

**SOCIAL FACTORS INFLUENCING WOMEN PARTICIPATION IN COMMUNITY
PEACE BUILDING IN SUNA EAST SUB COUNTY MIGORI COUNTY, KENYA**

BY

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DECLARATION

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

Signed: _____ **Date:** _____

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L51/63810/2013

This project report has been presented for examination with my approval as the University supervisor.

Signed: _____ **Date:** _____

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SCHOOL OF CONTINUING AND DISTANCE EDUCATION

UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my sons; Leon, Greg, and Gerald and my mother Sarah.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

To Almighty God, thank you for giving me the faith, courage, tenacity, and passion to pursue and finish this personal goal. I wish to express my sincere gratitude to the University of Nairobi for allowing me undertake this MA course. To my colleagues Anjeline Mwasya, Ernest Ayoma, Joshua Owande, and Magret Mbugua, thank you for your kind support during my study. To my Head teacher, Michael Ojwang and friends; Jane Mogeni and George Ochieng, I am grateful for your encouragement and motivation.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

FEDO	Feminist Dalit Organization
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
NIWC	Northern Ireland Women's Coalition
PWHE	Pastoralists Women Health and Education
UN	United Nations
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
UNSCR	United Nations Secretary General
VCT	Voluntary Counselling Centre
WAVES	Women Against Violence and Exploitation in Society

ABSTRACT

This research study aimed at examining social factors influencing women participation in community peace building, Suna East Sub County. The experiences of women have shown that women are active agents of peace building at the community level. For sustainable peace to be realised it is necessary that women be fully engage in peace building process especially at the community level where they have vast experience with the day to day affairs. This study had the following research objectives:- To assess the influence of gender roles in women participation in community peace building in Suna East sub County. To determine the role of education in influencing women's participation in community peace building in Suna East sub County. To establish how family support influences women participation in community peace building in Suna East sub County. This study used descriptive survey to collect data from the respondents who were women in Suna-East sub-County in Migori County. Within the Sub-County, the study focused on the twenty-five (25) leaders of the five (5) women groups involved in peace education in the Sub-County. The study also engaged five (5) key community leaders, particularly the chiefs and key church leaders; thus having a total population of thirty (30). This study establishes that gender roles influence women participation in community peace building in Suna East Sub County. This is made possible by uniting different families and mobilising people towards peace building efforts in their community. Furthermore, women peace initiatives have helped create lasting peace within the community. Through peace building seminars, education brings about social transformation of women by changing their views on the society and peace hence they become more engaged in civic matters. The family support influence women participation in community peace building. This is so because families accept women proposals on peace, they involve women in peace building activities and also sponsor women activities. This study recommends that the Government of Kenya promotes women participation in community peace building through empowering women in education, peace building training and enacting laws that are likely to promote women participation in community peace building.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION	ii
DEDICATION	iii
ACKNOWLEDGMENT	iv
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	v
ABSTRACT	vi
LIST OF TABLES	x
LIST OF FIGURES	xi
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Background to the study.....	1
1.2 Statement of the problem.....	5
1.3 Purpose of the study	6
1.4 Objectives of the study	6
1.5 Study questions	6
1.6 Significance of the study	7
1.7 Limitations of the study.....	7
1.8 Delimitations of the study.....	7
1.9 Assumptions of the study	7
1.10 Definition of significant terms	8
1.11 Organization of the study.....	9
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW	10
2.1 Introduction.....	10
2.2 Women Participation in Community Peace Building	10
2.3 Gender Roles and Women Participation in Community Peace Building.....	13
2.4 Education and Women Participation in Community Peace Building	14
2.5 Family Support and Women Participation in Community Peace Building.....	15
2.6 Gender Policies and Women Participation in Community Peace Building	16
2.7 Theoretical review	17
2.8 Conceptual framework	20
2.9 Research gap	21
2.10 Chapter summary	21
CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	22
3.1. Introduction.....	22
3.2. Research design.....	22

3.3. Target Population	22
3.4 Sample and Sampling Procedure	23
3.5. Data collection instruments	23
3.6 Validity of the research instruments.....	23
3.7 Reliability of the research instruments.....	24
3.8 Data collection procedure.....	24
3.9. Data analysis and procedures.....	24
3.10 Ethical Considerations.....	25
3.11 Operationalization of variables	25
3.12 Summary.....	27
CHAPTER FOUR : DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSION	28
4.1 Introduction.....	28
4.2 Questionnaires Response Rate.....	28
4.3 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents	28
4.3.1 Age of respondents.....	29
4.3.2 Occupation	29
4.3.4 Respondents’ Position in the group.....	30
4.4 The influence of Gender Roles in Women Participation in Community Peace Building....	31
4.4.1 Discussion	32
4.5: Education and Women Participation in Community Peace Building	33
4.5.1 Discussion	35
4.6 Family Support and Women Participation in Community Peace Building.....	35
4.6.1 Discussion.....	37
4.5 Chapter Summary.....	38
CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS	39
5.1 Introduction.....	39
5.2 Summary of findings	39
5.2.1 The Influence of gender roles in women participation in community peace building	39
5.2.2 Role of education in influencing women’s participation in community peace building.....	39

5.2.3 The influence of family support on women participation in community peace building	39
5.3 Conclusion	40
5.4 Recommendations	40
5.5 Suggestions for further study	41
REFERENCES	42
APPENDICES	45
Appendix I: Questionnaire for women group leaders	45
Appendix II: Letter of Authority to Carry out the Study.....	49

LIST OF TABLES

Table 3.2: Operationalization of variables	26
Table 4.1 Questionnaire Response Rate.....	28
Table 4.2 Age of Respondents.....	29
Table 4.3: Respondents' Occupation	29
Table 4.4 Position of the Respondents.....	30
Table 4.5 Level of Education.....	30
Table 4.6: Regularity of Women discussion on Peace Building issues	31
Table 4.7: By uniting different Families Women take part in Community Peace Building	31
Table 4.8: Role of Women Peace Initiatives in helping Women create lasting Peace within the Community.....	32
Table 4.9: Attendance at the Community Peace Building Seminar.....	33
Table 4.10: Role of Educationin changing Women's Perception.....	34
Table 4.11: Education creates Social Transformation	34
Table 4.12: Influence of Educationin enabling Women to be more civically engaged	35
Table 4.13: Sponsorship by Families to Women Activities	36
Table 4.15 Families' Acceptance of Women proposals on Peace.....	36
Table 4.15Families involving Women in Peace Building Activities.....	37

LIST OF FIGURES

Fig. 1: Conceptual Framework	20
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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the study

Women participation in peace building is crucial if sustainable peace is to be realised. However, the challenge has been the sidelining of women in most of the activities in the society. Women have great potential in equal measure to that of men when it comes to participation in peace building. Women participation in peace building can be influenced by social factors such as; gender roles, education and family support. These factors make it possible for women to participate in the community peace building (Corey and Levine, 2011).

Conflict is one of the major challenges facing sustainable development in most African countries and the world at large. Intervention efforts have being made to combat escalating number of conflicts being witnessed today both at the international level and at the local community level. Peace building at the community level is one of the latest conflict resolution methods that have proved to be effective in combating conflicts especially the intra-state conflict; which has currently gained momentum (Thelma, 2001).

When people start threatening each other with violence, often only local organisations are able to mount a rapid response, and prevent people from being killed or forced to flee. Local organisations also prevent immediate violence by reducing the number of militia members, including children, through offering a safe return to civilian life, and by dissuading people from joining violent movements (Corey and Levine, 2011).

All societies have traditional indigenous methods of dealing with violent conflict – if they did not, they would not function as societies. But where levels of violence have been high, for example in post-conflict situations or under an exceptionally repressive regime, additional

peace building structures may be needed. These give communities the resilience to deal with conflicts whenever they arise, reducing the level of violence even if they cannot eliminate it completely (Joyce and Kristen, 2010).

Gender and peace building at the community level has dominated public discourse both among the scholars and policy makers. The role of women in peace building has always elicited fierce reactions from both opposers and proposers of it. However it is important to note that women play a critical role in peace building just as much as they are equally affected by the conflict as men do. Women suffer in equal measure as men during the conflicts, thus their contributions to the peace building at the local community should be perceived to be just as equal to that of the male gender that has more often than not dominated the peace building process (Joyce and Kristen, 2010).

The men in the communities understand peace more in terms of absence of conflict and insecurity at community or regional levels, freedom of movement, and having job opportunities. Lack of money to buy food is a major factor contributing to lack of peace at home, expressed by both women and men. Women in both communities conceived of peace as the freedom to live the lives they chose, to send their children to school, to move around freely without threat, to live without violence or conflict within their homes, and to be able to feed their families. Hence both understanding of peace from the women and men perspective can be put together to bring about sustainable peace at the local community (Sylvester,2002).

During the violent conflict women are raped, assaulted, forced into prostitution, and subjected to all manner of human rights violations. This renders women strategically placed to address specific issues relating to women in conflict based on the ordeal experiences that they go through during conflicts. Therefore women participation in peace building may

increase the chances of obtaining sustainable peace since their pertinent issues are likely to be adequately addressed (Thelma, 2001).

Women participation in community peace building has taken shape in a number of countries throughout the world. In Nepal for example; women collaborate with local women's rights organisations to become highly active at the local level in resolving conflict and building sustainable peace. For instance; Feminist Dalit Organization (FEDO) has been partnering with women in the local communities to empower marginalised women to claim their rights, tackle discrimination and become political leaders (Womankind Worldwide, 2013).

Women Against Violence and Exploitation in Society (WAVES) is a grassroots women's rights organisation founded by the local community women based in Bo District of Sierra Leone, working in rural, marginalised communities supporting women and girl survivors of violence. Supported by Womankind, they promote access to justice for women in three Chiefdoms, reaching ten communities. They have implemented activities related to education and awareness-raising on women's rights, training on gender laws, support (counselling, accompaniment to report) to women and girl survivors of violence, and advocacy for women's rights issues such as forced marriage, women's land rights and domestic violence. They also work with men and male leaders in each community, so that they listen to women's issues and themselves become 'ambassadors' of their cause. Future planned work include livelihoods support activities as WAVES has realised that economic hardship is a key obstacle for women's participation within communities (Womankind Worldwide, 2013).

In Liberia women in both communities organised themselves collectively and formed support networks and groups at the local level. They understood that when someone has a problem, everybody has a problem. This helped them to overcome obstacles created by cultural barriers, such as patriarchal norms and values, to create spaces where they can be heard, settle

disputes, address unjust treatment of children, propose initiatives for community development and seek justice for survivors of violence and sexual abuse. Importantly, this was observed both in a community with direct support from NGOs as well as in a community with no direct support (Womankind Worldwide, 2013).

Women participation in community peace building in Kenya is not different from the global arena. Pastoralist Women for Health and Education (PWHE) a women led community based organization has promoted women peace builders in the region by pushing for affirmative action in the selection of officials in peace structures at the district, location and divisional levels. The organisation conducts trainings on HIV/AIDS prevention and carries out outreach programmes encouraging community members to visit voluntary counseling and testing (VCT) centres. PWHE is also working with Imams to preach against Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) in mosques appreciating the fact that the practice is a religious ritual. In addition PWHE has an Early Childhood Centre that caters for orphans and vulnerable children (Peacenet Kenya, n.d).

Participation of women in community peace building in Suna East sub-County take place in the form of local women who have organised themselves collectively and formed support networks and groups at the local level. These local community women groups include; Shukiranya Self Help Women Group, TangneAng'e Women Group, Junction Women group, Upendo Victory Women Group, Bakima Women Group and Nyasare Water Jirani Mwema Self Help Group. They understand that when someone has a problem, everybody has a problem. This helped them to overcome obstacles created by cultural barriers, such as patriarchal norms and values, to create spaces where they can be heard, settle disputes, address unjust treatment of children, propose initiatives for community development and seek justice for survivors of violence and sexual abuse as well as economic empowerment. This

has seen women's participation in peace building within Suna East Sub County led to direct and positive impacts for the women of those communities in the sub county. They have also gained safe spaces to share their worries, help solve disputes and support each other. It is on this background that this study seeks to determine social factors influencing women participation in community peace building in that Sub-County.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Women participation in community peace building in Suna East Sub County has not been encouraging. There has been sidelining of women on matters of community peace building. This has created the feeling that women are lesser beings and that their contributions to the peace building are not significant. The potential that women have in community peace building when fully utilized can bring about sustainable peace within the community.

A number of studies on women participation have been done both in Kenya and at the international scene. For example, a study that was carried out by Stacie (2010) on women role in peace building: Nicaragua, El Salvador, and Guatemala compared mainly analysed traditional peace building, and introduced four areas that have been identified as important during peace building, and also outlined some of the concerns, problems and limitations that plague the peace building process in the post-war setting. It then turns to an examination of women's role in peace building in three case studies, namely Nicaragua, El Salvador and Guatemala. However, this study did not look into factors that make it possible for women to participate in the community peace building.

Another study was carried out by Muli (2014) on factors influencing women participation in sustainable peace building: A case study of Kibera, Nairobi; Kenya. This study mainly focused on the factors that hinder women participation in the community peace building. As already hinted in these paragraphs, women when properly organised and free to act could be

key peace builders not only because they are usually the first victims, but more crucially because by nature, women are peace-builders at the family and all over. This study therefore seeks to determine the social factors that influence women participation in community peace building in Suna East sun County Migori County.

1.3 Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is to determine social factors that influence women participation in community peace building in Suna East Sub County in Migori County.

1.4 Objectives of the study

The following are the objectives of the study:

- i) To assess the influence of gender roles in women participation in community peace building in Suna East Sub County.
- ii) To determine the role of education in influencing women's participation in community peace building in Suna East Sub County.
- iii) To establish how family support influences women participation in community peace building in Suna East Sub County.

Study questions

The study is guided by the following questions

- i) What is the influence of gender roles in women participation in community peace building in Suna East Sub County?
- ii) What is the role of education in influencing women's participation in community peace building in Suna East Sub County?
- iii) How does family support influence women participation in community peace building in Suna East Sub County?

1.6 Significance of the study

This study is likely to inform policy makers, that is, the government of Kenya, on the place of women in community peace building thus laws can be made that is likely to give women more authority and powers to participate fully in the community peace building. This study may also enlighten the civil society and other interested parties on the potential that women have in community peace so that necessary measures can be taken to improve on what is already being achieved by women in peace building within their local communities. Finally this study is likely to contribute to the body of knowledge specifically on the factors that make women participation in community peace building possible.

1.7 Limitations of the study

It was expected that the study was likely to experience constraint in terms of time and resources since the researcher is a student and working at the same time. The researcher however organised both her time and available financial resources to ensure that important activities of this study were taken care of and in good time and at the minimum cost.

1.8 Delimitations of the study

The study concentrated on the social factors influencing women participation in community peace building in Suna East sub-County. Within the Sub-County, the study focused on the twenty-five (25) leaders of the five (5) women groups involved in peace education in the Sub-County. The study also sought information from five (5) key community leaders, particularly the chiefs and key church leaders; thus having a total population of thirty (30).

1.9 Assumptions of the study

This study had assumed that all the respondents would be available and cooperative as they answered the questions. As is shown in Table 4.2, the respondents were very cooperative with 100% questionnaire return rate.

1.10 Definition of significant terms

The following are the significant terms of this study.

Women participation in community peace building This is the involvement of women in decision making during peace building through formation of peace groups by ensuring a reduction of the conflict at the family and community level.

Gender roles These are socially constructed roles in relation to women as having high tendency for social grouping, uniting different families as well as being mobilisers.

Education This is an experience brought about by a woman's level of formal education; participation in peace and other seminars and also through engagement in various civic activities.

Family support This is deemed as accepting women proposal on peace as well as involving them in peace building activities within their families.

1.11 Organization of the study

This study is organized into five chapters. Chapter One has the background to the study, a statement of the problem, research objectives, significance of the study, limitation of the study, operation definition of key terms and finally the organization of the study.

Chapter Two presents the literature review. Chapter Three is on research methodology and design, sample and sampling technique, research instruments, data collection procedures, and finally data analysis. Chapter Four covers data analysis, interpretation and presentation while Chapter Five will contains summary of findings, conclusion and recommendations.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews literature on what other scholars have done in relation to factors influencing women participation in community peace building. It is divided into sections that include empirical review, theoretical review, research gap and conceptual framework.

2.2 Women Participation in Community Peace Building

UNSCR 1325 on Women, Peace and Security provides a clear normative mandate and commitment for international actors to embed in their support to FCAS efforts to enhance the role of women in all aspects of peace processes. Adopted in October 2000, it was the first time that the UN Security Council (UNSC) had focused on the topic of women and armed conflict and acknowledged the role of women as active agents in the negotiation and maintenance of peace agreements. UNSCR 1325 provides for a range of measures aimed at including women in the prevention, management and resolution of conflict. It puts ‘women and peace’ firmly on the map, and it has been followed by a rapid escalation of policies and projects to promote and protect women and girls (El-Bushra, 2012; Olonisakin et al., 2011).

More recently in 2011, the UN agreed on a UN Strategic Results Framework on Women Peace and Security of support to women in peace and security interventions, including the establishment of a set of 26 indicators by which to assess practice by various actors including UN member states and UN entities, in advancing UNSCR 1325 (UN Secretary-General, 2011). These commitments by the UN are a great step forward towards realisation of gender inclusion in the peace building process, however, they are just merely commitment on the paper which is quite different from what is taking place on the ground that is the local communities.

Women in West Africa have played significant roles in situations relating to peace and war for centuries, primarily as traditional peace-makers, as priestesses who confer with gods to determine whether it was right to go to war or not, as praise singers for men during battles as a boost to ensure their victory, or as custodians of culture. In each culture there are stories of women who have played some leadership roles as peace envoys or harbingers of peace in their communities. For example, the 'Queen Mothers' in Ghana and the Yoruba land in Nigeria, and the 'bondo' women in Sierra Leone, etc. These women were highly revered and protected. However, as the trend of wars and armed conflicts in West Africa changed, women became the victims of unimaginable forms of violence as a tactic of war. They were targeted for rape and other non-sexual assault, for example, maiming and atrocities such as the evisceration of pregnancies. The use of rape as a weapon of war indicates that there is a unique type of battle that women face during wars. They are the "violated during the violation, the victims of the victimisation, and the captured of the captive (ECOWAS, 1999).

With this change in the pattern of warfare the traditional roles women played began to diminish. The decisions to go to war are now made by militias and insurgent groups that are mostly constituted by men. Even in cases where women are associated with these fighting forces and seen as perpetrators, their role in the decision-making processes is uncertain. While it is true that there are fierce women commanders in rebel movements, ultimate leadership of these groups has been the preserve of men. Notwithstanding this shift in the treatment of women – from the protected to the targeted – women continue to play key roles. In fact, the impact of these conflicts has been both disempowering and empowering for women. It has served as a unifier, mobiliser and an impetus to women's groups (particularly at the grassroots level) to develop alternative strategies aimed at transforming violent structures, practices and relations at all levels, as well as improving gender relations, including women's access to decision making and leadership. In West Africa, as violent

conflicts ravaged the sub-region from the late 80s and bringing in its wake severe consequences, women worked through local associations (such as market women's associations and age grades), faith-based groups and guilds to protect their families and communities (Ekiyor, 2001).

Given their lack of presence at the formal political realm, these grassroots community level engagements became the main outlets for women's peace activism. Also, given their lack of resources, knowledge and skills, they devised alternative strategies to facilitate their work. Most of these are still very relevant and now serve as models. For instance, women have established efficient information networks to spread information of attacks and safe routes, thus saving lives and reducing the direct impact of the violence. They have used their proximity as mothers, wives, sisters, etc., to members of the rebel forces to obtain information which they have used to protect their communities, for example, in the Senegalese Casamance conflict; they have also engaged in cross community coalition building using their market networks and inter-marriage links; as well as acted as intermediaries in their bid to get fighting forces to 'lay down arms' – the example here is the singular action taken by twelve Ivorian women in 2003 when they visited the stronghold of the rebel forces in Bouake, the northern region of Cote d'Ivoire, demanding that the rebels end the hostilities (Thompson and Eade, 20012).

In Kenya local community women peace builders mainly adopt the traditional ways of building peace to enable them to talk a language the community understands. There is a common view that women have no boundaries, they go anywhere, and have no tribes, get married anywhere, and peace is their business. For instance, among the Kalenjin community, whenever women wanted their men to stop fighting, they would carry green grass or leaves. This signified that women were asking the men to stop fighting. In the Pokot community,

women use skin belts called *legetioto* stop their men from fighting (Barasa, 2000). Legetio is a belt made from animal skins and women use it to tie around their belly after giving birth to reshape their stomach. During war, it is used by mothers to protect or curse their children and husbands by either tying it or untying it. It is also believed that it keeps the family united and therefore a woman must always tie it. It is made from a bull's skin and decorated with cowry shells and the bull must have been killed in a special ceremony. Pokot people believe that if a woman quarrels with her children, especially boys, and she unties it, the boy child will die (Daily Nation, 1999).

2.3 Gender Roles and Women Participation in Community Peace Building

According to Snyder (2012) analysis, life in exile on the Thai/Burmese border creates additional burdens and risks for Burmese women and narrows their life choices, but it also provides opportunities for empowerment by opening up new spaces for agency and leadership. Women become aware of gender relations as they become involved with women's NGOs, participate in various training workshops, become members of camp committees, assist at police stations and hospitals in incidents of gender-based violence, access formal education (for girls), and, in the case of the NGO leadership, network through the Women's League of Burma. Male and female roles change through workshops on women's rights and through skills development, which enhances self-confidence among women and men's confidence in women's abilities. This study indicated ways by which women take part in the peace building but has not clearly indicated how such ways enhance women participation in the peace building.

According to Accord (2013) women take part in peace building through ways such as translating existing capacities and expertise into political participation where women often influence formal political processes from the outside. Women's groups have campaigned for

the inclusion of women's rights during negotiations, monitored policies and legislation and lobbied for women's rights in new constitutions. In Aceh, women's organisations promoted political education at the grassroots to ensure the general population was familiar with government policies. Those providing peace process supports can help connect capacities and expertise among women's groups and integrate them more directly into formal political processes. The NIWC demonstrates the possibility of transitioning from civil society to political party. Women in the case studies identified a lack of resources and capacity to engage in institutional politics, including deficits in funding, organisational and advocacy skills, and knowledge of political practice. The NIWC initially struggled to finance the activities required of a political party and was forced to rely on donations. The consensus-based approach many women's groups employ can involve lengthy consultations that take time. This study has also clearly shown how women participate in peace building but did not adequately cover all the factors that contribute to women participation in peace building within the community.

2.4 Education and Women Participation in Community Peace Building

Ecoma Alaga's paper, (n.d.) "Pray the Devil Back to Hell:" Women's ingenuity in the peace process in Liberia, highlighted the importance of training a core group of female peace activists and providing ongoing support through national and international networks. Building a shared identity (drawing on their common status of 'womanhood,' a basic message, uniform clothing, and daily shared group activities) were all crucial for the Liberian women's movement.

Other key aspects of engagement were ongoing communications between parts of the movement and practices of inclusiveness, transparency and consultation; the value of a physical presence at, or near, the negotiating table; and the importance of remaining engaged

at the implementation stage after an agreement was signed. The careful use of gender-stereotypes in a constructive manner and ‘motherhood activism,’ participatory decision-making to overcome cleavages within the group, local ownership, knowledge of UNSCR 1325 as a framework for engaging their government and international partners, and clear and inclusive political messaging were also factors in the movement’s success in pressing for the signing and later the implementation of a peace agreement. This study contributes to my study since it has highlighted the use of gender stereotypes in a constructive manner that my study basically deals with however, it has failed to show how constructive gender stereotypes enhance women participation in the peace building within the community.

2.5 Family Support and Women Participation in Community Peace Building

Family support is the assistance the women get from their husbands and other family members in facilitating their efforts of participation in peace building. In a descriptive correlation study conducted with 65 adolescent minorities, significant findings included a positive relationship between family support and peace promotion practices (Mahat et al., 2002). These findings are consistent with research results in adult populations as well (Katapodi et al., 2002; McDonald et al., 2002; McNicholas, 2002). Descriptive research comparing family support and women adherence to peace building initiatives (Katapodi et al., 2002). McNicholas (2002) attempted to identify determinants women participation in peace building based on family support in middle-aged adults. Analysis of self-report surveys identified a significant correlation between family support and positive women participation in peace building. Research results from a study of African-American suggested family support was a predictor of women participation in community peace building (McDonald et al., 2002).

Numerous recent studies in peace literature recognized a correlation between family support and women participation in peace building (Eyler et al., 1999; Allgower, Wardle, & Steptoe, 2001; Fraser & Spink, 2002; Mahat et al., 2002; McNicholas, 2002; Resnick & Nigg, 2003). However none of the studies have identified the actual social factors influencing women participation in community peace building. Akifenywa (2011) states that roles of women in home management and child training are crucial issues in society and national development hence peace building. Women, throughout the world have been playing important role in the development of their immediate environment. They play roles in various aspect of life as their male counterpart; function in the home, political arena and economic domain etc. this is to show that their contribution is not limited to one aspect of life but across boundaries (Akifenywa, 2011). Thus, accepting women proposals on peace and involving them in peace initiatives are among the major ways that family support influences women participation in community peace building.

2.6 Gender Policies and Women Participation in Community Peace Building

Corey Levine's (2011) analysis of women's participation in the Afghan peace process looked at the limited inclusion of women in newly established mechanisms for peace in Afghanistan, including the High Peace Council, the London Conference and the Consultative Peace Jirga. Women in Afghanistan have seen expanding rights on paper, including equality in the Constitution, the National Action Plan for the Women of Afghanistan, and protections under the Elimination of Violence Against Women law. Yet, their access to health and education is still extremely limited and women who are politically active or providing or pursuing an education are under constant threat of physical violence.

Legal set-backs have already occurred (e.g. the Shia Personal Status law and the 2010 Presidential Decree on the Electoral Code, whereby female quotas can be filled by males if

no female candidate is available). Not surprisingly, the fear that women's rights will be sacrificed in peace negotiations with the Taliban is wide-spread. To alleviate these concerns, the Afghan Women's Network has recommended a 25 per cent quota for women on all decision-making bodies related to the Afghan Peace and Reconciliation Program, a gender component to all projects under the program, the inclusion of the Ministry of Women's Affairs in the Joint Secretariat, separate registration of female beneficiaries, and rigorous, participatory monitoring of the process. This study has indicated how women in Afghanistan has advocated for 25% women representation which is an indication that women are actively involved in peace building by agitating for their rights. My study showed how local community women activists participate in peace building (Corey and Levine, 2011).

2.7 Theoretical review

This section presented a theory that was more relevant to the study which is Feminist theory. The linkages between women and peace have been widely addressed by many authors. This theoretical review briefly explains the three main approaches that have been developed to tackle this issue. These categories should not be considered fixed, but they are useful for grouping similar points of view and reflections. First, one can find the analysis that links women and peace from an essentialist point of view. Second, there are those authors that have developed the idea of motherhood in order to explain why so many women have become involved in the cause of peace. And finally, a third approach has been developed by the authors that want to highlight the political dimensions of this particular tie (Corey and Levine, 2011).

As mentioned above, some authors have adopted an essentialist point of view, signalling an allegedly natural women's attachment to peace. From this vision, women are seen as naturally peaceful, incapable of exercising violence, and at the same time, men are

contemplated as “violent beings” (Puleo, 2004). This approach has been criticised with many arguments, pointing to the risks that naturalising women’s behaviour has, as it serves to depoliticise women’s positions in relation to war and peace. Furthermore, it serves to perpetuate a discriminatory order in which women remain subjugated: “the essentialist construction of men as aggressive and violent fits the nationalist-militaristic myth in which we fight for the sake of the “women and children” (Yuval-Davis 1997). This kind of association of women with peace has been reinforced with gender stereotypes that have served to categorize women as passive, victims and emotional (Tickner, 1999). Furthermore, “the association of women with peace and moral superiority has a long history of keeping women out of power” (Tickner, 1999).

A second approach has been one that has linked women’s involvement in the cause of peace to their role as mothers, often explained by the notion of “motherhood”, rather than the personal and particular experience of being a mother. The socialization experienced by women historically, reinforcing their role as care-givers and nurturers (Shiva 1988) would explain many women’s involvement in pacifism. As Sara Ruddick states, “the contradiction between violence and maternal work is evident” (1989). Others have pointed to the fact that women have committed themselves to the cause of peace, not only in the search for better conditions for women, but mainly for their families and children (Mirón, 2004). Many women reject the idea that linking women’s peace activism to motherhood necessarily implies an essentialist position as “it reflects an important aspect of most women’s lived experience, it can unify women, can be a source of authority and a powerful tool for resistance” (Cockburn, 2007). Some authors, from a constructivist point of view, stress the fact that women have been socialised in roles that appear to be antithetical to violence and destruction, what mobilizes them against war (Coomaraswamy and Fonseca, 2004). The notion of motherhood has inspired the discourses and practices of many women’s peace

movement worldwide. This approach has received criticisms for two main reasons. First, it excludes those women that are not mothers and are not willing to be.

Second, it can contribute to reinforce patriarchal roles and to reduce women's autonomy (Cockburn 2007). Taking into account these two approaches, many feminists have developed a third point of view that emphasizes the fact that women's agency for peace is connected to their exclusion from the public sphere (and from war), rather than their biological nature or their experiences as mother or care-givers (Coomaraswamy and Fonseka 2004; Magallón2006). Not only their exclusion from formal politics, but also the fact that "women are virtually nowhere drafted and forced to fight in wars which they don't approve of" (Corey and Levine, 2011). The continuation of "politics by other means" would therefore be alien to many women and would serve to explain women's peace activism. Virginia Woolf can be considered to be one of the first women to have expressed this feeling of being an outsider in the world where wars take place (Woolf, 1938; Grau 2000). Her beautiful words serve to illustrate this idea when talking about where peace ideas could come from amid the war. Hence women can actively participate in the community peace building process given the opportunity since they are naturally peace oriented according to the theory.

2.8 Conceptual framework

Fig. 1 presents the conceptual framework for this study

Independent variables

Dependent variable

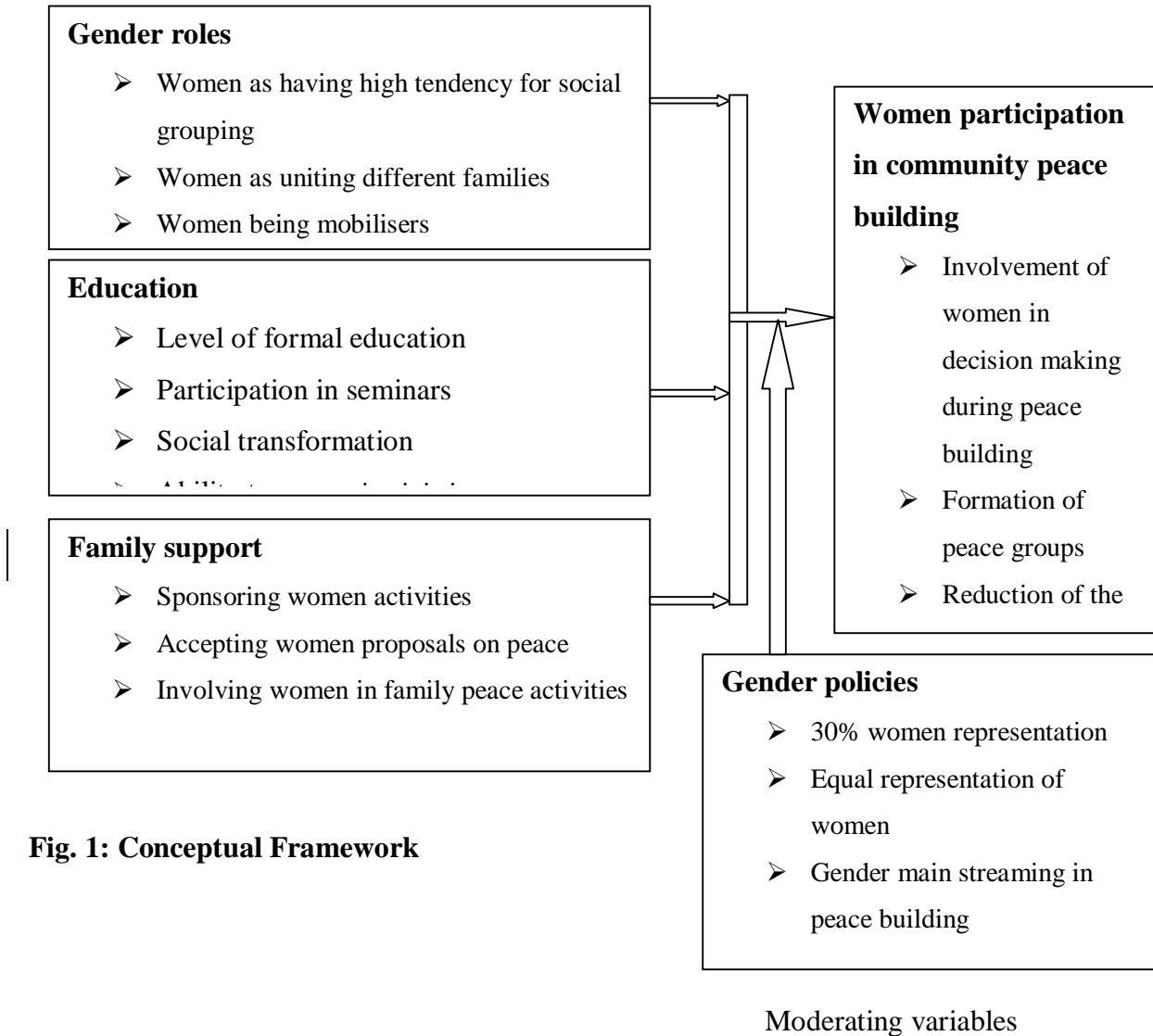


Fig. 1: Conceptual Framework

2.9 Research gap

This study comprises of the independent variables that include; gender roles, education, and family support. The indicators on gender roles include; Women as having high tendency for social grouping, women as uniting different families and women being mobilisers. The indicators on education include; level of education, participation in seminars, social transformation and ability to engage in civic engagements. The indicators for family support include; sponsoring women activities and accepting women proposals on peace. The above variables influence women participation in community peace building which is the dependent variable. This study also has the intervening variable that is gender policies.

A number of studies that have been carried out on women participation in peace building have mainly been done both in Kenya and at the international level such as (Muli, 2014; Stacie, 2010). Yet none of the studies have focused on the social factors that deter women from participating in community peace building hence the gap that this study intends to fill.

2.10 Chapter summary

This chapter presents review of literature from what other scholars have done on social factors influencing women participation in community peace building. The chapter reviewed the theory supporting this study as well as empirical literature on women participation in community peace building.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

This chapter describes the methods that were applied in carrying out the research. It describes in details the steps that were followed to determine the social factors influencing women participation in community peace building. This chapter is divided into the following; research Design, target population, description of sample and sampling procedure, description of research instruments, data collection procedure, data analysis techniques and finally ethical considerations.

3.2. Research design

According to Saunder et al. (2007) a research design is a detailed description of how a study shall be conducted. It presents detailed information on how data were collected, the instruments which were used, how the instruments were employed and the intended method of analyzing the data. This study used descriptive survey to determine the social factors influencing women participation in community peace building. Descriptive survey design is a research design used to assess facts, opinion, attitudes about a phenomenon in this current undertaking (Saunder et al. 2007). The research used descriptive survey designs through the use of questionnaires so as to obtain quantitative data on the social factors influencing women participation in community peace building. Bryman and Bell (2003) assert that quantitative data is data in numerical form which can be put into categories, or in rank order, or measured in units of measurement.

3.3. Target Population

Saunder et al. (2007) defines population as a well-defined collection of individuals or objects that is the main focus of scientific study. The target population of this study comprised of five

(5) women groups involved in peace education in the sub-county. For each group the researcher selected all the leaders to a total of twenty-five (25) leaders. The study also included five (5) other community leaders, including the chiefs and church leaders to a total of thirty (30) respondents.

3.4 Sample and Sampling Procedure

As says Ogula (2007), when the total number is small census is used to select respondents into the study. The study therefore covered all the twenty-five women group leaders and five community leaders. The sampling procedure that was used in this study was snowballing where the researcher identified a few of the women group leaders who also helped the researcher identify the other group leaders. Community leaders were also recruited in the same manner. The researcher identified one community leader who was used to get other community leaders.

3.5. Data collection instruments

In this study a questionnaire was used to collect primary data. According to Bryman and Bell (2003) questionnaire is a tool used to collect data where carefully selected, orderly, self administered questions are used. It was more efficient in that it required less time for respondents to give information, permitted respondents to remain anonymous in their responses and it was easy to administer.

3.6 Validity of the research instruments

Validity refers to how accurately the data obtained in the study represents the variables of the study (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003). To ensure validity of the instrument, the researcher sought the opinions of the experts in peace studies, particularly the university supervisor.

3.7 Reliability of the research instruments

Reliability is a measure of the degree to which a research instrument yields consistent results or data after repeated trial. Reliability answers the question “Are scores stable over time when the instrument is administered a second time” (Chandran, 2004). To ensure reliability, the researcher carried out a pilot test in the neighbouring county to help reveal questions that could be vague and provide an opportunity for the researcher to review them so that they convey the same meaning to all the respondents. Mugenda & Mugenda (2003) suggest that the pilot sample should be 1 to 10% of the study target population, depending on the study population size.

3.8 Data collection procedure

The data were collected from women in Suna East sub County using questionnaires. Permission was sought from Suna East sub County authorities in order for the researcher to be allowed to carry out this study. The researcher then administered the questionnaires personally because this had the advantage as it provided an opportunity for the researcher to establish good rapport with the respondents, which included; explanation of the purpose of the study and clarification of individual items hence encouraged the respondents to act immediately and promptly.

3.9. Data analysis and procedures

The raw data were collected and systematically organized in order to carry out data analysis. The instruments were categorized and the information tallied and summarized so as to obtain the descriptive statistics that is frequencies, percentages, mean, variance and cross tabulations to describe the sample. The data from the questionnaires were analyzed as per the research questions of the study. The quantitative data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social scientists (SPSS®). This software was preferred by the researcher because of its merits

of record keeping and the capacity to process data. Bannister (2005) asserts that analysis enables researcher to make conclusions thus, execute judgment on the occurrence of a given phenomenon.

3.10 Ethical Considerations

The researcher made respondents fully aware of the nature of the research and their role in the research before they agreed to take part in it. The researcher explained what the study was all about and why he chose them as respondents. Respondents in this study were assured and remain anonymous in the thesis. The anonymity was intended to hide the identity of respondents for any vindication or reprisal by their superiors in their places of work. Any confidential information given to the researcher will be treated so.

3.11 Operationalization of variables

The operationalization of variables is shown in Table 3.1

Table 3.1: Operationalization of variables

Objectives	Independent variables	Indicators	Measurements	Measurement scale	Data collection method	Data analysis
To determine gender roles in enhancing women's participation in community peace building	Independent: Gender roles	Women as having high tendency for social grouping Women as uniting different families Women being mobilisers	Types of women mobilisation programs No of groups with peace education programs created by the women Contents of such peace programs Outreach peace programs by trained women in peace	Interval and ratio scale	Questionnaire	Descriptive statistics and frequency distribution table
To determine the role of education in enhancing women participation in community peace building	Education	Participation in seminars Social transformation Civic engagement	Number of women participants Types of social transformation in educated women Number of women actively involved in civic affairs	Interval and ratio scale	Questionnaire	Descriptive statistics and frequency distribution table
To determine the influence of family support on women participation in community peace building	Family support	Sponsoring women activities by families Accepting women proposal on peace Involving women in peace activities	Types of women relationships with family and friends Level of involvement in family conflict resolution Level of women mobilization	Ordinal and interval	Questionnaire	Descriptive statistics and frequency distribution table

3.12 Summary

This chapter presented the methodology that was used for this study. The chapter covered research design, population and sampling, data collection and procedures, and data analysis.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSION

4.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to analyse, present, interpret and discuss data in order to answer the research questions. The data collection tool was a questionnaire which had open ended and closed ended questions and group discussion. This chapter looks at Questionnaire response rate, demographic characteristics of the respondents. Data analysis was to determine the social factors influencing women participation in community peace building. The findings have been represented in form of tables for easy yet effective communication.

4.2 Questionnaires Response Rate

The finding on the questionnaire response rate is as shown in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1 Questionnaire Response Rate

Expected number of respondents	Actual number of respondents	Response rate (%)
30	30	100

The researcher distributed questionnaires to 30 respondents and all were returned. This high percentage was achieved due to the small number of target population and also the researcher's follow up. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), a 50% return rate is acceptable for data analysis.

4.3 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

This section discusses the demographic characteristics of respondents, that is, age, occupation, position in the group, and marital status.

4.3.1 Age of respondents

The respondents were asked to indicate their age bracket and the results are presented in Table 4.2

Table 4.2 Age of Respondents

Age	Frequency	Percentage
Below 25	4	13
25-30	4	13
31-35	14	46.7
36-40	6	20.7
Above 40	2	6
Total	30	100

As Table 4.3, majority (74%) of the participants were above 30 years of age thus being mature enough to comprehend issues pertaining to women participation in the community peace building.

4.3.2 Occupation

The study also sought to know the occupation of the respondents. The findings are shown on Table 4.3.

Table 4.3: Respondents' Occupation

Occupation	Frequency	Percentage
Business person	10	33
Teacher	5	17
Nurse	3	10
Farmer	12	40
Total	30	100

The findings from Table 4.3 show that all the respondents were independent person with an occupation.

4.3.4 Respondents' Position in the group

The study sought to determine the respondents' position in the group; the findings are shown in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4 Position of the Respondents

Position	Frequency	Percentage
Community leader	5	20
Group leader	25	80
Total	30	100

The study found out that a majority of the respondents (80%) were group leaders hence they were privy to information on women participation in the community peace building.

Level of education of the respondents is presented in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5 Level of Education

Education	Frequency	Percentage
Primary level	6	20
O-level	14	47
Diploma	8	27
Degree	2	6
Total	30	100

From the Table 4.5, most of the respondents (80%) had acquired basic formal education, that is, they had high school education and above. As such, it would be fair to expect that they were in a position to appreciate the value of peace in their communities.

4.4 The influence of Gender Roles in Women Participation in Community Peace Building

The first objective of this study was to assess the influence of gender roles in women participation in community peace building in Suna East Sub County. In order to achieve this objective, the respondents were asked to indicate how often they discuss peace building issues in their social groups. The findings are shown in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6: Regularity of Women discussion on Peace Building issues

How often respondents discussed peace issues	Frequency	Percentage
Always	6	20
Sometimes	14	47
Never	10	33
Total	30	100

The findings indicate that a majority of the respondents, at 67%, discuss peace building issues in their groups though not always. However, there was a worrying huge percentage that responded negatively.

The study sought respondents' opinion on how uniting different families contributes to community peace building. The findings are shown in Table 4.7

Table 4.7: By uniting different Families Women take part in Community Peace Building

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	12	40
Agree	10	33
Undecided	3	10
Disagree	3	10
Strongly disagree	2	7
Total	30	100

The findings show that a majority of the respondents (at 73%) agreed that uniting different families is a factor in community peace building.

The respondents were asked to indicate whether women peace initiatives have helped them create lasting peace within the community. The findings were as shown in Table 4.8.

Table 4.8: Role of Women Peace Initiatives in helping Women create lasting Peace within the Community

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	27	89.1
No	3	10.9
Total	30	100

The findings show that a majority of the respondents (89.1%) agreed that women peace initiatives have helped them create lasting peace within the community.

4.4.1 Discussion

This study established that women formed groups that brought together participants from different families to discussion of peace issues. This helped in uniting members from different families. Furthermore, the groups mobilized other community members to also participate in peace initiatives and thus contributing to creation of lasting peace within the community.

The findings of this study concurs with that of Bouta (2005) who found out that women have been capable of building bridges of dialogue and empathy in polarized societies that go beyond the reasons for the armed confrontation and the deep rooted hatred and division. They have sought positions in common from which to initiate a rapprochement and search for new ways of living together. These coalitions can be found in contexts such as the Balkans, Israel

and Palestine, Cyprus or Northern Ireland. Furthermore, Giles (2004) found that alliances established between women have empowered them to transcend core political, ethnic, or religious divisions. At times, however, women that have dared to cross the border and have dialogue with other women have been labelled as traitors to their community, homeland or identity (Bouta, 2005).

4.5: Education and Women Participation in Community Peace Building

The second objective of this study was to determine the role of education in influencing women’s participation in community peace building in Suna East Sub County. Their responses are outlined in Tables 4.9 to 4.12.

The respondents have to state if they had ever attended community peace building seminars. Their responses appear in Table 4.9.

Table 4.9: Attendance at the Community Peace Building Seminar

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	17	55.1
No	13	44.9
Total	30	100

The findings show that a majority of 55.1% of the respondents have attended community peace building seminars.

The study sought to determine respondents’ opinion on how society and community peace building has been shaped by the knowledge they acquired in their formal education. The findings are as shown in Table 4.10.

Table 4.10: Role of Education in changing Women’s Perception

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	12	40.10
Agree	11	38.2
Undecided	3	8.90
Disagree	2	6.8
Strongly disagree	2	6
Total	30	100

The findings show that a majority of the respondents (78.3%) agreed that their perception of the society and community peace building has been shaped by the knowledge they acquired in their formal education.

The study sought to determine whether they thought the formal education they had received has brought about social transformation in their lives. The findings were as shown in Table 4.11.

Table 4.11: Education creates Social Transformation

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	12	45
Agree	11	44
Undecided	3	5
Disagree	2	3
Strongly disagree	2	3
Total	30	100

The findings in Table 4.11 show that 89% of the respondents agreed that education has brought about social transformation in their lives.

The study sought to determine whether education has enabled the respondents to be more engaged in civic matters in their community. The findings were as shown in Table 4.12.

Table 4.12: Influence of Education in enabling Women to be more civically engaged

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	25	70.70
No	5	29.30
Total	30	100

The finding show that a majority of the respondents, that is 70.70%, agreed that education has enabled them to be more engaged in civic matters in their community.

4.5.1 Discussion

This study established that women who had attended community peace building seminars in their community had their views on peace and peace building positively changed. This inculcated a better perception of the society and community peace building. Consequently, this increased their confidence and engagement in civic matters in their community.

Puechguirbal (2003) opines that one of the major determinants of women participation in peace building process is education. He continues to state that most women in the developing countries do not have sufficient knowledge and skills to enable them participate in the peace building initiatives. Similarly, Koppell (2009) argues that women can reach their full potential in handling peace initiatives when they acquire sufficient education.

4.6 Family Support and Women Participation in Community Peace Building

The third objective of this study was to establish how family support influence women participation in community peace building.

The respondents were asked to give their opinion on whether their family support women activities. The findings are as shown in Table 4.13.

Table 4.13: Sponsorship by Families to Women Activities

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	12	40.10
Agree	11	38.2
Undecided	3	8.90
Disagree	2	6.8
Strongly disagree	2	6
Total	30	100

The findings show that a majority of the respondents at 78.12% agreed that their families sponsored them to women activities.

The study further also sought to establish whether the respondents' families accept their proposals on peace. The findings are shown in Table 4.14.

Table 4.15 Families' Acceptance of Women proposals on Peace

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	12	40
Agree	10	33
Undecided	3	10
Disagree	3	10
Strongly disagree	2	7
Total	30	100

The findings show that a majority of the respondents, at 73%, agreed that their families accepted their proposal on peace.

Finally the study sought to know whether the respondents' families involve them in peace building activities. The findings were as shown in Table 4.15.

Table 4.15 Families involving Women in Peace Building Activities

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	12	45
Agree	11	44
Undecided	3	5
Disagree	2	3
Strongly disagree	2	3
Total	30	100

The findings indicate that a majority of the respondents (89%) agreed that their families involve them in peace building activities.

4.6.1 Discussion

This study established that families supported women in their peace efforts. The families supported women by accepting their proposals on peace as well as sponsoring women activities on peace. This enabled women to effectively participate in the community peace building efforts.

Bodo (2010) asserts that the role of women in community peace building cannot be underestimated more specifically when they get support from their family members. The role of women in nurturing, building relationships and maintaining the family is central to their identity hence women need family support to be able to actively take part in community peace building. This concern with relationships and people often means that women play the role of peacemakers within their families and their communities but because of their unique position in the society they need their families support to be able to take part in the community peace building (Gnanadason et al., 1996).

4.5 Chapter Summary

In this chapter the response rate, demographic characteristics of the respondents, presentation of findings based on the research objectives have been discussed in relation to social factors influencing women participation in community peace building.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a summary of findings of the study, offers a conclusion based on the variables, and finally proposes policy recommendations and suggestions for further study.

5.2 Summary of findings

The following is the summary of the key findings of the study

5.2.1 The Influence of gender roles in women participation in community peace building

From the study, it was established that women formed groups that brought together participants from different families to discussion of peace issues. Not only did this effort unite members from different families, but it also ensured that these groups mobilized other community members to also participate in peace initiatives and thus contributing to creation of lasting peace within the community.

5.2.2 Role of education in influencing women's participation in community peace building.

The study has established that women who had attended community peace building seminars in their community had their views on peace and peace building positively changed. Their transformation had led to a better perception of the society and community peace building and had increased their confidence and engagement in civic matters in their community.

5.2.3 The influence of family support on women participation in community peace building

This study established that in general families supported women in their peace efforts. Not only did they accept proposals on peace from the women, but the families had also sponsored

women activities on peace. Thus supported, the women were able to effectively participate in the community peace building efforts.

5.3 Conclusion

Based on the findings this study concludes that gender roles influence women participation in community peace building in Suna East Sub County. This is made possible by uniting different families and mobilising people towards peace building efforts in their community. Furthermore, women peace initiatives have helped create lasting peace within the community. Through peace building seminars, education brings about social transformation of women by changing their views on the society and peace hence they become more engaged in civic matters. The family support influence women participation in community peace building. This is so because families accept women proposals on peace, they involve women in peace building activities and also sponsor women activities.

5.4 Recommendations

The following are the recommendations of the study

- (i) The Government of Kenya should promote women participation in community peace building through enacting laws that specifically address women participation in community peace building.
- (ii) Other stakeholders such as the CBOs and NGOs dealing with issues of peace at the community level should ensure that women are actively involved in matters of peace building so as to realize sustainable peace at the local level.
- (iii) Families should continue supporting women peace initiatives and also respond positively to the women proposal on peace building activities. This is likely to encourage more women to participate in the community peace building.

- (iv) The local communities should also embrace women's effort in peace building at the community level by giving women a chance to be represented in the peace building forums at the local community level.

5.5 Suggestions for further study

- (i) A study should be carried out in other local communities in Kenya to determine the factors influencing women participation in the community peace building.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR WOMEN GROUP LEADERS

Social Factors Influencing Women Participation in Community Peace Building

My name is Jackline Kenyaga, a student at The University of Nairobi. This questionnaire is designed to gain an understanding of the factors influencing women participation in community peace building. Kindly complete this questionnaire as objectively as possible. The information given out is solely for academic purpose and would be treated as confidential.

Thank you.

Section A: Demographic information

Write or tick [√] the appropriate response to each of questions.

1. Age: Below 25 []
26-30 []
31-36 []
37-40 []
Above 40 []
2. What is your occupation?.....
3. Indicate your position in the group.....
4. Indicate your academic qualification:
Primary level certificate []
O-level certificate []
Diploma []
Degree []
5. Indicate your marital status

- Single
- Married
- Divorced
- Separated
- Windowed

Section B: Gender roles and women participation in community peace building

1. How often do you discuss peace building issues in your social groups?

- Always
- Sometimes
- Never

2. By uniting different families I take part in community peace building

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Undecided
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

3. I participate in community peace building by mobilising people towards peace building efforts in my community.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Undecided
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

4. Women peace initiatives have helped create lasting peace within the community

- Yes
- No

Section C: Education and women participation in community peace building

1. Have you ever attended community peace building seminar in your community?

- Yes
- No

2. How have your views on peace and peace building changed upon undergoing through peace building seminars?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

3. My perception of the society and community peace building has been shaped by knowledge that I have acquired in education.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Undecided
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

13. Education has brought about social transformation in my life

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Undecided
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

14. Education has enabled you to be more engaged in civic matters in your community.

- Yes
- No

Section D: Family Support and Women Participation in community peace building

15. Give your opinion on the following statements.

Statement	Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly disagree
The family sponsors women activities					

Family accepting women proposals on peace					
The family involves women in family peace activities					

End of the questionnaire

Appendix II: LETTER OF AUTHORITY TO CARRY OUT THE STUDY



UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND EXTERNAL STUDIES
SCHOOL OF CONTINUING AND DISTANCE EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL STUDIES

Your Ref:

Our Ref:

Telephone: 318262 Ext. 120

Main Campus
Gandhi Wing, Ground Floor
P.O. Box 30197
NAIROBI

19th August, 2015

REF: UON/CEES/DES/2/15

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

RE: KENYAGA A. JACKLINE - REG. NO L51/63810/2013

This is to confirm that the above named is a student at the University of Nairobi College of Education and External Studies, School of Continuing and Distance Education, Department of Educational Studies pursuing Master of Arts in Peace Education.

She is proceeding for research entitled "**Social Factors Influencing Women Participation in community Peace Building ;**" A case Study of Suna East Sub-County, Migori County, Kenya.

Any assistance given to her will be highly appreciated.

CHAIRMAN
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL STUDIES
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND EXTERNAL STUDIES
UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI
P.O. Box 30197
NAIROBI.

Dr. Omondi Bowa
Chairman
Department of Educational Studies