

**FACTORS INFLUENCING WOMEN PARTICIPATION IN
GOVERNMENT PROCUREMENT: A CASE OF NYERI CENTRAL
SUB-COUNTY, KENYA**

BY

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**A RESEARCH PROJECT REPORT SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF MASTER OF ARTS DEGREE IN PROJECT
PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI**

2016

DECLARATION

This is my original work and has not been presented for award of a degree in the University of Nairobi or any other university.

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

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DEDICATION

This research project is dedicated to my husband Andrew, my son Brian, my daughters Sheila, and Michelle, my brothers Roy and Victor; and my late mother Beatrice; for their support, patience, steadfast counsel, sacrifice and unwavering faith in me.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to acknowledge my supervisor Prof. Christopher M. Gakuu of the University of Nairobi, for the time, guidance and support extended to me throughout this research study.

I wish to extend my sincere gratitude to the University of Nairobi fraternity, and especially the Nyeri Extra Mural centre, for according me the opportunity and support to pursue this research study.

I am greatly indebted to my fellow classmates for their inspiration, criticism, advice, support and encouragement during the entire study period.

Last but certainly not least, I wish to humbly recognize and appreciate the efforts of everyone who participated in one way or another towards making this study a success.

May God bless and keep you all.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AGPO	Access to Government Procurement Opportunities
ECDE	Early Childhood Development and Education
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEM	Global Entrepreneurship Monitor
GoK	Government of Kenya
GERA	Global Entrepreneurship Research Association
IEA	Institute of Economic Affairs
ILO	International Labour Organization
ITC	International Trade Centre
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
PCI	Project Concern International
PPOA	Public Procurement Oversight Authority
SMEs	Small and Medium-sized Enterprises
TEA	Total Entrepreneurial Activity
UN	United Nations
UNCITRAL	United Nations Commission on International Trade Law
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
WEF	Women Enterprise Fund
WTO	World Trade Organization
WTO GPA	World Trade Organization Agreement on Government Procure

ABSTRACT

Public procurement is increasingly being recognized as a vehicle to help governments achieve social goals and sustainable economic development. The government procurement market often makes up 10 to 15 per cent of the GDP of developed countries and up to 30 to 40 per cent of the economies of developing countries. In Kenya for example, the government spends approximately 70% of its budget on procurement. Given the fact that governments are the largest buyers in any economy, government procurement offers a unique, financially sustainable avenue to empower women and reduce poverty. Public procurement as a tool to promote participation by women-owned businesses is therefore, compelling from a developmental and economic perspective. Increasing opportunities for more small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to engage in the delivery of goods and services can result in improved outcomes for alleviation of poverty and increasing gender equality, given that women-owned businesses are disproportionately in this sub-sector of the economy. In this regard, governments including Kenya have institutionalized different measures to increase access to government procurement by different target groups, including women. However, despite the numerous opportunities available in government procurement, few women effectively participate in this sizeable market. The main objective of the study was to establish factors influencing women participation in government procurement in Kenya. The specific objectives were to assess how economic, socio-cultural, governmental and technical factors influence women participation in government procurement. Data was collected from 395 women respondents from Nyeri Central Sub-County using self administered questionnaires; and interview guides were used for procurement officers, WEF officers, Uwezo fund officers and AGPO officers. The data was analysed with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) computer software. Qualitative data was analysed through content analysis, while quantitative data was analysed through descriptive statistics. Data was presented in the forms of percentages and tables. The research established that access to financial capital, price competition, Government contracts value, awareness, social systems, legislation, capacity building programs, corruption, procurement requirements, tender processes and bureaucracy individually and collectively affect participation of women in Government procurement. However, the benefits that SMEs and women-owned businesses have to offer in terms of enhancing government efficiency and productivity mean that we should act to surmount existing challenges. Therefore the study recommended that the Government should consider lending to women as individuals as opposed to groups; standardize and simplify the tender process and documentation; increase training, sensitization and capacity building programs; as well as seal existing loopholes in procurement legislations and policies. Women, on their part, should be more proactive, vigilant and alert on existing rights and opportunities in Government procurement.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the study

The first and third Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger; and to promote gender equality and empower women, respectively by 2015 (UN, 2009). Gender equality is about equal rights, responsibilities, opportunities and outcomes for women and men, girls and boys. This means that women's and men's rights, responsibilities and opportunities do not depend on whether they are born female or male (GoK, 2008). Empowerment on the other hand, refers to the process of developing self sufficiency skills in people so that they are able and willing to engage actively in their own development and self liberation.

According to UN Women, empowering women to participate fully in economic life across all sectors is essential to build stronger economies, to achieve internationally agreed goals for development and sustainability, and to improve the quality of life for women, men, families and communities. Kirton (2013) agrees with the foregoing by observing that, since women-owned businesses are disproportionately in the small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) sub-sector of the economy, increasing opportunities for more SMEs to engage in the delivery of goods and services can result in improved outcomes for alleviation of poverty and increasing gender equality. According to the World Economic Forum's Gender Gap Report there is a positive correlation between gender equality and a country's level of competitiveness, GDP per capita and its rank in the Human Development Index. This is consistent with evidence that reducing gender inequality enhances productivity, economic growth and development (Hausmann, Tyson & Zahidi, 2012).

In many parts of the world however, women remain economically and socially disadvantaged, with women in patriarchal societies being socialized to play roles and assume responsibilities which portray them as nurturers, caregivers and subordinate to men. Inequality between women and men has been clearly identified as one of the causes blocking development. One of the indicators of MDG 3 has been identified as the share of women in wage employment in the non-agricultural sector (UN, 2009). Statistics indicate that of the estimated 1.3 billion people living in extreme poverty worldwide, 70% of them are women (PCI). Women's nominal wages are said to be about 17% lower than men's. In most countries, women perform approximately 66% of the world's work, produce 50% of the food, but earn 10% of the income and own less than 1% of the world's property (PCI). According to UNDP (2009),

achieving the MDGs will not be possible without closing the gaps between women and men in terms of capacities, access to resources and opportunities. Gender equality and women's empowerment is therefore, central to the development paradigm, thus sustainable development requires an understanding of both women's and men's rights and responsibilities and the relationships thereof (Kirton, 2013).

It is evidently clear that trade enhances creation and growth of jobs, whose ripple effect is alleviation of poverty that affects women. This positive impact of trade on gender equality and socio-economic development can be reinforced through enhanced participation of women owned businesses in the economy. Increased participation of women owned enterprises in an economy can lead to more and better paying jobs for women (ITC, 2014). Public procurement accounts for 10%-15% of gross domestic product (GDP) in developed nations, and about 30% of GDP in developing countries (ITC, 2014). In Kenya, public procurement contracts are estimated to be worth approximately 1.6 trillion Kenya shillings. Given the magnitude of government spending, public procurement has the potential to foster growth and socio-economic transformation of a country (ITC, 2014).

In an effort to eradicate poverty and improve the economic status of women the Government of Kenya has put in place a number of measures aimed at empowering women and increasing their participation in the country's development in all sectors. It has established catalytic funds such as the Women's Enterprise Fund, the Youth Enterprise Fund, Uwezo Fund, among others; to enable women access funds for starting or growing their business ventures (GoK, 2015). In light of government procurement, the Kenyan government has further established a 30% affirmative action policy provision whereby women, youth and persons with disability are given preference for 30% of public procurement tenders.

1.2 Statement of the problem

In both rural and urban areas of Kenya, absolute poverty is higher among women than men, at 50% and 46.2% respectively (GoK, 2015). Poverty continues to limit women's participation in development. Although women constitute 51% of the population in Kenya, gender disparities are still persistent in most sectors (IEA, 2008). IEA (2008) attributes these gender inequalities to limited access and control over productive resources, access to financial services, insufficient access to education, lack of skills, limited access to technology, cultural impediments and other constraints limiting employment options and participation in decision making, among others. All these serve to seriously constrain women's ability to effectively participate in and benefit from economic development.

Kenya's Vision 2030 is the Government's development blue print that aims to transform Kenya into a newly industrializing middle income country providing a high quality of life to its citizens by 2030 (GoK, 2015). Poverty and inequality are strongly related and therefore policies that reduce inequality should be encouraged. The first and second Medium Term Plans for the years 2008-2012 and 2013-2017 respectively, highlight gender mainstreaming and the empowerment of women as key priorities in order to ensure equality between men and women in access to economic, social and political opportunities (GoK, 2015). Given the fact that governments are the largest buyers in any economy, government procurement offers a unique, financially sustainable avenue to empower women and reduce poverty (ITC, 2014).

In an effort to eradicate poverty and improve the economic status of women, the Kenyan Government has put in place various catalytic measures like the Women Enterprise Fund (WEF) established in 2007, UWEZO (Ability) Fund established in 2014, the 30% affirmative action policy for women, youth and persons with disabilities in public procurement; to empower and increase women participation in the country's development. These measures aim at providing a holistic integrated approach to addressing the challenges women face in starting or expanding their enterprises especially with regard to lack of capital, low financial literacy, accessibility to markets, decent work spaces and linkages with big enterprises (GoK, 2015). The 30% affirmative action policy provides that women, youth and persons with disability are given preference for 30% of public procurement tenders. The aim is to enhance the ability of enterprises owned by these target groups, to participate in government procurement by giving them more opportunities to do business with Government without competition from established organizations.

However, despite all these measures and the numerous opportunities available in Government procurement, few women effectively participate in the same. For instance, Nyeri Central Sub-County has an adult female population of over 30,750 (KNBS, 2010), but only about eleven women-owned enterprises had registered with AGPO by 4th March, 2015. Considering the various targeted assistance strategies by the Kenyan Government to empower women to participate in government procurement, the question that remained unanswered is why the uptake of Government procurement opportunities by women was so significantly low. It was against this background that this research sought to establish factors influencing women participation in government procurement in Kenya.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study was to establish factors influencing women participation in government procurement in Kenya.

1.4 Objectives of the study

The specific objectives of the study were:

- (i) To determine how economic factors influence women participation in government procurement in Kenya.
- (ii) To establish to what extent socio-cultural factors influence women participation in government procurement in Kenya.
- (iii) To assess how governmental factors influence women participation in government procurement in Kenya.
- (iv) To determine in what ways technical factors influence women participation in government procurement in Kenya.

1.5 Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions:

- (i) How do economic factors influence women participation in government procurement in Kenya?
- (ii) To what extent do socio-cultural factors influence women participation in government procurement in Kenya?
- (iii) How do governmental factors influence women participation in government procurement in Kenya?
- (iv) In what ways do technical factors influence women participation in government procurement in Kenya?

1.6 Significance of the study

In the words of Arancha Gonzalez (ITC, 2014), “gender equality and women’s empowerment are set to be a cornerstone of the Post-2015 Development Agenda, increasing the relevance of pursuing options through procurement to deliver on development commitments”. If well directed and through greater participation of women, government procurement can cause a positive ripple effect and drive economic growth tremendously. This study seeks to encourage and assist the Government of Kenya to effectively use public procurement in facilitating the economic empowerment of women entrepreneurs in order to achieve inclusive economic development. The study is also relevant in helping women take advantage of

the existing opportunities in government procurement by highlighting how to overcome various challenges that they face in the business world.

1.7 Delimitations of the study

The study's main focus was economic, socio-cultural, governmental and technical factors influencing women participation in government procurement in Kenya. The study sought to determine how these factors influence women participation in Government procurement in Kenya. The study was however, limited to the Nyeri Central Sub-county as the study area. Further, the study only considered adult females aged between 20-60 years, since these were considered to have the legal capacity to contract and are economically productive.

1.8 Limitations of the study

The study was limited by a range of factors, some of which included:

Time constraint since the researcher was engaged in full time employment and the study had to be done within a stipulated time period.

Resources constraint including financial resources and reference materials, which were in limited supply.

1.9 Assumptions of the study

The study was based on the following assumptions:

Participants were available and cooperative.

Participants responded correctly and honestly.

1.10 Definition of significant terms

Women participation in government procurement: Women participation in Government procurement refers to the ability and right of women-owned businesses to engage in Government procurement. This includes women-owned businesses applying for Government tenders, women-owned businesses awarded Government tenders, and women-owned businesses registered with AGPO.

Economic factors: These refer to forces that govern the production, distribution and consumption of goods and services in Government procurement. They include access to financial capital, price competition and contract sizes.

Socio-cultural factors: These refer to forces within cultures and societies that affect how people think, feel, and behave. Such factors include education levels, levels of awareness, and social systems.

Governmental factors: These are actions related to state administration, policies and legislations in reference to prevailing business conditions. Such factors include procurement and other legislations, capacity building programmes and corruption.

Technical factors: These are practices relating to the practical involvement or engagement in government procurement. Such factors include tender procedures, qualification requirements, and red tape or bureaucracy.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews theoretical and empirical literature on women participation in government procurement. The researcher reviewed other previous studies on the subject with an aim of establishing potential research gaps. The researcher's main goal was to assess factors influencing women participation in government procurement in Kenya. These were broadly categorized into four namely, economic, socio-cultural, Government policies and technical factors.

2.2 Women participation in Government Procurement

The key objective of public procurement policy is to define an efficient, transparent system, which enables governments to procure value-for-money goods and services in order to run the day-to-day business of government (Kirton, 2013). A second objective of public procurement is to facilitate the promotion of local industry and economic development (GoK, 2005). Given the magnitude of government spending on goods and services, public procurement can be a useful tool for an economy's growth and socio-economic transformation of a country (Kirton, 2013). A body of literature suggests that trade, though primarily an economic phenomenon has significant effects on sustainable development. According to Kelley et al (2013), although trade can be an engine for economic growth and development, there is no automatic transmission mechanism or direct causal relationship between trade and human development. In order to ensure that trade results in net benefits for nations, particularly developing nations, there must be systematic efforts to align trade regimes with human development goals, including gender equality.

While the main goal of public procurement is to buy goods and services that governments need, public procurement can also be used to promote socioeconomic objectives (ITC, 2014). These are often referred to as 'horizontal' or 'collateral' objectives because they are ancillary to the primary purpose of public procurement, which is to acquire goods and services for the government (Quinot, 2013). Promoting socioeconomic, industrial and environmental policies, including those related to women-owned businesses, are important secondary objectives of public procurement systems (ITC, 2014). It is clear at this point that an inclusive government procurement policy can accelerate sustainable economic development by ensuring equality of opportunities in government contracts. Thus, unlocking

government procurement for women owned businesses can be a good way of using trade as an avenue for increasing economic development benefits for women and the society at large.

The case for public procurement as a tool to promote participation by women-owned businesses is compelling from a developmental and economic perspective. According to ITC (2014) small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are the engines for job growth in the world economy, accounting for nearly 80% of jobs worldwide. Increasing their competitiveness increases their likelihood of success, expansion and job creation. Arancha Gonzalez, the executive director of ITC, observed that women entrepreneurs tend to reinvest up to 90% of their earnings in their families and communities, which links inclusive economic growth directly to development (ITC, 2014).

Gender equality is a universal goal that is enshrined in many international instruments such as the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) and the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), 1979” (UNCTAD 2004). Adding a gender dimension to public procurement and trade issues represents a commitment by governments to achieving gender equality where it matters most, in policies governing the flow of economic resources (Kelley, Brush, Greene, Litovsky, & GERA; 2013).

Kirton (2013) emphasizes that increasing opportunities for more small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to engage in the delivery of goods and services can result in improved outcomes for alleviation of poverty and increasing gender equality, given that women-owned businesses are disproportionately in this sub-sector of the economy. In agreement with Kirton, Kelley et al (2013) observe that expanding the participation of SMEs in the tendering process has a number of advantages for poverty reduction, gender equity and sustainable development. According to the World Economic Forum’s Gender Gap Report, there is a positive correlation between gender equality and a country’s level of competitiveness, GDP per capita and its rank in the Human Development Index. This is consistent with evidence that reducing gender inequality enhances productivity, economic growth and development (Kelley, et al, 2013).

However, according to UNCTAD (2004), women’s participation in the workforce has always been significant when taking into account the unremunerated domestic labour they perform in their homes and in subsistence agriculture. Even so, globally their work in the formal sector has increased steadily over the past years. Entrepreneurship is one economic area where women continue to be underrepresented, more so in the high growth entrepreneurship (Robb, Coleman & Stangler, 2014). In America for instance, women-owned businesses account for about one third of all types of businesses.

However, among employer firms women-owned businesses account for only 16%, and less than 10% in high growth firms (Robb, et al, 2014).

Women's participation in entrepreneurship varies markedly around the world. According to the 2012 World Economic Forum's Gender Gap Report, in Latin American and Caribbean economies, 15% of the female population was engaged in entrepreneurship. Europe, Asia and Israel recorded a female Total Entrepreneurial Activity (TEA) rate of 5%; while Sub-Saharan Africa recorded the highest regional TEA levels of 27% of the female population being engaged in entrepreneurship (Kelley, et al, 2013). In just seven economies (Panama, Thailand, Ghana, Ecuador, Nigeria, Mexico, and Uganda), women had equal or slightly higher levels of entrepreneurship than men. For the rest, women represented a smaller share of the entrepreneur population.

According to ITC (2014), an important first step to leveraging public procurement in support of women-owned businesses is to define what it means to be a woman-owned business and the criteria for participation in preferential programmes. Lack of consistency, clarity and data in this area has frustrated past efforts to promote increased participation by women entrepreneurs. It continues to do so today. The definition of a women-owned business may vary from country to country. However, it is critical that definitions emphasize ownership and control by women to avoid tokenism and illicit practices such as fronting. These definitions and associated criteria are also key to understanding market capacity, establishing a baseline against which to measure progress, targeting technical, financial and other forms of assistance, and determining which businesses are eligible for preferential status (ITC, 2014).

Mayoux (2001) noted that there are certain factors that limit women entrepreneurs' ability to take advantage of the opportunities available to them in their environment, and these factors have been identified as the reasons why their businesses fail (Kantor,1999). According to ITC (2014) common challenges that face women in both developing and developed economies in government procurement include lack of information about tender opportunities, overly complex and burdensome tender procedures, unreasonable technical and financial qualification requirements, large contract sizes, insufficient time to assemble tenders, price competition, lack of feedback from procuring agencies, and failure by those agencies to promptly pay women-owned businesses. According to United Nations (2006), women entrepreneurs face many challenges including government rules and regulations, lack of access to finance, assets, information technology, infrastructure and other facilities that enable their efficiency and business growth. Therefore factors that influence women participation in government

procurement can broadly be grouped into economic, socio-cultural, political and technical. We will consider each of these in turn.

2.3 Economic factors

Some of the economic factors influencing women participation in Government procurement in Kenya include access to financial capital, contract sizes/value, and price competition. Let us now consider each of them in turn.

2.3.1 Access to financial capital

As IEA (2008) put it, access to financial services is critical for economic empowerment of any population and it varies across gender. For women-owned businesses in Africa, the financial criteria for tender evaluation pose the biggest challenge. On the other hand, procuring entities have a duty to ensure that contractors have the financial capabilities to perform the contracts (ITC, 2014). While women entrepreneurs are now understood to be an accelerator of global growth, their difficulty in accessing capital is a hindering factor (Varveer & Azzareli, 2015). The opportunity cost is huge, given that women's economic impact is magnified by a multiplier effect. Women are more likely than men to plough earnings back into their communities, fostering prosperity and stability. But despite their systemic disadvantage, women are launching businesses at an impressive rate. In emerging markets alone, the eight to 10 million small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) with full or partial female ownership represent more than 30% of all formal SMEs (Varveer & Azzareli, 2015). According to the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) 2012 Women's report, more than 126 million women entrepreneurs were running new businesses and an additional 98 million were running established businesses in 67 economies in 2012 (Kelley et al, 2013).

Al-botmeh (2013) argues that women face more hurdles in accessing credit compared to men, for various reasons. Women often do not have the collateral necessary to access commercial loans. An International Monetary Fund (IMF) study, "Women, Work, and the Economy," states that if obstacles to women's full participation were removed, women could become a driver of global growth. Loosening of economic constraint imposed on women can have immense consequences on development (IEA, 2008). That would mean increased GDP and greater stability (Varveer & Azzareli, 2015).

When women can find decent jobs and acquire assets, they earn incomes and accumulate savings to help themselves and their families. In light of the challenges facing women in accessing financial capital, the

Government of Kenya initiated the Women Enterprise Fund (WEF) in 2007; and Uwezo fund in 2014. The funds are meant to enhance entrepreneurship among women, by borrowing money to engage in business and other activities at reasonable interest rates.

2.3.2 Contract Sizes/Value

According to Thomassen, Orderud, Strand, Vincze , de Bas, Wagt & Yagafarova (2014), the value of public contracts is one of the major factors that influence the extent to which SMEs can access these contracts. Most government contracts' values are too large for SMEs to handle. The larger the tender value, the less likely it will be awarded to SMEs since they lack the financial muscle to undertake such contracts.

2.3.3 Price competition

One of the objectives of the Kenyan Public Procurement and Disposal Act 2005 is to promote competition and ensure competitors are treated fairly (GoK, 2005). At the same time, it is a general rule of public procurement that, contracts are to be awarded to candidates quoting the lowest evaluated price. This means that, government contracts are awarded to the lowest priced, technically acceptable tender. A large proportion of women-owned businesses are not able to successfully compete against other large businesses when contracts are awarded to the lowest priced, technically acceptable tender (ITC, 2014). By emphasizing price rather than value for money, procuring entities ignore the life cycle costs associated with the purchases and forego the many innovative solutions offered by small firms owned by women.

2.4 Socio-cultural factors

Of the different socio-cultural factors influencing women, education levels, gender systems, and sensitization and awareness play a major role in determining their participation levels in government procurement.

2.4.1 Education levels

Studies in developed and developing countries show that a girl's education is important for the welfare of the family and future development (IEA, 2008). Nonetheless, women continue to be educated at a lower rate to the men, increasing their reliance upon men. According to World Economic Forum's Gender Gap Report 2012, the lowest levels of education are found in Sub-Saharan Africa, where only

about 15 percent of female entrepreneurs have a post-secondary degree (college) or higher. The highest levels of post-secondary-graduate entrepreneurs are in the United States, where 70 percent of women entrepreneurs achieve this level of education, which is higher than for non-entrepreneurs/non-business owners and relatively similar to men (Kelley, et al, 2013). Without relevant qualifications, women will continue to be relegated to lower paying, less secure and potentially hazardous jobs than their skilled male counterparts (Kirton, 2013).

Considerable progress has however, been made in terms of women's access to education in Kenya. There has been a steady increase in the enrolment of girl children in early childhood development and education (ECDE). According to the Kenya Review of the Beijing Platform for Action report, in some instances the number of girls enrolled in ECDE programmes surpassed that of boys (GoK, 2015). This means that more girls are attaining early childhood education, unlike in the past. Similar increases have been recorded at primary school levels. However, equality in the rate of transition between girls and boys is yet to be attained (GoK, 2015). Analysis of secondary school enrolment by gender data indicates that girls join secondary school at increasingly large numbers. However, as they move up the academic ladder from Form 1 to Form four, their number reduces. This means that although many girls join high school, only a proportion of them manage to complete (GoK, 2015).

At the university level, women remain underrepresented, forming about 40% of the total student population in 2013/2014 (GoK, 2015). Further, the women are typically over-represented in subjects such as health, social science and education, and consequently, these choices influence their job choices, and in the long run, their competitiveness in the labour market. This contributes to limited knowledge among women to excel in more lucrative sectors such as manufacturing and highly profitable entrepreneurship programmes (IEA, 2008). Discrimination, lower retention rates, underrepresentation at secondary and tertiary levels are some of the challenges women and girls are facing in education leading to reduced economic opportunities, poorer health and increased poverty and marginalization (GoK, 2015). The reason why investments and education policies are producing different outcomes for women and men is because gender inequality is deeply entrenched.

The factors affecting girls' participation in education are numerous and varied. They range from nomadic lifestyle for Northeastern region, long distances to school, care giving responsibilities for girls (e.g. trekking long distances to fetch water and firewood). These take away crucial time that they would otherwise spend on their studies and is ultimately detrimental to their academic performance. Their poor

performance affects their educational progression and their parents' support of their education (as parents who do not see the value added will not send their girls to school). The result is a vicious cycle, where girls attending school under difficult circumstances perform poorly, discouraging their parents from supporting their further education (Maina, 2009). Other causes of girls' low participation rates include cultural practices that favor the education of boys to that of girls, such as early marriages, childbearing, and attendant parental responsibilities. Extreme poverty also plays a role.

The benefits of women's education to women and to society in general are immense. In the workplace, education enhances skills required for job entry, improves chances of vertical mobility, and increases overall labour market productivity. At home, education leads to improved health, increased child survival rates, reduced fertility rates, lower infant mortality rates, and better protection against HIV and AIDS. Education of women and girls is therefore not only a moral and human rights issue, but also an economic and development issue, hence equity in education is fundamental.

2.4.2 Sensitization and awareness

According to ITC (2014), a common complaint among women-owned businesses is that they are not aware of and do not know how to access public procurement opportunities. To address this, many countries have established web portals, or electronic gateways, to publish all public solicitations or tenders, or at least those above a certain monetary threshold. By making information more available to women-owned businesses and other interested parties, electronic gateways increase transparency and reduce the opportunity for corruption, which negatively affects women-owned businesses (ITC, 2014).

One of the findings by FreshMinds in their study of U.K. SMEs was that, over three quarters of SMEs believed that there are barriers to awareness of government opportunities (FreshMinds, 2008). Even where there are preferential access programmes in government procurement, women entrepreneurs require more training to take advantage of the opportunities because of the unique and complex nature of public procurement systems and the historic lack of participation by women-owned businesses (ITC, 2014).

In India, the Government Tenders Information System is the central source for government and public sector procurement, tenders and notifications issued by the Central and State Governments and other public bodies for goods, services and works. It is an interactive database that allows users to search and sort tenders by location, agency, description and value, as well as download tender documentation (ITC,

2014). In South Africa, all national government solicitations are published in the Government Tender Bulletin, a weekly publication available online or by subscription (ITC, 2014).

The appropriateness of web-based solutions however, depends on the level of Internet connectivity and use in a given country. Women entrepreneurs in rural communities are less likely to have Internet access or benefit from electronic procurement gateways. Information about tender opportunities could be given directly to women's business organizations and other associations that support women entrepreneurs, which can share the information with their members (ITC, 2014). Civil Society, Government, private sector and other relevant organs should step up awareness campaigns on rights and opportunities for women and policy interventions already in place targeting women. This would enhance their effective participation in the social, economic and political systems (IEA, 2008).

2.4.3 Social systems

All societies have gender systems which attribute different roles to men and women. Generally, though not everywhere, men traditionally have a dominant role in social relations, in particular those of authority and power. Based on inherent structural factors due to specific physiological characteristics; and socially constructed differences that have been influenced by history, culture and perceptions; men's and women's reactions to change and interaction with economic structures may vary (Coche et al, 2006).

Social, cultural and traditional practices and unfounded norms deny women various opportunities to effectively participate in production systems (IEA, 2008). Some cultures still regard the place of a woman as being in the kitchen and raising children as part of the reproductive role. This kind of socialization makes it hard for many men to fathom the idea that they can share the same platform with a woman (IEA, 2008). These societal attitudes and norms inhibit some women from even considering starting a business, while systemic barriers mean that many women entrepreneurs stay confined to very small businesses often operating in the informal economy. This not only limits their ability to earn an income for themselves and their families but also impedes them from realizing their full potential to contribute to socio-economic development, job creation and environmental stewardship. The ILO estimates that while 22 percent of men's productive potential is underutilized; women's is as high as 50 per cent.

In Kenya, some traditional practices governing land and livestock ownership, access and control over land, and benefits accruing to land produce in Kenya tend to favour men compared to women. This to a large extent disadvantages women in accessing credit especially when collateral is required. For example, in 2004 only 1% of land titles in Kenya were held by women and 5-6% was owned jointly (IEA, 2008). Further, like other parts of the Continent, Women in Kenya face the challenge of balancing between work and family responsibilities. Mekonnen and Spurling found that “on average women work for 12.9 hours a day compared to 8.2 hours for male counterparts” (as cited in IEA, 2008, p.43-44). Time spent by women in attending to household tasks leaves them with limited time to engage in time demanding enterprises (IEA, 2008).

Removing barriers, such as discriminatory property and inheritance laws, discriminatory customary laws, sexual harassment, poor access to formal financial institutions, and time constraints due to family and household responsibilities, could create greater opportunities for sustainable enterprises run by women. This in turn would contribute to women’s economic empowerment and gender equality as well as job creation (ITC, 2014).

2.5 Governmental factors

Several governmental factors influence women participation in public procurement. Some of the major ones include policies and legislation, capacity building programmes and corruption.

2.5.1 Policies and legislation

Public procurement is a powerful tool to promote socioeconomic objectives because it operates at the intersection of the government’s regulatory and buying powers (McCrudden, 2004). Governments have the power to regulate market participants by encouraging markets through competition laws or by restraining markets through social regulation, such as health and safety laws (ITC, 2014). In Kenya, government procurement is guided mainly by: The Public Procurement and Disposal Act, 2005; The Public Procurement and Disposal Regulations, 2006; and Circulars and manuals form PPOA. The institutional framework includes the following bodies: Public Procurement and Oversight Authority (PPOA); Public Procurement Oversight Advisory Board; and Public Procurement Administrative Review Board (GoK, 2005).

To harness the potential of women-owned businesses however, procurement policies must be gender sensitive. According to Kepler & Shane (2007), it is necessary to note that businesses owned by women and those owned by men are not the same Women-owned businesses tend to be smaller; are often less

experienced; have less access to human, financial and social capital; tend to be in less-profitable sectors, such as retail sales and services; and have owners who tend to have more family and care responsibilities.

Gender-neutral laws therefore, do not create a neutral playing field. Since women-owned businesses are different, it is important to consider the disparate impact of seemingly gender-neutral rules, policies and programmes (Kepler & Shane, 2007). Removing barriers faced by women-owned businesses is a necessary step. However, their removal is unlikely to substantially increase participation by women-owned businesses in public procurements unless other steps are taken. To stimulate entrepreneurial activity, governments must develop affirmative policies, procedures, and programmes specifically for women-owned businesses (ITC, 2014).

Governments have long used targeted assistance strategies to encourage or promote economic participation by historically disadvantaged individuals and other marginalized groups within society. Although few governments have done so to date, these same strategies can be used to promote increased economic participation by women-owned businesses (ITC, 2014). Some of the targeted assistance techniques being used by governments include preferences and reservations.

Preferences involve granting a price preference or margin of preference to firms that are eligible for preferential treatment (ITC, 2014). In these cases, the procuring entities artificially increase the bid prices of the non-preferred firms by a set number of percentage points while making no adjustments to the bid prices of the preferred firms. Award is then made to the firm with lowest evaluated price. Alternatively, the preference may take the form of additional points (ITC, 2014).

According to the Kenyan Public Procurement and Disposal (Preference and Reservations) Regulations, 2011; preference means the right or opportunity to select a person from an identified target group which is considered more desirable than another. Local preference means the right or opportunity to select a person from an identified target group that is considered more desirable than another in a constituency, local authority or county.

Reservations involve setting aside one or more procurement opportunities for competition among a preferred category of firms, such as women-owned businesses. Firms that do not meet the eligibility criteria are excluded (ITC, 2014). The Kenyan Public Procurement and Disposal (Preference and Reservations) Regulations, 2011 defines reservations as exclusive preference to procure goods, works and services set aside to a defined target group within a specified threshold or region.

In the United States, the statutory target for small businesses owned and controlled by women is not less than 5% of the total value of all federal contracts (ITC, 2014). In Kenya, the Public Procurement and Disposal (Preference and Reservations) Regulations, 2011 provides that procuring entities are mandatorily required to allocate at least 30% of their procurement expenditure, for the purpose of procuring goods, works and services from micro and small enterprises owned by youth, women and persons with disability. To benefit from preference and reservations scheme, women-owned businesses should however be legal entities registered with the relevant government body; with at least seventy percent membership being women and the leadership being hundred percent women.

However, like Kirton (2013) put it, enacting affirmative action legislation and adopting policies, which establish quotas or give preference to women and minority groups, while a step in the right direction is insufficient to provide access to government tenders by women and minority-owned enterprises and SMEs'. Other pragmatic steps need to be taken.

2.5.2 Capacity building programmes

The targeted assistance strategies by governments are primarily intended to increase the demand for goods and services from women-owned businesses. To enhance effectiveness of the system, the created demand must be matched by supply (ITC, 2014). To address this, governments must establish programmes that build the capacity of women-owned businesses to compete successfully in public procurement markets, and deliver the goods and services that governments require to fulfil their public functions (ITC, 2014). Women entrepreneurs require training due to the unique and complex nature of public procurement systems and the historic lack of participation by women-owned businesses (ITC, 2014). It is essential for policies to be developed in support of education, training and business development for women's businesses which are unable to compete due to a current lack of skills (Kirton, 2013).

In Kenya, the 30% public procurement reservation for youth, women and persons with disability aims to enhance the ability of enterprises owned by these target groups, to participate in government procurement. This affirmative action aims to empower youth, women and persons with disability-owned enterprises; by giving them more opportunities to do business with Government. Through Access to Government Procurement Opportunities (AGPO) programme, the government is in the process of registering and pre-qualifying Youth, Women and Persons with Disability owned enterprises so that they can access government tenders and contracts (AGPO, 2015).

In August 2007, Women Enterprise Fund (WEF) was established, with the aim of providing accessible and affordable credit to support women start and/or expand business for wealth and employment creation. The Fund also provides business support services such as capacity building, marketing, promotion of linkages and infrastructure support. The agency offers three loan products to women, ‘Tuinuke’ loan, ‘Jiimarishe’ loan and LPO financing. Tuinuke loan is a product at the constituency level, also known as Constituency Women Enterprise Scheme (CWES). It is given out through registered women groups of ten members and above, interested in expanding or starting new businesses. As a prerequisite for the loan application, the women groups must be trained on business management skills by the WEF officers. The loan is interest free, with only five percent administrative fee; and is repayable within one year with a grace period of 2-1 months depending on amounts (WEF, 2015). Jiimarishe loan is a financial intermediary partners’ channel. The loan is given to individual women, Self Help Groups or companies owned by women at an interest rate of 8% per annum on reducing balance. The repayment period for this loan product is a maximum of 36 months; with a maximum amount per borrower being two million Kenya shillings (WEF, 2015). WEF also offers LPO financing to individual women owning enterprises or women owned companies. This is a product tailored to serve women by increasing their capacity to respond and adequately service tenders thus meeting supply requirements (WEF, 2015).

In September, 2013, His Excellency the President of the Republic of Kenya launched UWEZO Fund. This is a youth and women’s fund at the constituency level, which has its genesis in the pledge His Excellency the President made to allocate the Kshs. 6 billion that was meant for the presidential run-off to youth and women groups (Uwezo Fund, 2015). The Fund is an empowerment tool that provides youth and women groups access to grants and interest-free loans, as well as mentorship opportunities to enable them take advantage of the 30% government procurement preference for youth, women and persons with disabilities. The Uwezo Oversight board undertakes sensitization and capacity building forums across the country, from time to time (Uwezo Fund, 2015).

2.6 Technical factors

The following technical factors play an important role in influencing the level of women participation in government procurement in Kenya. They include tender process, qualification requirements, and red tape/bureaucracy in the procuring agencies.

2.6.1 Tender process

FreshMinds (2008) notes that public procurement procedures are often complex, burdensome and costly that they discourage women-owned businesses from participating in public procurement markets. Public procurement contracts generally involve greater bid, proposal and compliance costs than commercial contracts. This often places women-owned businesses at a disadvantage because they are less experienced and have fewer resources to draw upon than other businesses (FreshMinds, 2008).

According to the Kenyan Public Procurement and Disposal Act, 2005, the procurement cycle involves: Preparation of Procurement Plans; Preparation of procurement specifications and initiation of the procurement process; Preparation of Pre-qualification/Tender/Bid documents; Advertisement/initiation of bids; Receiving and Opening Bids; Evaluation of Bids; Adjudication and Contract Award; Notification of Contract Award; Negotiations (where applicable); Preparation and Signing of Procurement Contract; Contract Administration; Receipt Inspection and Acceptance of goods, works, services and consulting services; and Storage and Inventory Management (GoK, 2005). A research carried out by FreshMinds (2008) on U.K. SMEs, established that over half of SMEs feel that the process of tendering for government contracts requires more time and resource than their business can allow.

Simplification, clarification and standardization of the tender process and documentation, have the potential to lower the transaction costs of contracting and tends to produce a positive network externality (ITC, 2014). ITC (2014) observes that African countries like South Africa, Liberia, Zambia and Kenya, make use of standard tender documents. According to the South Africa Green Paper on Public Sector Reform, uniformity in tender and contract documentation promotes: Effective participation by new entrants and emerging enterprises in the business environment; Cost effectiveness, both in financial and human resource terms; Understanding and interpretation by new entrants/emerging contractors; as well as Simplification of the documentation process (ITC, 2014).

Prequalification process can also pose as a barrier to women participation in government procurement. In some settings, prequalification proceedings are used as part of a multi-step procurement process where interested firms must first demonstrate they meet the minimum technical, financial, legal and other qualifications for a particular project before progressing further in the tender process. The multi-step process is typically used for more complex procurements. In other settings, prequalification proceedings are the initial point of entry into the procurement system. In this situation, interested firms

must prequalify for inclusion on the procuring entity's approved vendor lists. Procuring entities often use approved vendor lists rather than open competition to solicit quotations and make low-value purchases (ITC, 2014).

Women entrepreneurs are well placed to compete for these contracts because the size of the contracts and purchases are relatively small. But they can only compete if they have prequalified.

Unfortunately, many women entrepreneurs are reluctant to take the prequalification step. They often consider the registration and prequalification processes too complex, or they are simply not able to meet some of the prequalification requirements. Further, some women entrepreneurs operating in the informal economy are reluctant to register for these opportunities because they believe it could subject them to additional taxes and other costs (ITC, 2014). Many procuring entities prequalify vendors on a periodic basis, for example annually, biannually or every three years, rather than a rolling basis, which is the practice favoured by international instruments such as WTO GPA. Prequalifying vendors on a periodic basis locks prospective new entrants out of the procurement system for the length of the prequalification period (ITC, 2014).

Simplifying and standardizing documentation can help mitigate these issues to some extent. It is possible to prequalify women-owned businesses for groups of contracts or certain categories of goods, works, and services, and to share this information across procuring entities. In Kenya, for example, the Public Procurement and Disposal Act of 2005, allows one procurement entity to use the results of prequalification procedures conducted by another public entity, which reduces the administrative burden on businesses.

2.6.2 Qualification requirements

Generally, public procurement contracts should only be awarded to qualified suppliers (GoK, 2005). For prospective enterprises to participate in government procurement proceedings, they must first qualify by meeting technical, financial and other criteria necessary to execute the contract, such as technical competence, financial resources, equipment and other physical facilities, managerial capability, experience, and personnel (ITC, 2014). In order to qualify to bid for a government contract, an individual or company should meet the following criteria: the person/company should possess necessary qualifications capability, experience, resources, equipment and facilities to provide what is being procured; the person/company should have the legal capacity to enter into a contract for procurement; and the person/company should not be insolvent, in receivership, bankrupt or in the process of being

wound up and should not be the subject of legal proceedings relating to the foregoing (Migai Akech,2005; as cited in Kirton, 2013). Most procuring entities require that prospective contractors have the legal capacity to enter into contracts, that is, they are not insolvent, bankrupt or in receivership, and that the firm's management personnel have not been convicted of specific criminal offences, or been debarred or suspended from doing business with the government (ITC, 2014).

Procuring entities have a duty to ensure the contractors have the financial and technical capabilities to perform the contracts. These are necessary components to guard against abuse of government resources, but they simultaneously act as discriminatory barriers to micro and small enterprises that have limited resources (Kirton, 2013). Procuring entities should ensure that qualification requirements are appropriately tailored to the size and complexity of the contract requirements; as opposed to a 'one size fits all' approach which ends up locking out most women-owned businesses.

2.6.3 Red tape/Bureaucracy

FreshMinds (2008) observed that on average, SMEs consider the private sector easier to sell to than the public sector. SMEs' rate of success in winning private sector contracts is double their rate of success in winning public sector contracts. Nearly three quarters of SMEs felt that the public sector is more difficult to deliver work to than the private sector, due to a greater amount of formality, a lack of responsiveness and unrealistic timescales. This discourages many would be procurers. The stringent rules and regulations that have become a part of the battle against corruption complicate the procedure for securing government contracts (Kirton, 2013).

2.7 Theoretical Framework

This study will also be guided by the Empowerment Theory as advanced by different researchers. To understand empowerment we can begin by examining the concepts of power and powerlessness (Moscovitch and Drover, 1981). Power is defined by the Cornell Empowerment Group (1989) as the capacity of some people and organizations to produce intended, foreseen and unforeseen effects on others. Parenti (1978) describes power as the ability to control powerful resources in order to get what you want, despite resistance. One way of thinking about power is in terms of the ability to make choices. To be disempowered therefore, implies to be denied choice (Kabee, 2001). There are therefore, many sources of power including personality, property/wealth, influential organizations, among others (Galbraith, 1983).

Powerlessness on the other hand can be seen as the expectation of a person that their own actions will be ineffective in influencing the outcome of life events (Keiffer, 1984). In a society where powerful people have wealth, property, control of jobs, prestige, and access to goods and services; people who are experiencing powerlessness have little access to these valued resources. According to Lerner (1986), powerlessness can either be real or surplus. Real powerlessness results from economic inequities and oppressive control exercised by systems and other people. Surplus powerlessness, on the other hand, is an internalized belief that change cannot occur, a belief which results in apathy and an unwillingness of the person to struggle for more control and influence. Albee (1981) observes that powerlessness has over the years, come to be viewed as an objective phenomenon, where people with little or no political and economic power lack the means to gain greater control and resources in their lives.

From the foregoing, empowerment can therefore be defined as an intentional ongoing process centered in the local community, involving mutual respect, critical reflection, caring, and group participation, through which people lacking an equal share of valued resources gain greater access to and control over those resources (Cornell Empowerment Group, 1989). It may be seen as a process where individuals learn to see a closer correspondence between their goals and a sense of how to achieve them, and a relationship between their efforts and life outcomes (Mechanic, 1991). Wallerstein (1992) defines empowerment as a social-action process that promotes participation of people, organizations, and communities towards the goals of increased individual and community control, political efficacy, improved quality of community life, and social justice. Kabee (2001) views empowerment as the expansion in people's ability to make strategic life choices in a context where this ability was previously denied to them (Sida, 2001).

According to Kabee (2001) changes in the ability to exercise choice can be thought of in terms of changes in three inter-related dimensions which make up choice. These include resources (which form the conditions under which choices are made. These can be material, social or human); agency (the ability to define one's goals and act upon them or the process by which choices are made); and achievements (outcomes of choices). These dimensions of empowerment are inter-dependent because changes in each contribute to, and benefit from, changes in the others. Thus, the achievements of a particular moment are translated into enhanced resources or agency, and hence capacity for making choices, at a later moment in time (Sida, 2001). In some cases, change in one dimension or level is presumed to lead to, or be symptomatic of, changes in others so that they confine themselves to indicators of that change.

Rappaport (1987) argues that empowerment conveys both a psychological sense of personal control or influence and a concern with actual social influence, political power, and legal rights. Empowerment is not only an individual psychological construct, but also organizational, political, sociological, economic, and spiritual concepts. It is a multi-level construct applicable to individual citizens as well as to organizations and neighbourhoods.

Generally empowerment theory views empowerment as processes and outcomes. Processes incorporate actions, activities, or structures; while outcomes entail achieved levels of empowerment (Perkins & Zimmerman, 1995). However, both empowerment processes and outcomes differ in their outward form since no single standard can fully capture its meaning in all contexts or populations (Rappaport, 1983; Zimmerman, 1993). Empowering process may include individuals' participation in community programmes, collective decision making and shared leadership in organizations, or collective action by a community to access government and other community resources (Perkins & Zimmerman, 1995). Empowerment outcomes on the other hand refer to the results of empowerment process. These may include situation-specific perceived control and resource mobilization skills at individual level; development of organizational networks, organizational growth, and policy leverage at organizational level; and evidence of pluralism, existence of organizational coalitions, and accessible community resources at community level (Perkins & Zimmerman, 1995).

In this sense, empowerment can exist at three levels: personal/individual level, organizational/group level, and community level. It is however, difficult to clearly separate the three levels of empowerment (Lord & Hutchison, 1993). At the individual level of analysis, psychological empowerment requires an understanding of the socio-political environment, which includes knowledge of the laws and an appreciation of one's rights and responsibilities. It also incorporates beliefs regarding competency to act in regard to that understanding. These beliefs encompass concepts of self efficacy, locus of control, and self-esteem. Finally, empowerment involves an effort to exert control over one's environment, through proactive action or advocacy.

Kabeer N. (2001) conceptualizes empowerment at three different possible levels: immediate level, intermediate level, and deeper level (Sida, 2001). Immediate level includes changes at individual and groups levels in their sense of selfhood and identity, in how they perceive their interests and in their capacity to act. Intermediate level involves the rules and relationships which prevail in the personal,

social, economic and political spheres of life. Deeper level includes hidden structures which shape the distribution of resources and power in a society and reproduce it over time.

Sida (2001) observes that there is a widespread tendency in the empowerment literature to talk about access to resources in a generic way, as if indicating some relationship between women and resources automatically specifies the choices it makes possible. In reality, however, resources are at one remove from choice, a measure of potential rather than actualized choice. How changes in women's resources will translate into changes in the choices they are able to make will depend, in part, on other aspects of the conditions in which they are making their choices (Sida, 2001). Access to resources will only translate into empowerment if women are able to act on, or because of, these resources in some definitive way.

Paulo Freire in his study of the poor and oppressed in Brazil in the 1960s noted that with proper methods and exposure, people were able and also willing to engage actively in their own development and self-liberation (Freire, 1993). According to Alexander & Welzel, women empowerment is promoted by: socioeconomic development; rising gender-egalitarian attitudes that transform economic development into a cultural process of human development; historical legacies stemming from a society's cultural and political traditions; and institutional design factors.

UN Women holds that empowering women to participate fully in economic life across all sectors is essential to build stronger economies, to achieve internationally agreed goals for development and sustainability, and to improve the quality of life for women, men, families and communities. The empowerment of women is critical in alleviating poverty, hunger, disease and stimulating development (GoK, 2015). Economic empowerment for any population is the cornerstone for sustainable development owing to direct contribution to production systems. This includes participation in such sectors as agriculture, mining, manufacturing, construction, transport, trade, finance, social services, among others (IEA, 2008). Gender equality requires equal enjoyment by women and men of socially valued goods, opportunities, resources and rewards, while gender equity suggests that women and men have equal life chances (Kirton, 2013).

2.8 Conceptual Framework

The study sought to determine factors influencing women participation in government procurement in Kenya. Economic, socio-cultural, governmental and technical factors formed the independent variables, while women participation in government procurement was the dependent variable. Business experience was the moderating variable. Figure 1 summarizes the interactions among the variables of the study.

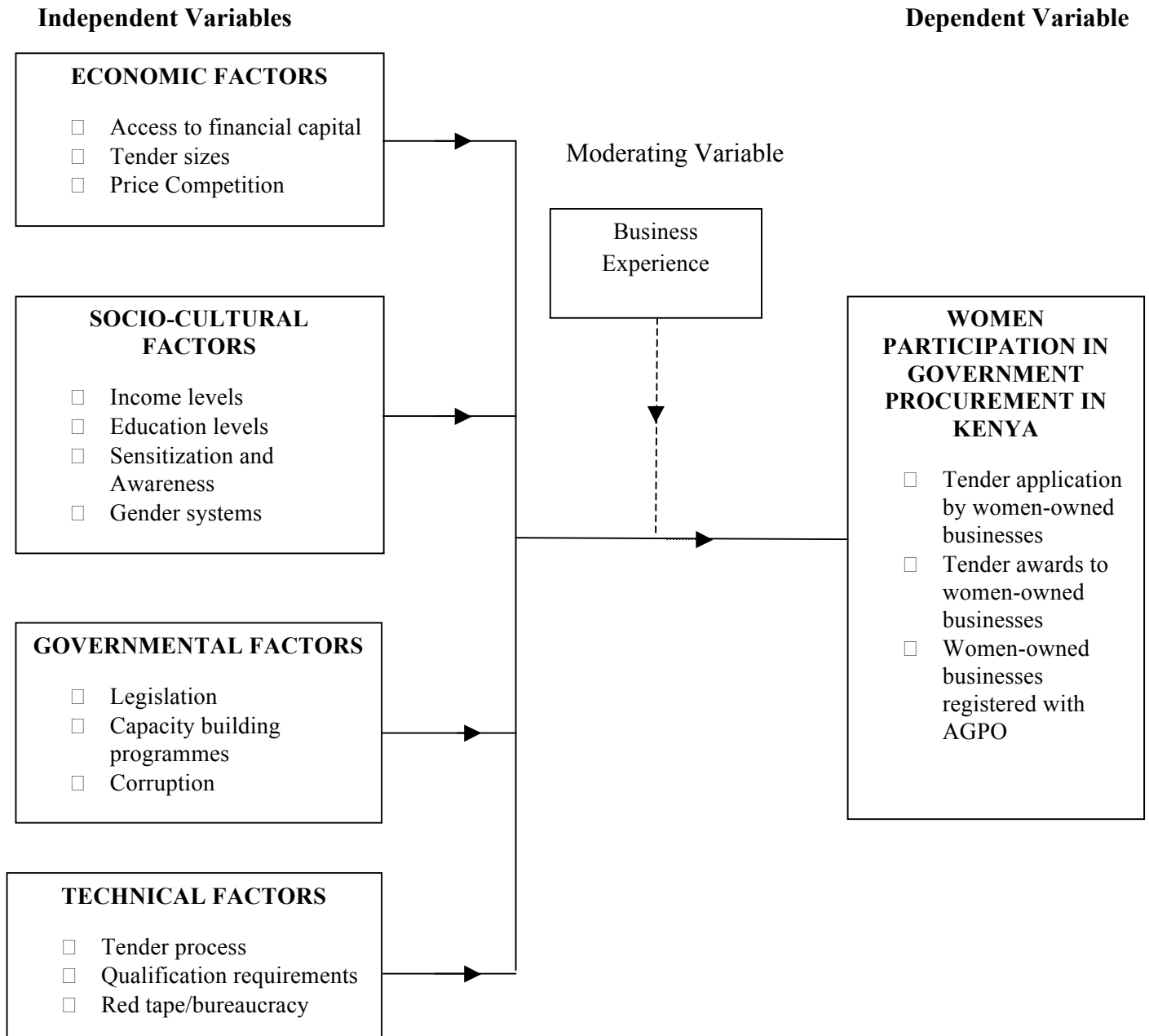


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

2.9 Research Gap

A number of research studies have been carried out on trade, gender and public procurement; factors affecting procurement performance; SMEs experiences of government procurement; women entrepreneurship development; opening government procurement to women's enterprises; empowering women through public procurement; among others. There is however, very little that has been done with regard to factors influencing women participation in government procurement and specifically in Kenya. Despite the numerous opportunities available in public procurement, few women effectively participate in the same, due to a number of multivariate factors. The different underlying factors that shape women participation in government procurement opportunities can be broadly classified into economic, socio-cultural, Governmental and technical factors. These factors individually or collectively influence the level of women participation in government procurement.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the research design, study population, sample size and sampling techniques, data collection procedure and tools as well as data analysis and presentation.

3.2 Research Design

The study employed descriptive survey design using mixed mode approach. Descriptive research refers to studies concerned with describing the characteristics of a particular individual, or of a group as they presently exist (Kothari, 2004). According to Abraham Fischler, a mixed methods research design is a procedure for collecting, analyzing, and mixing both quantitative and qualitative research and methods in a single study to understand a research problem.

3.3 Study Population

According to Sekaran, (2002), a population is a group of individuals, objects or items from which samples are taken for measurement or it is an entire group of persons, or elements that have at least one thing in common. The target population for the study was adult women aged between 20-60 years in Nyeri-Central Sub-County, who were about 30,750 (KNBS, 2010); the procurement officers; Women Enterprise Fund officers; Uwezo Fund Officers; and Access to Government Opportunities (AGPO) officers.

3.4 Sample Size

From the study population of 30,750, a sample size of 395 participants was selected at a confidence level of 95% or at 5% margin of error. This was calculated using Yamane (1967) formulae as presented in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Sample size

Participants	Population (N)	Sample (n)
Women	30,750	395
Procurement office		2
Women Enterprise Fund Office		2
Uwezo fund office		2
AGPO office		2
Total		403

3.5 Sampling Procedure

To sample the women respondents, cluster sampling which is a probability sampling technique was employed. The technique was necessitated by the fact that the study population was too large and scattered over a large geographical area, hence difficult to obtain a sampling frame (Mugenda & Mugenda, 1999). It therefore involved dividing the population into clusters. Nyeri Central Sub-County has four (4) locations, which in turn have twenty two (22) sub-locations (Ministry of Devolution and Planning, 2013), which formed the clusters. A cluster, in this case a sub-location, was then randomly selected on assumption that the sub-locations are similar in characteristics and finally simple random sampling was used to pick out the individuals to be included from the sampled cluster.

The study also employed purposive sampling technique, which is a non-probability technique, to sample the procuring agency (Sub-County procurement office), Women Enterprise fund office, Uwezo Fund office and Access to Government Opportunities (AGPO) office. The researcher considered these groups to have the required information with respect to the objectives of the study (Mugenda & Mugenda, 1999).

3.6 Data collection instruments

The study employed survey method to collect both quantitative and qualitative primary data. The data collection techniques employed included personal interviews and self-administered questionnaires/mail interviews. The questionnaires contained both closed and open-ended questions as well as a five point Likert scale statements. Likert scale measures people's attitudes by asking them to respond to a series of statements about a topic, in terms of their level of agreement or disagreement with the statements in the questionnaire. The numbers in a Likert scale are ordered such that they indicate the presence or absence of the characteristic being measured (Mugenda & Mugenda, 1999). The study employed a five point Likert scale ranked as follows: Strongly Disagree = 1; Disagree = 2; Neutral = 3; Agree = 4; Strongly Agree = 5

3.7 Validity of research instruments

Validity refers to the accuracy appropriateness, meaningfulness and usefulness of the inferences a researcher makes based on the data collected (Mugenda & Mugenda, 1999). Validity determines whether the research truly measures that which it was intended to measure (Joppe, 2000). It has to do with how accurately the data obtained in the study represents the variables of the study (Mugenda & Mugenda, 1999). To ensure validity, the researcher relied on the guidance from the research supervisor.

3.8 Reliability of research instruments

Reliability is a measure of the degree to which a research instrument gives consistent results or data after repeated trials (Mugenda & Mugenda, 1999). Joppe (2000) observes that if the results of a study can be reproduced under a similar methodology, then the research instrument is considered to be reliable. The researcher employed the split-half method to obtain a reliability coefficient. This involved scoring two-halves of the test separately for each person and then calculating a correlation coefficient for the two sets of scores. The resulting coefficient indicates the degree to which the two halves of the test provide the same results, and hence describes the internal consistency of the test. The reliability coefficient was calculated using the Spearman-Brown prophecy formulae. If the coefficient is high, the instrument is said to yield data that have a high reliability (Mugenda & Mugenda, 1999).

3.9 Operationalization of Variables

Operationalization of variables refers to the process of determining how to measure the study concepts. Since many concepts are intangible, we are not able to point to them directly. Instead, we have to find a

way to measure them, often indirectly. The independent and dependent variables in this study were measured by inferring from the following indicators, as shown in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2: Operationalization of variables

OBJECTIVE	TYPE OF VARIABLE	INDICATOR	MEASUREMENT	LEVEL OF SCALE	APPROACH OF ANALYSIS	LEVEL OF ANALYSIS
To determine how economic factors influence women participation in government procurement in Kenya	Independent variable Economic Factors	Access to financial capital	No. of women accessing financial facilities	Ratio	Quantitative	Descriptive
		Price competition	Pricing of the tender bids	Nominal	Qualitative	Descriptive
		Contract sizes	Value of contracts being tendered	Nominal	Qualitative	Descriptive
To establish to what extent socio-cultural factors influence women participation in government procurement in Kenya	Independent variable Socio-Cultural Factors	Education background	Women education levels	Nominal	Qualitative	Descriptive
		Awareness	Women levels of awareness	Nominal	Qualitative	Descriptive
		Social systems	Existing social systems	Nominal	Qualitative	Descriptive
To assess how governmental factors influence women participation in government procurement in Kenya	Independent variable Governmental Factors	Legislation	Existing procurement laws and regulations	Nominal	Qualitative	Descriptive
		Capacity building programmes	Existing programmes	Nominal	Qualitative	Descriptive
		Corruption	Existence of corruption	Nominal	Qualitative	Descriptive
To determine in what ways	Independent variable					

technical factors influence women participation in government procurement in Kenya	Technical Factors	Tender procedures	Existing tender procedures	Nominal	Qualitative	Descriptive
		Qualification requirements	Tendering requirements necessary for a bidder to qualify	Nominal	Qualitative	Descriptive
		Red tape/Bureaucracy	Procedures that must be followed in procurement	Nominal	Qualitative	Descriptive
	Dependent Variable Women participation in government procurement	Women-owned businesses applying for government tenders	No. of women-owned businesses applying for government tenders	Ratio	Quantitative	Descriptive
		Women-owned businesses awarded contracts	No. of women-owned businesses awarded government contracts	Ratio	Quantitative	Descriptive
		Women-owned businesses registered with AGPO	Number of women-owned businesses registered with AGPO	Ratio	Quantitative	Descriptive

3.10 Data Analysis and Presentation

The raw data collected was prepared in readiness for analysis through editing, coding classification and tabulation. According to Kothari (2004), data are edited to assure that they are accurate, consistent with other collected facts, uniformly entered and well arranged to facilitate coding and tabulation. The edited data was then coded for efficient analysis. The data was further classified into homogenous groups on the basis of common characteristics (Kothari, 2004). Data was then tabulated. Tabulation refers to the

process of summarizing raw data and displaying it in form of statistical tables for further analysis (Kothari, 2004). This was done with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) computer software. Qualitative data was analysed through content analysis, while quantitative data was analysed through descriptive statistics, including frequencies, percentages and mode. Data was presented in the forms of percentages and tables.

3.11 Ethical issues in research

The researcher sought permission to conduct the research from the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) and the County Commissioner, Nyeri. The researcher ensured that participation was not only voluntary but also well informed. In this regard, the researcher informed participants of the purpose of the study, which is purely academic; and also ensured that participation was not coerced whatsoever by respecting the respondents' decision to participate, decline to participate, or even withdraw at any time during the research study. Further, the researcher respected participants' privacy and guaranteed confidentiality by adhering to standards of anonymity throughout the study.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter involves data analysis, presentation, and interpretation of the data collected from fieldwork, as well as discussion of findings. The general objective of the study was to establish factors influencing women participation in Government procurement in Kenya. Data was collected using self-administered questionnaires from the respondents as well as personal interviews. The raw data was cleaned and processed through manual tallying, and analysis done using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) computer software. The presentation is organized according to the specific study objectives.

4.2 Response Rate

Out of the 395 questionnaires administered 281 were completed and returned. This represents a response rate of 71.0% which is reasonable in research. According to Borg, Gall and Gall (2004) and Creswell (2009) a response rate of 50.0% is adequate to give the correct view for a survey study. The response rate is presented on Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Response Rate

	Frequency	Percentage
Successful	281	71.0
Unsuccessful	114	29.0
Total	395	100.0

4.3 Demographic characteristics of respondents

The respondents in this study included adult women aged between 20 years and 60 years within Nyeri Central Sub-County. The respondents' general and demographic data analysis yielded the following information.

4.3.1 Age of respondents

Table 4.2 displays the age distribution of the respondents. According to the analysis 35.0% of the respondents were aged between 21 and 30 years. 15.0% of the respondents were aged between 31 and 40 years, 30.0% of the respondents were aged between 41 and 50 years, while 20.0% of the respondents were aged between 51 and 60 years. Majority of the respondents were aged between 21 and 30 years, followed closely by those aged between 41 and 50 years.

Table 4.2: Age of respondents

Age in Years	Frequency	Percentage
Less than 20	0	0.0
21 – 30	98	35.0
31 – 40	42	15.0
41 -50	84	30.0
51 – 60	57	20.0
Above 60	0	0.0
Total	281	100.0

4.3.2 Respondents' marital status of respondents

Table 4.3 displays the marital status distribution of the respondents. According to the analysis 37.0% of the respondents were single, 40.0% of the respondents were married, 14.0% were widowed while 9.0% were separated. This means that majority of the respondents were married.

Table 4.3: Respondents' marital Status

Marital status	Frequency	Percentage
Single	104	37.0
Married	112	40.0
Widowed	39	14.0
Separated	26	9.0
Total	281	100.0

4.3.3 Respondents' business experience

Table 4.4 shows whether or not the respondents had a running business as at the time of the study. According to the analysis 55.0% of the respondents had running businesses while 45.0% of the respondents did not run businesses. This can be interpreted to mean that majority of the respondents had some business experience, hence able to participate in Government procurement.

Table 4.4: Respondents' business experience

Do you run a business	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	155	55.0
No	126	45.0
Total	281	100.0

4.4 Women participation in Government procurement

The main purpose of the study was to establish factors influencing women participation in government procurement in Kenya. Table 4.5 shows the number of tender applications received in the financial 2013/2014, 2015 in Nyeri Central Sub-County procurement office.

Table 4.5: Tender applications in 2013/2014, 2015

Type of bidder	Frequency	Percentage
Women-owned business	237	48.0
General contractors	257	52.0
Total	494	100.0

A total of 494 applications were received in different categories. 237 applications received were from women-owned businesses, while 257 applications were from general contractors. This translates to 48.0% for women-owned businesses and 52.0% for general contractors. Out of the 494 tender applications a total of 295 contracts were awarded.

Table 4.6 shows the number of tenders awarded in the financial 2013/2014, 2015 in Nyeri Central Sub-County. 58 contracts were awarded to women-owned businesses, while 237 contracts were awarded to

other/general contractors. This means that women-owned businesses got 20.0% of the contracts while 80.0% of the contracts awarded went to general contractors. This means that as much as women-owned businesses are applying for Government tenders winning the contracts remains a challenge for them.

Table 4.6: Tender awards in 2013/2014, 2015

Type of bidder	Frequency	Percentage
Women-owned business	58	20.0
General contractors	237	80.0
Total	295	100.0

Table 4.7 displays the respondents' response to whether they had ever participated in government procurement. 25.0% of the respondents had applied for government tender(s), while 75.0% of the respondents had never applied for government tenders. This means that majority of the respondents had never participated in government procurement.

Table 4.7: Respondents' participation in government procurement

Have you ever applied for		
Government tenders	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	70	25.0
No	211	75.0
Total	281	100.0

Table 4.8 shows that out of the 70 respondents that had ever applied for government tender(s), 21.0% of them won the applied tenders, while 79.0% of them did not win the applied tenders. This means that majority of the women that apply for government tenders do not actually win Government contracts.

Table 4.8: Respondents awarded tenders

Did you win the tender you applied for	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	15	21.0
No	55	79.0
Total	70	100.0

Table 4.9 displays respondents' response to whether they were registered with AGPO. Results displayed by the figure indicate that only 10.0% of the respondents had registered with AGPO. This represents a very small percentage of the population considering that adult women population in Nyeri Central Sub-County is over 30,750(KNBS, 2010). This means that women are not taking advantage of opportunities presented to them.

Table 4.9: Whether respondents were registered with AGPO

Are you registered with AGPO	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	28	10.0
No	253	90.0
Total	281	100.0

Table 4.10 shows results from AGPO registration desk at the Nyeri Huduma Centre. The data reveals that only eleven women-owned businesses had registered with AGPO by 4th March, 2015, accounting for 26.0% of businesses registered with AGPO.

Table 4.10: AGPO registration

Registered with AGPO	Frequency	Percentage
Women	11	26.0
Youth	29	67.0
Persons with disability	3	7.0
Total	43	100.0

Without AGPO registration it becomes difficult for a woman-owned business to enjoy the 30% preference and reservation policy in Government procurement.

4.5 Economic factors influencing women participation in government procurement

One of the specific objectives of this study was to determine how economic factors influence women participation in Government procurement. The researcher sought to assess how different economic factors influence women participation in government procurement. The economic factors assessed include access to financial capital, price competition and contract value.

Respondents' main source of financial capital

Table 4.11 displays the results from the respondents' response to what was their main source of financial capital.

Table 4.11: Respondents' main source of financial capital

Main source of financial capital	Frequency	Percentage
Personal savings	169	60.0
Bank loans	70	25.0
Business partners	0	0.0
Family & friends	14	5.0
Others	28	10.0
Total	281	100.0

The analysis reflects that 60.0% of the respondents sourced their financial capital from personal savings, 25.0% from bank loans, 5.0% from friends and family, while 10.0% sourced their capital from other sources like Saccos. With personal savings as the common source of capital among women it becomes difficult for them to participate in Government procurement since it calls for relatively larger capital outlays than personal savings.

Application for loan from WEF or Uwezo fund

Results from table 4.12 show that 25.0% of the respondents had at one time applied for a loan from either WEF or Uwezo Fund, while 75.0% of the respondents had never applied for a loan with either of

the two funds. Majority of the respondents therefore, had never borrowed from the funds. This indicates that women are not sourcing their capital from the available lending programmes either because they do not know about them or are not aware of how to go about borrowing from the funds. This agrees with the earlier observation that most women source capital from personal savings meaning they are less likely to engage in capital intensive ventures like Government procurement.

Table 4.12: Whether respondents had ever applied for a loan from WEF or Uwezo fund

Have you ever applied for a loan from WEF or Uwezo fund	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	70	25.0
No	211	75.0
Total	281	100.0

Respondents' main source of income

Table 4.13 shows that 45.0% of the respondents had employment as their main source of income. 30.0% of the respondents had business as their main source of income. 15.0% of the respondents had both business and employment as their source of income, while 10.0% of the respondents had others as their source of income. Majority of the respondents were in employment. This may explain why only 25% of them had ever participated in Government procurement.

Table 4.13: Respondents' main source of income

Source of income	Frequency	Percentage
Business	84	30.0
Employment	127	45.0
Business & employment	42	15.0
Others	28	10.0
Total	281	100.0

Economic factors influencing women participation in Government procurement

Table 4.14 displays the results from the respondents' response on economic factors influencing women participation in Government procurement.

Table 4.14: Economic factors influencing women participation in Government procurement

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mode
Access to financial capital is a major challenge for women participation in Government procurement	0.0%	0.0%	15.0%	20.0%	65.0%	5
Price competition in Government bidding makes it difficult for Women-owned businesses to effectively participate in Public procurement	0.0%	0.0%	15.0%	25.0%	60.0%	5
Government contracts' size/value render women-owned businesses unsuccessful in public procurement	0.0%	5.0%	10.0%	25.0%	60.0%	5
Average	0.0%	1.67%	13.33%	23.33%	61.67%	5

65.0% of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement that access to financial capital is a major challenge for women participation in government procurement. 20.0% agreed with the statement, bringing the total of those in agreement to 85.0%. According to the analysis, 60.0% of the respondents strongly agreed while 25.0% agreed with the statement that price competition in Government bidding makes it difficult for women-owned businesses to participate in public procurement. The total of those

in agreement with the statement is thus 85.0%. 60.0% of the respondents strongly agreed while 25.0% agreed with the statement that Government contracts' size/value render women-owned businesses unsuccessful in public procurement. The total of the respondents in agreement with this statement is 85.0%. The mode score of the responses was 5 for the three statements, which means that the most frequent response was strong agreement with the statements in the questionnaire. This shows that access to financial capital, price competition among bidders and Government contracts value are major challenges that continue to face women in public procurement.

4.6 Socio-cultural factors influencing women participation in government procurement

The study also sought to establish the extent to which socio-cultural factors influence women participation in Government procurement in Kenya.

Respondents' highest level of education

Table 4.15 shows the respondents' highest level of education. According to the analysis 20.0% of the respondents were educated up to secondary level, 25.0% of the respondents up to diploma level, while 55.0% of the respondents who formed the majority, were educated up to degree level. This shows that women in the study area are reasonably educated. Thus, lack of education is not a challenge for them.

Table 4.15: Respondents' highest level of education

Highest level of education	Frequency	Percentage
Primary	0	0.0
Secondary	56	20.0
College	70	25.0
University	155	55.0
Not schooled	0	0.0
Total	281	100.0

Respondents' level of awareness

Table 4.16 reveals that 70.0% of the respondents were aware of the 30% preference and reservation policy in government procurement, whereas 30.0% of the respondents did not have knowledge of the

policy. This means that majority of the respondents were aware of the government directive that at least 30% of all Government tenders should be awarded to youth, women and persons with disabilities.

Table 4.16: Respondents’ knowledge of 30% preference and reservation policy in Government procurement

Do you know of 30% preference & reservation policy	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	197	70.0
No	84	30.0
Total	281	100.0

Table 4.17 shows the level of awareness amongst the respondents on how or where to access Government procurement information. Results from the table indicate that 55.0% of the respondents knew how/where to get information on government tenders, while 45.0% of the respondents did not know how/where to get information on government tenders. This means that majority of the respondents knew how or where to access government procurement information. The interpretation of this is that women in the study area are reasonably aware of Government procurement opportunities.

Table 4.17: Respondents’ knowledge of how/where to access information on government procurement

Do you know how/where to access Government procurement information	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	155	55.0
No	126	45.0
Total	281	100.0

Social systems

Table 4.18 displays the feeling of the respondents on whether family roles influence women participation in Government procurement. 100.0% of the respondents observed that family roles influence women participation in government procurement. Women have to balance between family responsibilities and other income generating activities. This leaves them constrained in terms of time and other resources.

Table 4.18: Whether family roles influence women participation in government procurement

Do family roles influence women participation in Government procurement	Frequency	Percent
Yes	281	100.0
No	0	0.0
Total	281	100.0

4.7 Governmental factors influencing women participation in Government procurement

Another specific objective of the study was to assess how Governmental factors influence women participation in Government procurement. Table 4.19 highlights the respondents' views on the extent to which Government policies influence women participation in Government procurement. 55.0% of the respondents strongly agreed and 30.0% agreed, bringing the total of those in agreement with the statement that Government procurement and other policies influence women participation in public procurement to 85.0%. Government policies and legislations that target women empowerment have the potential to enhance women participation in Government procurement. Further, Government good will in the implementation of existing policies and legislations can reduce the institutional challenges that face women entrepreneurs.

Table 4.19: Governmental factors influencing women participation in Government procurement

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mode
Government procurement and other policies influence women participation in public procurement	0.0%	0.0%	15.0%	30.0%	55.0%	5
Government capacity-building programmes have the potential to enhance women participation in public procurement	0.0%	5.0%	15.0%	30.0%	50.0%	5
Corruption in Government institutions is a major challenge to women participation in public procurement	0.0%	0.0%	15.0%	35.0%	50.0%	5
Average	0.0%	1.67%	15.0%	31.67%	51.67%	5

50.0% of the respondents strongly agreed and 30.0% agreed with the statement that Government capacity building programmes have the potential to enhance women participation in public procurement. The total of those in agreement with the statement is thus 80.0%. Capacity building programs such as the 30% preference and reservation policy in public procurement, Women Enterprise fund and Uwezo fund; if well implemented have the potential to facilitate more women participation in Government procurement.

50.0% of the respondents strongly agreed and 35.0% agreed with the statement that corruption in Government institutions is a major challenge to women participation in public procurement. This brings the total of those in agreement with the statement to 85.0%. Of all the challenges facing women, corruption seems to be the most serious. This is so because existence of corruption renders every other effort irrelevant. Corruption means that even in situations where one qualifies for a contract on merit, they are less likely to win it if they lack “the necessary connections”. This discourages most women from participating in Government procurement.

The mode of the scores recorded was 5 which means that majority of the respondents agreed with the statements in the questionnaire.

4.8 Technical factors influencing women participation in Government procurement

The fourth specific objective of the study was to determine in what ways technical factors influence women participation in Government procurement. Results in Table 4.20 reveal that 55.0% of the respondents were aware of the qualification requirements for government tendering, while 45.0% did not know the qualification requirements for government tendering. This means that majority of the respondents were aware of the requirements necessary for one to qualify for public tendering. This tallies with the previous observation that women in the study area are reasonably aware of the existing Government procurement environment.

Table 4.20: Respondents’ knowledge of qualification requirements for government tenders

Do you know the qualification requirements in Government procurement	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	155	55.0
No	126	45.0
Total	281	100.0

Table 4.21 shows the results from the respondents response with regard to statements posed in the questionnaire. The results indicate that 55.0% of the respondents strongly agreed and 15.0% of them agreed with the statement that qualification requirements in Government procurement are too rigid and discouraging to women-owned businesses’ participation. This brings the total of those in agreement with the statement to 70.0%, which represents a majority. As much as women are aware of what is expected

of them to qualify for Government tenders, the rigidity and complexity of the requirements tends to discourage most women from participating in Government procurement.

The statement that Government tender process is time consuming and complicated for most women-owned businesses attracted a 45.0% response in strong agreement and 25.0% in agreement. Hence 70.0% of the respondents were in agreement with the statement. Government procurement is lengthy and characterized by strict time frames. This limits the capacity of SMEs to participate since their scale of operation is relatively small. Hence, they cannot afford to wait for a long period of time without supplying goods/services or receiving payments of goods/services supplied.

Table 4.21: Technical factors influencing women participation in Government procurement

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mode
Qualification requirements in Government procurement are too rigid and discouraging to women-owned businesses' participation	0.0%	5.0%	25.0%	15.0%	55.0%	5
Government tender process is time consuming and complicated for most women-owned businesses women participation in public procurement	0.0%	20.0%	10.0%	25.0%	45.0%	5
Government bureaucracy/red tape discourages women participation in public procurement	0.0%	5.0%	5.0%	40.0%	50.0%	5
Average	0.0%	10.0%	13.33%	26.67%	50.0%	5

50.0% of the respondents strongly agreed and 40.0% agreed with the statement that Government bureaucracy/red tape discourages women participation in public procurement. In total 90.0% of the respondents agreed with the statement. Government bureaucracy tends to increase the cost of doing business, especially for SMEs. In addition, the bureaucracy creates room for corruption, worsening an already bad situation. This effectively renders Government procurement inaccessible to SMEs, making it a game for the “big boys” who know how to play by the rules.

The most frequent response to influence of technical factors on women participation in Government procurement was ‘strongly agree’ as represented by the mode of 5. This means that majority of the respondents were in strong agreement with the statements in the questionnaire.

4.9 Discussion of findings

This section contains discussion of the study findings guided by the study objectives. The general objective of the study was to establish factors influencing women participation in Government procurement in Kenya. In order to understand factors influencing women participation in Government procurement in Nyeri Central Sub-County, the study was guided by the following specific objectives: to determine how economic factors influence women participation in government procurement in Kenya; to establish to what extent socio-cultural factors influence women participation in government procurement in Kenya; to assess how governmental factors influence women participation in government procurement in Kenya; and to determine in what ways technical factors influence women participation in government procurement in Kenya.

4.9.1 Women participation in Government procurement

Results from the data analyzed indicate that whereas 55% of the respondents were business women only about 25% of the respondents had ever bid for Government contracts. Over 75% of the respondents had never tendered for Government contracts. This agrees with the findings of FreshMinds (2008) that, three quarters of SMEs rarely or never bid for Government contracts. Data from AGPO officers indicated that only eleven women-owned businesses had registered with AGPO by 4th March, 2015. This represents a very small fraction of the adult female population in Nyeri Central Sub-county which is more than 30,750(KNBS, 2010). Results from the study revealed that 21% of the respondents that had tendered in public procurement were awarded Government contracts, while 79% of those who tendered did not win the applied contracts. Out of a total of 494 tender applications received in the financial year 2013/2014, 2015 in Nyeri Central Sub-County, 48% of the applications were from women-owned businesses. Yet only 58 contracts were awarded to women, which accounts for about 20%. This is not an acceptable

state of affairs. Participation for women in Government procurement should not end at the application level. It should include tender awards as well. It should not be seen as enough that 48% of tender applicants were women; rather it should concern everyone that only 20% of contracts were awarded to women yet women account for more than half of the population.

According to the procurement officers interviewed this state of affairs can be attributed to the fact that most women applicants did not respond effectively to the conditions of contracts. As such they were disqualified at the evaluation of most responsive tender applications stage. Therefore, even as much as women are applying for the Government tenders few of them are successful due to their inability to effectively respond to the contract parameters. This then brings in the next question, why are women-owned businesses unable to effectively respond to conditions of Government contracts? To answer the question the study sought to find out factors influencing women participation in Government procurement in Kenya as follows.

4.9.2 Economic factors influencing women participation in Government procurement

The study observed that over 60% of the respondents had personal savings as their main source of financial capital. This poses a great challenge to their participation in Government procurement seeing as Government procurement often requires relatively large capital outlay. Only 25% of the respondents had ever borrowed money from a financial institution. This agrees with a research carried out by the Institute of Economic Affairs – Kenya (2008) that determined that although close to 50% of women have access to credit; most of these are from informal savings mechanisms and micro-finance institutions. Robb et al (2014) on their part indicated that women-owned entrepreneurs raise smaller amounts of capital to finance their firms and are more reliant on personal rather than external sources of financing. This means that women are only able to raise smaller financial capital. Consequently, women-owned businesses are only able to participate in low value contracts or are not able to participate in Government procurement at all.

The reason why few women borrow funds from financial institutions can be attributed to the fact that they are either unaware of the existing financial products in the market, are aware but consider borrowing highly risky hence avoid it altogether, or face institutional challenges like lack of collateral/security in accessing the available funding. This agrees with Wolfe, L. (2014) who observed that while financial health and collateral may be required for all entrepreneurs, women sometimes find it more difficult to secure capital than their male counterparts. If women entrepreneurs do not seek, or if they are not able to obtain financial capital; their prospects for growing their businesses are diminished

considerably. The Institute of Economic Affairs – Kenya (2008) established that most business women lack training in financial management and entrepreneurship skills. Even when women are awarded government tenders, funding issues pose a major challenge. For a good number of women, winning tenders is not really the issue, financing is.

As far as WEF and Uwezo funds in Kenya are concerned, the study revealed that only 25% of the respondents had ever borrowed from the funds. When asked why they did not borrow from the funds, most of the women interviewed expressed their displeasure in the requirement that one had to belong to a group to qualify to borrow from the existing government funds. The respondents argued that sourcing for compatible group members is not only tedious but also time wasting. For a group to qualify to borrow from the funds, it must have at least ten members, be registered with the social services ministry, must have been in existence for at least three months, and must be operating a group bank account. The respondents observed that bringing together at least ten people with a common economic objective is not an easy task. These requirements are limiting to a woman entrepreneur who prefers to do business as an individual. Further, the amount of money disbursed to the groups is at best discouraging. For starters, a group of ten people qualifies to borrow a maximum of Kshs. 100,000 which is payable in one year. After full payment of the first loan, they then qualify for a further Kshs. 250,000, then Kshs. 350,000 and finally Kshs. 500,000 which is the highest amount a group can borrow. Most women felt that the amounts disbursed are incapable of enabling groups engage in any substantial economic activity considering the large number of their members. As a result, the funds are not attractive to majority of women.

On the other hand, some respondents did not know how to go about borrowing from the funds. A good number of women did not know where to go to access the funds. Some did not even know of the existence of the funds in the first place. This means that there is a lack of awareness of the existing financing products and means of accessing the same. This effectively limits the number of those seeking to borrow from the funds. Hence, women continue to grapple with difficulties in accessing finances to facilitate running of their businesses despite the Government's efforts to earmark billions of shillings for empowering women economically. Omondi (2015) observed that the Kenyan Government had earmarked Kshs. 850 million for Uwezo fund, Kshs. 500 million for WEF and Kshs. 300 million for youth enterprise fund in 2015/2016; all of which are aimed at empowering women economically. According to the Kenya Association of Women Business Owners (KAWBO) the 30% preference and reservation policy by the government for women, youths and people with disabilities, brings the amount

accessible to women to about Kshs. 300 billion (as cited in Omondi, 2015). The uptake of these funds has however been very low. In 2014/2015 financial year for instance, about Kshs. 200 billion was allocated to women, youths and people with disabilities. However, only about Kshs. 20 billion was taken up (Omondi, 2015). This makes up for only 10% of the allocation. Jane Kagiri, an IT consultant, attributed the low uptake to the fact that women have not been sensitized enough on the availability of the funds as well as how to access them (as cited in Omondi, 2015). It is not enough to allocate funds, more needs to be done to ensure that the target groups know of the existence of such funds. Further, these target groups need to be empowered enough to not only qualify for those funds but also be willing to borrow from the funds.

The other aspect of economic factors analysed was the influence of contract value in Government procurement. The study showed that 85% of the respondents agreed with the statement that Government contracts' value render women-owned businesses unsuccessful in public procurement. The value of public contracts influences the extent to which SMEs can participate. Public procurement contracts generally involve greater bid, proposal and compliance costs than private contracts. The larger the tender value, the less likely it will attract SMEs participation since they lack the financial muscle to undertake such contracts. This often places women-owned businesses at a disadvantage because they are less experienced and have fewer resources to draw upon than other businesses. ITC (2014) observed that bundling multiple requirements into one large contract can preclude many women-owned businesses from competing for the work because they do not have the scope or depth of other firms. The sheer size of some government contracts places them well outside the reach of most women-owned businesses. Generally, there is the stereotype that women cannot manage large contract values that is mostly associated with technical tenders. A banker argued that banks worry that women are too honest, such that if a woman said she had won a high value tender one wonders whether she will be aggressive enough to chase after the money to enable payment to the bank (as cited in Omondi, 2015). In this case, women's virtues are a stumbling block.

The study also determined that price competition is another economic factor influencing women participation in Government procurement. Over 85% of the respondents agreed with the statement that price competition in Government bidding makes it difficult for women-owned businesses to effectively participate in public procurement. In public procurement, contracts are generally awarded to bidders with the lowest evaluated price. This makes it difficult for SMEs to compete due to the principle of economies of scale. Since their businesses are generally smaller, their operation costs are relatively

higher compared to larger businesses. As such, quoting lower prices becomes a difficult task. This automatically makes their bids less successful or unresponsive. This agrees with the observation of ITC (2008) that women-owned businesses typically cannot successfully compete against other businesses when contracts are awarded to the lowest priced, technically acceptable tender. The most frequent problem faced by SMEs, which includes the majority of women-owned businesses, was the procuring entities' over-emphasis on price (European Commission Directorate General Enterprise and Industry, 2007). By emphasizing price rather than value for money, procuring entities ignore the life cycle costs associated with the purchases and forego the many innovative solutions offered by small firms (ITC, 2008).

4.9.3 Socio-cultural factors influencing women participation in Government procurement

The study revealed that over 55% of the respondents were educated to the university level and nearly 25% to college level. This totals to 80% of respondents with post secondary school education. This clearly shows that women education levels are reasonable. This agrees with Robb et al (2014) observation that women have made remarkable educational gains over the last few decades. Women now consistently outpace men in terms of college enrollment and receive 50 percent more master's degrees than men do. Among the youngest workers, those eighteen to thirty-two, women are now far more likely to have bachelor's degrees than men are. The reason women education and women entrepreneurship do not match is largely due to gender issues. Candida G. Brush noted that even though women have more education it may not relate to self-perceived confidence in their entrepreneurial capabilities (Kelley et al, 2013).

Whereas over 70% of women seem to be aware of the 30% preference and reservation Government directive on public procurement, nearly 45% of women do not know how or where to access information on public procurement opportunities. This agrees with ITC (2014) observation that, a common complaint among women-owned businesses is that they are not aware of and do not know how to access public procurement opportunities. In Kenya, public procurement jobs are required to be advertised in at least one daily with national coverage. There are also web portals that publish Government tenders. However, these avenues are not readily available to a majority of SMEs hence making it difficult for women to access the information on Government procurement opportunities. ITC (2014) observed that the appropriateness of web-based solutions depends upon the level of Internet use in a given country. Women entrepreneurs in rural communities are less likely to have Internet access or benefit from electronic procurement gateways. A research by FreshMinds (2008) determined that over three quarters

of SMEs believed that there are barriers to awareness of Government opportunities. This means that there is limited access to public procurement information by most women. The effect of this is limited participation by women in Government procurement as seen from the results of the study.

As far as social systems are concerned, 100% of the respondents observed that family roles influenced women participation in Government procurement and business in general. Like other parts of the African continent, women in Kenya face the challenge of balancing between work and family responsibilities. Time spent by women in attending to households tasks leaves them with limited time to engage in time demanding enterprises. According to the World Bank, while women make up close to 50 per cent of the world's population, they only comprise 41 per cent of the global labour market (as cited in Omondi, 2015). Work-life balance is often a goal of entrepreneurs across the board, but mothers who start businesses have to simultaneously run their families and their companies. Hillary Genga argues that being a mother while running a business is very challenging, and the perception is that you could be more effective running your business if you didn't have to deal with kids (as cited in Fallon, 2013). Women entrepreneurs have dual responsibilities to their business and to their family, and finding ways to devote time to both is key to truly achieving that elusive work-life balance. Kirton (2013) observed that the benefits accrued from trade liberalisation are affected by a person's socio-economic background, gender, class, ethnicity, skills, cultural normative values and education, among other factors. Therefore, when considering gender and trade, the impacts of trade on men and women can be substantially different because they commonly work in different sectors and have different skill sets. Our policies must therefore help women to be able to combine family roles with entrepreneurship.

In summary, most respondents observed that the existing socio-cultural beliefs and practices compound the challenges facing women entrepreneurs. As the Institute of Economic Affairs-Kenya (2008) established, some cultural and traditional practices governing land and property ownership, access and control, and benefits accruing to land produce in Kenya, tend to favour men compared to women. Vital Voices, a women advocacy group, noted that only one per cent of the world's landowners are women (as cited in Omondi, 2015). In Kenya, only about 5 per cent of registered land owners are women (Omondi, 2015). The Institute of Economic Affairs-kenya (2008) observed that some cultures still regard the place of a woman as being in the kitchen and raising children. These societal attitudes and norms inhibit some women from even considering starting a business, while systemic barriers mean that many women entrepreneurs stay confined to very small businesses often operating in the informal sector. Most women entrepreneurs in Kenya are in the SMEs sector, and this makes about 47 per cent of the businesses (1999

baseline survey). Women tend to operate businesses largely associated with women roles. Even in Government procurement, the categories reserved for women include supply and delivery of food stuffs, fruits and vegetables, stationery, cleaning materials, among other feminine businesses. The study established that out of the 58 contracts awarded to women-owned business in the financial year 2013/2014 in Nyeri Central Sub-County, nineteen were for supply of food stuffs, sixteen were for supply of fruits and vegetables, two for uniforms, two for stationery, two for paints, four for construction materials, seven for hardware items, one for dog food, two for timber products, and one for repair of office machines. This clearly illustrates that few women are able to participate in the more technical and capital intensive procurement categories such as construction, manufacturing among others. This agrees with a study carried out by the Institute of Economic Affairs - Kenya (2008) that established that though women operate 54% of the total enterprises in the country, they dominate wholesale and retail, rural manufacturing and urban agriculture sectors alone. Men are well represented in such sectors as urban manufacturing (71%), transport (73%), financial services (80%) and social services (69%). In urban areas the proportion of men representation is even higher. For instance, 99% and 91% of persons operating construction and transport enterprises respectively, in urban areas are men (Institute of Economic Affairs-Kenya, 2008). Wolfe L. (2014) observed that although many mainstream jobs once considered non-traditional employment for women are now accommodating women, in some cases credibility lags behind the modern reality of a diverse workforce, forcing women to rise to another entrepreneurial challenge men don't face; that of fighting to earn credibility and respect. Hilary Genga, the founder and CEO of women's swimwear company, Trunkettes, observes that many times men think they can be dishonest or give a bad deal to a woman business owner simply because she's a woman, something they probably wouldn't try with another man (as cited in Fallon,2013). Irene Mumo believes that her bids to supply the Rural Electrification Authority with electric cables have been unsuccessful for two years of bidding because of her being a woman and the perception this creates in business (as cited in Omondi, 2015). Irene Mumo further adds that even when women win technical bids, they are more likely to sub-contract a good portion of the contract. This means women end up not being the primary beneficiaries (as cited in Omondi, 2015).

4.9.4 Governmental factors influencing women participation in Government procurement

Results from the study indicate that 85% of the respondents agreed with the statement that Government procurement and other policies influence women participation in public procurement. Most of the interviewed respondents observed that as much as there are legislations seeking to economically empower women; the same have been used to lock women out thanks to existing loopholes in the

legislations. For example, it is stipulated that where a group consists of men and women, 70% of the members must be women, and men cannot be officials or signatories to the groups. The effect of this is a scenario where men use women for fronting purposes, whereas in real sense the men in the groups run the show. For instance, if a man wants to benefit from the funds or the 30% preference and reservation policy, all they need to do is get at least seven women as members of his group and manipulate them as would be necessary. This defeats the original objective of empowering women economically. In fact the result has been to give the men in these groups undue advantage. Like Kirton (2013) observed, defining a gender-sensitive public procurement policy requires political will. The spirit of Government policies determines whether women are in real sense able to participate in public procurement. The feeling has been that most of these legislations are only theoretical and lacking practical impact. It is therefore imperative that Government policies ensure that they achieve the objectives they are set out to. Otherwise, they are as good as not being there.

Another political factor identified by the study was corruption. Majority of the respondents cited corruption as a major political factor influencing participation of women in Government procurement. Results from the study revealed that 85% of the respondents agreed with the statement that corruption in Government institutions is a major challenge to women participation in public procurement. This agrees with the President of Kenya His Excellency Hon. Uhuru Kenyatta's remarks, at the President's forum with young women entrepreneurs in July, 2015, that corruption remains a serious problem in Kenya (as cited in Kawira, 2015). The President noted that, it was still more difficult for women to find the business networks they needed to succeed as entrepreneurs thanks to run away corruption in Kenya. Most women bidders argue that contracting agencies mostly award government tenders to their preferred bidders regardless of whether the contract is categorized for special groups or not. It does not matter whether a contract is categorized for special groups, only contractors preferred by the contracting agencies get the job. The effect of this is that the special groups do not stand a chance of getting the business. This in turn affects public services delivery on which so many Kenyans, and especially women, rely.

The study also observed that 80% of the respondents agreed with the statement that Government empowerment and capacity building programmes have the potential to enhance women participation in public procurement. The Government of Kenya has established programs to build the capacity of women-owned businesses to compete successfully in public procurement. Some of the programs include the 30% preference and reservation policy, the Women Enterprise Fund and Uwezo Fund among others.

The 30% preference and reservation policy directs all public procuring entities to reserve at least 30% of their contracts for youth, women and persons with disabilities. This is an affirmative action meant to give the target groups an opportunity to enhance their economic status. However, very few women are taking up their share in Government procurement. Most Government agencies observed that they are not able to meet the 30% target as few women-run entities come up to seize the opportunities. These empowerment and capacity building programmes are a bold step that should be improved on. Women entrepreneurs need to be sensitized on the existence of the programmes and policies should be developed in support of education, training and business development to equip women with business skills.

4.9.5 Technical factors influencing women participation in Government procurement

In light of technical factors influencing women participation in Government procurement, results from the study showed that 70% of the respondents agreed with the statement that qualification requirements in Government procurement are too rigid and discouraging to women-run entities' participation. Women fear that procurement requirements such as bank statements, tax clearance certificates among others, might expose their financial capacity. Some women entrepreneurs operating in the informal sector are reluctant to participate in Government contracts because they believe it could subject them to additional taxes and other costs. As such, they are unwilling to participate lest they get exposed. Procurement officers interviewed accused women applicants of not effectively responding to the set procurement parameters also known as special conditions of contract. Some of the special conditions of contract include bid bond from a reputable bank or insurance company, adherence to the specified time frames, business registration documents, tax compliance certificates, trade license, and firm's audit report, among others. ITC (2014) established that a number of African women business owners and organizations repeatedly commented that the requirement for audited financial accounts is a major stumbling block. Many women entrepreneurs interested in doing business with the government do not have the financial literacy to properly maintain their books and records, nor can they afford to have their accounts audited every year. Further, the procurement officers blamed women business owners for failing to submit relevant supporting documents as required in the tender documents. Hence, they are disqualified at the document evaluation level. This agrees with the findings of FreshMinds (2008) that nearly three quarters of SMEs felt that it is more difficult to deliver work to the public sector than to the private sector. This is due to a greater amount of formality, a lack of responsiveness and unrealistic timescales on the part of the public sector.

Further, 70% of the respondents agreed with the statement that Government tender process is time consuming and complicated for most women-owned businesses. Public procurement procedures are often complex, burdensome and costly that they discourage women-owned businesses from participating. The legal and regulatory system of government procurement tends to take up a lot of time which is something many women entrepreneurs do not have, due to the family roles they are also entrusted with. This agrees with the findings of FreshMinds (2008) that, over half of SMEs feel that the process of tendering for government contracts requires more time and resources than their business can allow. ITC (2014) on the other hand, notes that many women-owned businesses do not have the same level of experience and resources as large businesses when submitting tenders. These bureaucratic bottlenecks give rise to a different challenge facing women entrepreneurs, sexual harassment. Women argue that men solicit sexual favors from them in order to make some headway in business. For a woman entrepreneur, being prequalified does not necessarily guarantee business. The business comes at a cost of extending sexual favors to the procuring agencies' officers, otherwise no business. This forces most women to opt out of government procurement. The procurement officers interviewed expressed that most women lack knowledge on procurement process, are unable to fill out standard tender documents correctly, and lack experience in contract management. Irene Mumo observes that it is not fair to allow the same amount of time for executing bids for women and general contractors. She argues that a sector like manufacturing is a new area for women; hence women may need more time to understand the subject bid documents. Ms Mumo feels that some of the technical tender documents are drawn with certain people in mind (as cited in Omondi, 2015).

The other technical factor that influences women participation in Government procurement is Government bureaucracy and red tape. The study revealed that 90% of the respondents agreed with the statement that Government bureaucracy /red tape discourages women participation in public procurement. Public procurement is characterized by a greater amount of formality stringent rules, regulations and time frames. One major issue in Government procurement is prequalification. This refers to the process through which interested firms first demonstrate their ability to meet the minimum technical, financial, legal and other qualifications for a particular project before progressing to the tender process. Unfortunately, many women entrepreneurs are reluctant to take the prequalification step. They often consider the registration and prequalification process too complex, or they simply are not able to meet some of the prequalification requirements (ITC, 2014). In addition, public procurement entities prequalify vendors on a periodic basis, say annually or biannually; rather than on a rolling basis. This in effect locks prospective new entrants out of the procurement system for the length of the

prequalification period. Due to Government bureaucracy, public procurement has often faced the challenge of delayed payment of works done. As a result, many SMEs are unwilling to participate in Government procurement. This is mostly because their capital outlay is often limited, hence cannot afford to tie it down without guarantee of payment within a specified period of time. This makes public procurement a rather risky venture for SMEs. This agrees with Kirton (2013) who noted that although public procurement processes are generally assumed to be fair, offering opportunities for all companies that meet the published tendering requirements, careful study of typical tendering requirements reveals that SMEs and women-owned enterprises may be disadvantaged by their size and composition.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the summary of findings, conclusions and recommendations resulting from the study with a view of highlighting factors influencing women participation in government procurement in Nyeri Central Sub-county.

5.2 Summary of findings

The general objective of the study was to establish factors influencing women participation in Government procurement in Kenya. In order to understand factors influencing women participation in Government procurement in Nyeri Central Sub-County, the study was guided by the following specific objectives: determine how economic factors influence women participation in government procurement in Kenya; establish to what extent socio-cultural factors influence women participation in government procurement in Kenya; assess how governmental factors influence women participation in government procurement in Kenya; and determine in what ways technical factors influence women participation in government procurement in Kenya. The study revealed that over 75% of women respondents had never participated in government procurement.

5.2.1 Economic factors influencing women participation in Government procurement

The study revealed that economic factors such as access to financial capital, price competition and contract value influence women participation in government procurement to a great extent. Only about 25% of those surveyed used commercial loans to finance their business. Over 60% of the respondents financed their ventures from personal savings. Business finance is one of the most fundamental needs for entrepreneurship to thrive. Even though lending institutions have funds that entrepreneurs can borrow from, their risk evaluation criteria and security requirements make it difficult for most SMEs to afford; or qualify for funds that may not make much difference in their businesses. When it comes to accessing credit women continue to face more hurdles for various reasons. As Al-botemeh(2013) observed, women often do not have the collateral necessary to access commercial loans. Varveer & Azzareli (2015) noted that while women entrepreneurs are now understood to be an accelerator of global growth, their difficulty in accessing capital is a hindering factor. The study further revealed that bid bonds or tender security served as a challenge to women's ability to participate in Government

procurement. And like ITC (2014) established, financial requirements, such as performance bonds, bid guarantees, and fees for tender documents, are beyond the reach of some women-owned businesses.

85% of the respondents observed that price competition amongst bidders makes it difficult for women-owned businesses to effectively participate in public procurement. Since most women owned businesses are small to medium scale, characterized by inadequate finances; price competition can deal them a major blow. These businesses do not have the luxury of reducing their products'/services' prices as they would otherwise wish. This is simply because their small scale of operation makes it difficult for their businesses to enjoy the benefits that accrue to large scale enterprises, otherwise referred to as economies of scale. As a result, their goods/services end up being relatively expensive.

Also, 85% of women surveyed expressed that Government contracts value render women-owned businesses unsuccessful in public procurement. This stems from their inadequate resource base and their business sizes which in most cases are small to medium. Consequently, they only qualify for small value contracts. Where a large value contract is concerned, very few women are able to participate.

Another economic factor that came up was the issue of delayed payments. A majority of women argued that Government is in the habit of delaying payments for goods and services rendered. This affects their financial capacity to carry on their business. ITC (2014) noted that Women-owned businesses in many countries persistently complain about the failure of procuring entities to make prompt payments. Because of their limited financial resources, women-owned businesses are less able to absorb the impact of delayed payments compared to larger businesses. Delayed payments reduce the working capital available to women-owned businesses and negatively affect production capacity and profitability (ITC, 2008). The effects of delayed payments are particularly acute where the women entrepreneurs are servicing loans that enabled them to compete for and perform the government contracts. . Loosening of economic constraints experienced by most women can have immense consequences on development.

5.2.2 Socio-cultural factors influencing women participation in Government procurement

The study findings showed that socio-cultural factors such as awareness levels, and social systems had a great influence on women participation in government procurement. It is evidently clear that education levels among the women surveyed can be said to be reasonable. However, barriers exist to awareness of government procurement opportunities by the women. Over 45% of the respondents stated that they had no knowledge of how or where to access public procurement information. Public procurement

information is not readily available to many women. This ultimately limits the number of women able to participate in Government procurement. 100% of the respondents held that family roles affect women participation in Government procurement. Patriarchal social, cultural and traditional practices that favor men deny women opportunities to effectively participate in Government procurement. For instance, discriminatory property ownership and inheritance issues affect women's ability to secure commercial loans. Further, women face the challenge of balancing work and family responsibilities.

5.2.3 Governmental factors influencing women participation in Government procurement

Findings from the study revealed that political factors like legislation, corruption, and capacity- building programs influenced women participation in government procurement to a great extent. As much as the Government has set out targeted assistance strategies to encourage and promote economic participation by women, more needs to be done in terms of sealing the existing loopholes in the legislations. Further, women need to be sensitized on the existing strategies to enable them participate effectively and efficiently. Women need to be empowered to go beyond 'feminine' business lines such as supply of food stuffs, fruits, vegetables, flowers, water, among others.

5.2.4 Technical factors influencing women participation in Government procurement

The study findings revealed that technical factors such as qualification requirements, tender process and red tape greatly influenced women participation in government procurement. Over 70% of the women interviewed observed that the public tender process influences women participation in Government procurement. At the same time, more than 85% of the respondents held the view that Government bureaucracy affects women participation in public procurement. The respondents observed that the process of tendering for Government contracts is characterized by formalities and strict time frames which require more time and resources. Very few women have the necessary expertise and/or experience in the public procurement tendering process to compete effectively with large established firms with several years' experience. This often places women-owned businesses at a disadvantage because they have less experience and fewer resources to draw upon than other businesses.

5.3 Conclusions of the study

The Kenyan Government spends about 70% of its budget on procurement, and with an annual budget of over Kshs. 1.7 trillion, the Government procurement spending analyses to about Kshs. 1 trillion annually. This means that following the 30% directive on Government procurement, procurement opportunities reserved for youth, women and persons with disabilities can be estimated at Kshs. 330 billion annually. This opportunity is enough to create countless women and youth entrepreneurs, which can cause a positive ripple effect of creating a huge economic growth in the country. However, despite these available opportunities, very few women have been able to participate in and benefit from Government procurement in Nyeri Central Sub-County. This study revealed that only about 25% of women in the study area had ever participated in Government procurement. From the study findings, the following conclusions can be drawn:

1. Economic factors including access to financial capital, price competition among bidders and Government contracts value; affect the ability of women-owned businesses to participate in public procurement. The biggest economic challenge facing women is access to financial capital. This has continued to limit the capacity of women to participate in Government procurement. Other economic challenges facing women in Government procurement include large contract sizes, price competition among bidders, and failure by procuring agencies to promptly pay women-owned businesses for goods and services rendered.
2. Socio-cultural factors such as social systems and family roles affect women participation in Government procurement to a great extent. The social setup of a community determines whether women are able and willing to participate in Government procurement. The social setup determines what type of business a woman can engage in and how. Nonetheless, women in the study area are reasonably educated and relatively aware of Government procurement. However, lack of information about specific tender opportunities is still a challenge for most women. Women in the study are aware of the general aspects of public procurement, but lack specific information that can result in meaningful business for them in Government procurement.
3. Governmental factors such as procurement legislations and other policies, capacity building strategies as well as corruption affects women participation in public procurement to a large extent. It is not just enough that laws and programs are put in place; the same should be well implemented and monitored to ensure the envisaged objectives are actually achieved. What is provided for in law and theory must be seen to be happening in practice. Corruption is a major

challenge facing women in Government procurement. This has resulted in women not getting their share of public procurement opportunities.

4. Technical factors such as qualification requirements, tender process and Government bureaucracy individually and collectively affect women participation in public procurement. The more complicated these systems are the more women they lock out of public procurement. Overly complex and burdensome tender procedures, unreasonable technical and financial qualification requirements, insufficient time to assemble tenders, lack of feedback from procuring agencies are among the challenges that women-owned businesses continue to face in their quest to participate in Government procurement.

5.4 Recommendations of the study

However, despite the above mentioned challenges, it is fair to note that there still exists enough opportunities for women-owned businesses in Government procurement in Kenya. The benefits that SMEs and women-owned businesses have to offer in terms of enhancing Government efficiency and productivity mean that we should act to surmount existing challenges.

In light of this the study highlighted different ways in which Government should make public procurement an equal opportunity process for SMEs; as well as how women and SMEs can enhance their effective participation in public procurement. The following recommendations were identified:

1. Government should extend loan facilities to women as individuals as opposed to groups. This will facilitate women individual entrepreneurial abilities. Government can also permit teaming arrangements, where two or more firms tender together for a procurement contract. Individual firms may not meet the technical and financial qualification requirements, but they could qualify as a team. Government can further ensure prompt payment for goods and services delivered or pay interest on delayed payments. This lessens the financial strain on the SMEs.
2. The Government should increase training, sensitization and capacity building programs for women entrepreneurs to enable them develop entrepreneurial abilities and attitudes. This will facilitate effective participation in Government contracts. Government should also improve access to information on Government procurement opportunities by women by giving information about tender opportunities directly to women business organizations and other

associations that support women entrepreneurs which can share the information with their members.

3. Government should ensure existing loopholes in procurement related legislations are sealed appropriately so that the contemplated gains are achieved in reality. In addition, Government should take measures to reduce corruption in public institutions so that Government procurement process becomes more transparent.
4. Government should simplify, clarify and standardize the tender process and documentation, both administratively and through use of easily understood common language. This has the potential to lower the transaction costs of contracting. Also, procuring entities should carry out prequalification process on a rolling basis as well as share prequalification information among themselves so that one does not have to prequalify for each entity separately. Procuring entities should also strive to provide constructive and clear feedback on lost bids. This would improve applicants' future chances of winning bids. Feedback provides unsuccessful bidders with invaluable information about the evaluated strengths and weaknesses of their tenders and enables them to better compete for future contracts. Feedback also helps ensure the procurement process is fair and transparent.
5. Women-owned businesses should be more vigilant and proactive about their rights and opportunities as well as policy interventions already in place targeting them. Further, women-owned businesses should deliver high quality goods and services so as to increase their chances of getting contracts in future.

5.5 Suggested areas of further studies

The scope of the study was limited to factors influencing women participation in Government procurement in Nyeri Central Sub-County; therefore the study was not exhaustive. Further studies could be carried out on:

1. Implementation of the 30% Government procurement directive in public contracts by Government agencies to establish how the directive is being implemented by procurement entities, and to identify any existing bottlenecks in the said policy.
2. Effectiveness of Uwezo fund and Women enterprise fund in economic empowerment of women in Kenya.

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APPENDIX 1: SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

FACTORS INFLUENCING WOMEN PARTICIPATION IN GOVERNMENT PROCUREMENT: A CASE OF NYERI CENTRAL SUB-COUNTY, KENYA

Dear respondent,

I am a postgraduate student at the University of Nairobi pursuing a Masters degree in Project Planning and Management. This Questionnaire is designed for the purpose of gathering information to study factors influencing women participation in government procurement, a case of Nyeri Central Sub-County. This is part of a research paper to be submitted by the researcher in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree.

Kindly take a few minutes to complete this questionnaire. Your identity will be completely anonymous, but your views, alongside those of others, are extremely important. The information generated using this questionnaire will be treated as confidential and will not be used in any way against you or in ways other than those intended in the study.

Please, respond to all questions and give your answers as honestly as possible. Please tick (✓) where applicable and write on the spaces provided.

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

1. What is your age bracket (in years)?

- (i) Less than 20 (ii) 21-30 (iii) 31-40 (iv) 41- 50
(v) 51 - 60 (v) Above 60

2. Do you have a running business?

- (i) Yes (ii) No

SECTION B: WOMEN PARTICIPATION IN GOVERNMENT PROCUREMENT

3. (a) Have you ever applied for a government tender/contract?

- (i) Yes (ii) No

b) If “Yes” in 3 (a) above, did you win the applied tender?

- (i) Yes (ii) No

c) If “No” in 3 (b) above what in your opinion were the reasons for not winning the tender?

.....

(d) Did you get feedback on the unsuccessful bid(s)?

(i) Yes (ii) No

e) Are you registered with Access to Government Opportunities (AGPO)?

(i) Yes (ii) No

f) If “No” in 3 (e) above, why are you not registered with AGPO?

(i) Not interested (ii) Do not Know about it (iii) Do not find it necessary

SECTION C: ECONOMIC FACTORS

4 (a) What is your main source of financial capital?

(i) Personal savings (ii) Bank loans (iii) Business partners

(iv) Friends & family (v) Others (Specify)

.....

b) Have you ever applied for financial loan from Women enterprise fund or Uwezo fund?

(i) Yes (ii) No

c) If “Yes” in 4 (b) above, did you get the loan applied for?

(i) Yes (ii) No

d) If “No” in 4 (c) above, what reasons were given for the unsuccessful loan application?

.....

e) What is your monthly income level bracket?

(i) Kshs. 10,000 and below (ii) Kshs. 10,001 – Kshs.20, 000 (iii) Kshs. 20,001 –
Kshs. 50,000 (iv) Kshs. 50,001 – Kshs. 100,000 (v) Kshs. 100,001 and above

f) What is your main source of income?

(i) Business (ii) Employment (iii) Both Business & Employment (iv) Others
(specify)

g) Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements using the ratings given below:

Strongly Agree = 5, Agree = 4, Neutral = 3, Disagree = 2, Strongly Disagree = 1 (Please tick once for each statement)

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Access to financial capital is a major challenge for women participation in Government procurement					
Price competition in Government bidding makes it difficult for women-owned businesses to effectively participate in public procurement					
Government contracts' size/value render women-owned businesses unsuccessful in public procurement					

SECTION D: SOCIO-CULTURAL FACTORS

5 a) What is your highest level of education?

- (i) Primary (ii) Secondary (iii) Diploma (iv) Degree (v) Others
 (specify) (vi) Not schooled

b) Do you know of 30% preference and reservation for youth, women and people with disabilities in government procurement in Kenya?

- (i) Yes (ii) No

c) Do you know how/where to access information on government tenders in Kenya?

(i) Yes (ii) No

d) Do you know of Access to Government Procurement Opportunities (AGPO) in Kenya?

(i) Yes (ii) No

e) What is your marital status?

(i) Single (ii) Married (iii) Widowed (iv) Separated

f) How many children do you have?

(i) 1 (ii) 2 (iii) 3 (iv) 4 (v) 5 (vi) Above 5 (vii) None

g) In your opinion, do family roles affect how women participate in business?

(i) Yes (ii) No kindly explain

.....
h) In your opinion, how do socio-cultural factors influence women participation in government procurement in Kenya?
.....

SECTION E: GOVERNMENTAL FACTORS

6. a) Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements using the ratings given below:

Strongly Agree = 5, Agree = 4, Neutral = 3, Disagree = 2, Strongly Disagree = 1 (Please tick once for each statement)

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Government procurement and other policies influence women participation in Government procurement					
Government capacity building programmes have					

the potential to enhance women participation in Government procurement					
Corruption in Government institutions is a major challenge to women participation in public procurement					

c) In your opinion, what Government policies influence women participation in government procurement?

.....

d) In your opinion, what can the government do to enhance women participation in government procurement in Kenya?

.....

SECTION F: TECHNICAL FACTORS

7. a) Do you know the qualification requirements necessary to apply for a government tender in Kenya?

(i) Yes (ii) No

b) If “Yes” in 7 (a) above, kindly name some of them

.....

c) Is your business registered with the relevant authorities in Kenya?

(i) Yes (ii) No (iii) Don’t know

d) Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements using the ratings given below:

Strongly Agree = 5, Agree = 4, Neutral = 3, Disagree = 2, Strongly Disagree = 1 (Please tick once for each statement)

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Qualification requirements					

in Government procurement are too rigid and discouraging to women-owned businesses' participation					
Government tender process is time consuming and complicated for most women-owned businesses					
Government bureaucracy/red tape discourages women participation in public procurement					

e) In your, opinion, what other factors influence women participation in government procurement?

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Thank you for your time and for completing this questionnaire.

APPENDIX 2: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR PROCUREMENT AND AGPO OFFICERS

1. Of the total Government tenders awarded, how many went to women-owned businesses?
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2. How do you implement the 30% preference and reservation policy for women in Government procurement?
.....
.....
3. Do you face any challenges in implementing the 30% directive in Government procurement?
.....
.....
4. In your opinion, are there factors that influence women participation in Government procurement in Kenya?
.....
5. How would you rate the participation of women in Government procurement in Kenya?
.....
.....
6. In your opinion, what needs to be done to enhance women participation in Government procurement in Kenya?
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.....

APPENDIX 3: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR WEF AND UWEZO FUND OFFICERS

1. How would you rate the borrowing by women from the fund?

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.....

2. In your opinion are there factors influencing women borrowing from the fund?

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.....

3. What are the requirements for a woman to qualify for the fund?

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.....

4. Do you face any challenges in the management of the fund?

.....
.....

5. How in your opinion how can the fund be made more effective for women?

.....
.....

6. Do you think the fund has been effective in facilitating women to participate in government procurement?

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.....

7. In your opinion, what can be done to enhance women participation in the fund?

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APPENDIX 4: SAMPLE SIZE FORMULAE (Yamane, 1967)

$$n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2} \quad \text{i.e.} \quad n = \frac{30,750}{1+30,750(0.05)^2} = 394.86$$

Say, 395

Where: n = Sample size
 N = Population size
 e = Level of precision

APPENDIX 5: SPEARMAN-BROWN PROPHECY RELIABILITY COEFFICIENT

FORMULAE

Reliability of scores on total test = $\frac{2 \times \text{reliability for } \frac{1}{2} \text{ test}}{1 + \text{reliability for } \frac{1}{2} \text{ tests}}$.

FDFDFF

