gender divide. This was represented by 88% of the respondents who revealed that the mobile phone perpetuates gender divide whereas 12% of the women disagreed. Most of the respondents blamed it on women being poorer, less educated, less empowered and having triple roles.

CHAPER FIVE – DISCUSSIONS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter consists of discussions elicited by major findings of the research, conclusions and recommendations of the study.

5.1 DISCUSSIONS

Women in Kiandutu do have cell phones. This is supported by the fact that 70% were found to own phones whilst a few borrow from spouses or friends for mainly calling and short message purposes. Subsequently, women strongly felt that phone usage is beneficial and greatly needed. Respondents who did not own phones often revealed they could not afford the phone or the airtime. From the study findings the researcher noted the majority of the respondents have little education and hence they are exposed to a bigger risk of not having the full information about what the phone entails. This in particular translates to that women in the slums do not have full usage of mobile phones. It was also noted that some of them indicated that their husbands own phones and when they needed to communicate with them they borrowed phones from neighbors, family or friends.

There was a high response rate and almost all of the women gave their names. This was interpreted to be because the subject of mobile uses and gratification was not a sensitive subject shrouded in taboo, embarrassment and stigma or requiring much confidentiality. It was a positive desirable and empowering topic for the women. The women were very willing to answer the questions for data collection purposes as proven by the 90% response rate.

Women responded that they mainly use voice and simple message services due to these being cheap, easy and instant modes of communication. This was construed to be due to the women's

low literacy levels as well as low economic status. Those with phones used them mainly for calling, short message services and financial transactions. The features that were shown to be most beneficial to the women were therefore the voice, sms and financial services.

Most of the women use mobile phones for economic transactions; this is because they do not have access to the traditional banking facilities which require formalities such as deposits, collateral or accounts. Women portend the benefits they receive include mobile money services such as M-Pesa which has made it easier for them to send and receive money instead of going to the banks.

Due to poverty most of the women use the phone for short periods of time because for them airtime is expensive and very few of the women use internet or social sites mainly due to lack of awareness these facilities exist, lack of interest and little knowledge on how to use them. This is due to low levels of literacy and low purchasing power.

Reasons they gave for needing the phones more than men included that they belonged to more groups such as church and women groups. So they require to communicate to these groups, talk to friends, listen to radio and are more interested in music especially gospel music. 69% of the women felt that they needed mobile phones more than men. They felt that women have more responsibilities, as well as they talk more than men. Women carry many roles; have more burdens of household and domestic chores, urgently seek subsistence jobs, are more active community members, and more often caregivers to extended family and the sick. The reason the women needed the phones more include; they not only work but also nurture, are caregivers, and are active in community work, do domestic chores, monitor children and are often seeking menial jobs through the phones. Scarce employment opportunities make earnest seeking of work necessary for the women through their phones. They also inquire about, buy and sell commodities using the phones. This means that society has burdened women with too many tasks, roles and responsibilities and in many cases they are single parents. Single parenthood means women carry

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unequal responsibilities and therefore compounds poverty thus marginalizing them further in cellphone use. This translates to bias distribution of labour in the private and public sphere.

The scourge of diseases such as HIV/aids has also necessitated the women use the mobile phones to communicate to organizations that provide assistance such as antiretroviral, food, drugs and to contact health care providers. This is often because they are the primary caregivers to the sick and orphaned.

The women face difficult living conditions, unemployment, lack of security and poverty in Kiandutu slums and therefore sometimes listening to radio and music on the phone assists them to release stressful tension.

Although the women of Kiandutu slums have embraced and benefitted from the mobile phones there is marginalization leading to gender divide. This can be seen from 77% of the women declaring this. Women felt that there is marginalization in Kiandutu slums in respect to mobile phone usage access and understanding or gratification. This was represented by of the majority of the respondents who felt they are marginalized. The majority of women therefore acknowledged that there is gender divide due to communication in mobile phone use in Kiandutu. Reasons for the gender divide were inequality through low literacy levels, poverty, majority single women headed households, lack of security and low confidence or apathy and understanding levels in the use of the cellphone.

The women strongly admitted that there is marginalization in Kiandutu slums in respect to mobile phone usage access and understanding or gratification. The major findings revealed that women do not have the same access, understanding or gratification with cell phones because women are not financially stable since they work for little pay and many live on subsistence of hand to mouth

manner in the slums. Many Kiandutu slum women are single parents or dependants on men and have low levels of education.

Reasons for gender divide were various. The majority of the women in the slums have primary education which makes it difficult for them to get well paying jobs. Women do menial jobs, are busy with domestic chores and struggling to sustain their families leaving little money to buy such items as mobile phones. Many of the households are also headed by single parents who are women. Some of the women lamented that their husbands forbid them from owning phones to discourage them from calling other men. The less educated and older respondents often displayed some apathy and sense of disentitlement feeling phones were for their men-folk. One respondent felt her male partner would know about filling her questionnaire better. Consequently, the majority at 88% revealed that the mobile phone perpetuates gender divide whereas 12% of the women disagreed. Most of the respondents blamed it on women being poorer, less educated, less empowered and having more roles and responsibilities.

Fundamentally therefore the study revealed that women do have access to phones and some of them indicated that their husbands own phones and when they needed to communicate with them they borrowed phones from neighbors, family or friends. But the vast majority responded that the mobile phone perpetuates gender divide due to women being poorer, less educated, less empowered, having too many roles and responsibilities which society has placed on them, are heading single households, moreover have apathy towards phones due to perceptions and stereotypes places on them by society. Women in Kiandutu slums do therefore face marginalization due to gender divide due to lack of full use, access and gratification of the phone.

5.2 CONCLUSION

Conclusively from the study the researcher can concede that the women do have some access to mobile phone. They do use the mobile phones and do derive some benefits from the uses and gratification of this important communication device but it does perpetuate gender divide due to various disadvantages faced by the women. Uses and gratification theory guides the study into realizing that women have needs and know as well as are proactive towards these desires. It seeks answers to what women do with the phones and what they need them for as well as what gratification is received. In this study it was concluded that the cellphone plays several useful roles as well as fulfills various needs in the lives of Kiandutu women. To encompass these, the uses and gratification of the mobile phones by Kiandutu slum women were placed into the classification proposed by the uses and gratification theory specifically cognitive, affective, personal and social integrative, as well as tension free or diversion release needs.

To fulfill their cognitive needs the majority of women used the phone through voice and simple message services to seek news or knowledge about family and friends. They were able to monitor children whilst at work. Some of the women used mobile phones to seek news of occurrences in the country. Few listened to news and informative programs on the radio. Their cognitive needs were also fulfilled by the phone as they used it to seek employment. The market women were able to confirm prices of commodities and this saves them cost of travel and time.

For affective needs fulfillment the women mentioned they used the mobile phone to listen to radio; this was in order to have fun or be entertained. Some tuned into the radio stations to compete in competitions or to send greetings to friends, relatives, or colleagues.

For personal integrative needs the women felt the mobile phone made them feel more confident and gave them a sense of self worth. They are able to communicate quickly and relatively cheaply as well as fulfill their financial transactions through such banking facilities as Equity Bank's M-pesa. It also made them feel secure as they could get in touch with neighbours or law enforcement in times of danger such as gangsters, rapists or in time of medical emergency especially during pregnancy.

To fulfill their social integrative needs many of the women use and derive benefits from the phones for communicating chiefly through voice and sms with various groups that they are members of such as church, community welfare or women groups commonly called 'chamas.'

In order to realize their diversion or tension free needs the women use the mobile phones to listen to music. This assists them to relax and release tension or stress as well as provides enjoyment.

Despite these benefits being female mean they face various disadvantages in connection to communication through mobile phones. The women lamented that they should be financed by the government and development agencies to buy phones since often the cost was out of their reach. Further they were limited in understanding how to use the mobile phones. Other impediments they faced were poverty, low literacy levels, lack of full knowledge of how to access and use the facilities on the phones, lack of confidence or empowerment to know they are equal to men in mobile phone use. Accordingly therefore from the study the researcher can concede that the hypothesis that women face marginalization in use and gratification of the cell phone due to gender divide is true. There is reason to accept this hypothesis that among the Kiandutu slum women, mobile phones are not equally accessed, used, or understood due to being female.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

As Idemili (1994:74) points out the importance of mass communication in any modern society cannot be overemphasized. He further argues that cumulatively communication plays a vital role in national development, national integration and enlightenment. This is a pointer to the fact that mass communication permeates the core of a society's past, present and future. Gender divide is an injustice because it denies a segment of the society the right to full and equal participation in communication which is a key sphere of life. With knowledge from such a study remedies can be sought.

In view of the findings therefore the researcher recommends various suggestions towards equal uses and gratification of the mobile phone among the Kiandutu slum residents.

The investigation revealed that the majority of women in Kiandutu have primary education and some secondary with the minority post secondary and a few have no education. This shows that they have the potential for empowerment through training and business opportunities in order to understanding and utilize mobile phones to earn livings. More women should be encouraged to go back to school and adult literacy classes should be availed. More schools should be set up by the government that will enable more people in the slums get free education which is a big investment in the slums future. The phone manufacturers should make the devices easier and simpler to use for the women. Seminars and training should be offered to the women to enable them fully understand the use of cell phones and the benefits of owning them. Women in Kiandutu need to be educated on the changing dynamics of society and how to take more opportunities in regards to communication devices such as the mobile phones, and the many features it offers. Topics to be considered in such forums for education should include the different needs, roles and interests of women; the relations between women and men pertaining to access and control of resources and services; changing norms due to the power dynamics between men and women; spousal

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communication; decision making in the homes that can lead to social and cultural constraints leading to missed opportunities such as this case of the mobile phone.

The government through the ministries responsible such as the Ministry of Information and Communication and the Ministry of Gender should implement income generation projects that are communication based such as telecentres manned by women to help them reduce the poverty levels. The flagship project for women in Vision 2030 is the Women Enterprise Fund. This fund needs to give cash subsidies to the low economic status women of Kiandutu for them to start small businesses because many of the women lamented their main impediment was financial empowerment; therefore it appears resources from such funds is not trickling down to them. Questions also need to be asked regarding the capacities of the chosen strategies to generate the kind of employment opportunities that can lift the poor out of the poverty trap. Adequate financing may not always translate to the women using the mobile phones more but is desirable accordingly it is also proposed that awareness campaigns to educate the women on how best to maximize their phones should be conducted regularly. Infrastructure needs to be improved an example being electricity and road this is for the women to reach facilities easily. Solar panels to charge phones should be subsidized for slum women.

It is also recommended that mobile phone booths for women be set up in Kiandutu where at a small fee women can be given phones to use for financial transactions such as M-Pesa or to call or text to cater for those unable to buy or have regular airtime. In order to familiarize and make women comfortable with these channels of communication at these booths women can be educated in a simple manner how to access the many unfamiliar facilities available on the cell phones. Women groups can also be given loans at a special rate to buy phones cheaply through their merry-go-round basis.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

This research studied women and their uses and gratification of the mobile phone in a slum environment with a view to determining whether this means of communication perpetuates gender divide and subsequently it is recommended that further research be done with emphasis on men. Other suggestions for further studies include such groups as youth, rural populace, affluent inhabitants, and university students. The uses and gratification of other media channels such as the radio can also be considered. This study revealed that husbands have some control over their wives communication therefore further research could be done to determine what role husbands play in controlling the use of mobile phones by their wives.

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APPENDIX 1: QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear Respondent

My name is Salina Chepkurgat Kiptalam, a postgraduate student at the School of Journalism and Mass Communication, University of Nairobi. As part of the degree requirement in my postgraduate program, I am carrying out a study on *"The cellphone gender divide: analysis of uses and gratifications of the cellphone among the Kiandutu slum women, Thika, Kiambu County".*

Kindly assist me by completing this questionnaire. Any information provided will be used purely for academic purposes. The information provided will be treated with utmost confidentiality. Your participation in this study is voluntary and you can pull out at any point without any consequences whatsoever. Thanks for your valuable time in filling this questionnaire.

Instructions:

Please tick the appropriate box (√) that represents your response or fill in the blank spaces with the appropriate information.

SECTION A: BIO-DATA

1. Name

(Optional)...

2. Age group (years)

Below 25 ☐

26-35 ☐

36-45 ☐

46-55 ☐

Above 55 years ☐

3. Marital status

Single ☐

Married ☐

Divorced/separated ☐

Widowed ☐

4. Highest level of education

No education ☐

Primary ☐

Secondary ☐

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Post Secondary ☐

SECTION B: USES AND GRATIFICATION OF THE MOBILE PHONE

5. Do you own a phone?

Yes ☐

No ☐

If yes, go to 6.

6. For how long have you owned a phone?

Less than 5 years ☐

6-10 years ☐

11-15 years ☐

Above 15 years ☐

7. How often do you use your phone in a day?

Very rarely ☐

Rarely ☐

Occasionally ☐

Frequently ☐

Very frequently ☐

8. How long do you spend on phone in a day?

Less than 30 minutes ☐

1-2 hours ☐

3-4 hours ☐

More than 4 hours ☐

9. Do you use your phone for financial transactions?

Yes ☐

No ☐

10. How often do you use the cell phone in a day for financial transactions?

Never ☐

Very rarely ☐

Occasionally ☐

Frequently ☐

Very frequently ☐

11. Does your phone have entertainment features?

Yes   ▢

No   ▢

If yes,

Which ones do you use?

....

....

12. Please rate your overall usage of your phone where the numbers represent:

1-never; 2-very rarely; 3-occasionally; 4-frequently; 5-very frequently

Needs	1	2	3	4	5	6
Cognitive Needs (For news, information, knowledge, or understanding of our environment).						
Affective Needs (For fun, aesthetic, pleasurable, or emotional experiences)						
Personal Integrative Needs (For credibility, confidence, stability, or personal status).						
Social Integrative Needs—For contact with family, friends,, women groups, church members, job seeking or community.						
Diversion Needs—For relaxation, escape, , or stress release						

Is there any other need you wish to comment upon or add...

....

13. In Kiandutu do you think women and men have the same access, use or understanding of the mobile phone?

Yes   .   ▢

No   ▢

If No how and why..

....

If Yes how and why...

....

14. In order of preference which areas in your phone do like using?

Voice (calling and receiving calls) [   ]

Short Message Service (SMS) [   ]

Application [   ]

Social Sites (Face Book, Twitter, Ovi Store) [   ]

Multi media [   ]

Google [   ]

Internet [   ]

Camera [   ]

Financial Services [   ]

15. Name a few benefits associated with the ownership of mobile phones?

....

....

....

....

16. Comparing your Mobile Phone to that of a male counterpart, who needs a mobile phone most

Yours [   ]

His [   ]

17. If you think the man needs a phone most, briefly explain why you feel the male counterpart has more need for his phone than you.

....

....

18. Do you think women are at any disadvantage in respect to mobile phone use or access or understanding or gratification?

Yes

No

If Yes explain

....

....

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19. Briefly explain what can be done to help women use, access and become more gratified with mobile phones.

....

....

....

Thank you for taking time to respond to this questionnaire