

The Influence of Legislation on Women Inclusion in Natural Resource Management in Mara North Conservancy

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ABSTRACT

Communities depend on natural resources close to their settlement as the main source of livelihood. Enhancing women inclusion is increasingly being recognized as instrumental in improving the performance in managing these scarce resources. However, while the trend of emphasis in women inclusion is picking up internationally, the situation in Kenya, particularly in the natural resource management is yet to get to acceptable levels raising concerns of why this is the case. The purpose of this study was to determine the influence of legislation on women inclusion in natural resource management, in Mara North conservancy, Narok County. The study was guided by Fullan's theory of change which explains the changes process in women inclusion in natural resource management. The study adopted the descriptive research design. The target population was 20 employees working at the Mara North conservancy, 850 community members, 80 county government officials and 150 project stakeholders at the conservancy. The study used primary data which was collected using questionnaires and interviews. Interviews were administered to the Mara North Conservancy Managing Director and community leaders. Data was analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively. Quantitative data analysis results were presented in tables. The study found that legislation significantly positively improved women inclusion in natural resource management (NRM). The F-change was significant implying that organization policies had significant moderating effect on the relationship between legislation and women inclusion in NRM. The study concluded that the legislation and organization policies contributed to women inclusion at Mara North conservancy. The study recommended for existence of mechanisms to monitor compliance in the set legislation is also crucial. Further recommendation was that laws and policies should be formulated to enforce equal participation in the natural resource management. The study finally recommended for full implementation of gender inclusion policies with the aim of enhancing women inclusion in natural resource management.

Key Words: *Gender Inclusion Legislation, Organization Policies, Women Inclusion, Natural Resource Management, Mara North Conservancy*

1. INTRODUCTION

Women play a major role in the global economy. They invest more in their families than men do, in areas such as education, health and nutrition, creating a secure foundation for the future of their families and communities (Douma, 2012). So empowering women economically, especially through their involvement in trade, creates job opportunities for everyone (ICT, 2017). Throughout history, the central role of women in society has ensured the stability, progress and long-term development of nations. Globally, women comprise 43 percent of the world's labor force mostly in agriculture. Women play a key role in supporting their households and communities in achieving food and nutrition security, generating income, and improving rural livelihoods and overall well-being (Global Volunteers, 2017). Most communities depend on natural resources close to their settlement as the main source of

livelihood. Thus, natural resource management efforts require effective participation of both the responsible management authorities and the communities as well (Oniyangi, 2013). While men's participation in management of these resources has been in place, women traditionally have not been participating in management of these resources. Even though women have this expertise, control over resources lies in the hands of men in male dominated communities. Moreover, women are poorly represented at the decision-making level with them having limited power (Akoyoko, 2014).

Women have specific knowledge on the conservation and use of local natural resources, formal control over these resources is mostly vested in the hands of men or male dominated institutions. In politics and institutions at all levels, women are weakly represented. In other cases women can participate in meetings and discussions on the way resources are managed, but their actual decision-making power is limited due to the social and cultural setting. Generally, women control those resources which are freely available while men dominate resources with higher monetary value, which are scarce. Pressures on resources due to population growth, climate change, pollution, and a tendency for large-scale interventions can reinforce and aggravate current gender inequalities (Douma, 2012). Globally, women inclusion in natural resource management remains a critical issue. This was confirmed by a study by Kunwar, Kafle, Kumar, Adhikari, Punita and Bimala (2014) undertaking a study from Nepal and established that the gender dynamics were relatively low despite their importance. Confirming this, Douma, (2012) conducting a workable approach to mainstream gender in natural resources management in Netherlands established that despite the measures to ensure women inclusion in community resource management very little had been achieved because the formulation of laws, policies and legislations in natural resource management. This trend is despite the importance of women inclusion in natural resources management. A research from Nepal and India (Agarwal 2010) revealed that enhanced women's participation in decision-making bodies contributed to improved forest governance and sustainable use of natural resources.

Thus, determining the factors affecting women inclusion in natural resources management is extremely important in Kenya where gender divisions still exist and where the natural resources are essential in daily lives of the people. Though women are being empowered in forestry decision-making in a large part through the actions of community-based organizations and civil society such Kenya Forestry Working Group (KFWG), the factors that influence their inclusion in the resource management activities are not well established. Convention on the eliminations of all forms of discrimination against women resolved adoption of gender-sensitive legislation and policies that recognize the particular disadvantages that women face in claiming their right to inheritance as well as their land in post-conflict contexts, including the loss or destruction of land deeds and other documentation owing to conflict (UN Women, 2013). Legislation allows local communities to take formal management responsibility for forest resources. Legislation on women participation in natural resource management has to focus on capacitating women to participate directly in the management of natural resources. This may include, but is not limited to, training of women negotiators on negotiation skills and drafting of legislation and institutional policy (Jensen and Halle, 2013).

2. RESEARCH PROBLEM

Enhancing women inclusion is thus increasingly being recognized as instrumental in improving the performance where better performance in diverse aspects has been found to be achieved where women are involved more (Oniyangi, 2013). However, while the trend of emphasis in women inclusion is picking up internationally, the situation in Kenya,

particularly in the natural resource management, women inclusion is far from being achieved. This is despite women being affected more by how natural resource are managed since they constitute the majority of the world's poor and are more dependent for their livelihood on natural resources (Findler, Win and Barak, 2016). Despite the available theories showing the importance women inclusion in natural resource management, the empirical literature has not been conclusive on the factors that influence women inclusion in Mara North Conservancy. Additionally, there is scarcity of studies conducted locally, with no studies being conducted in Mara North Conservancy in particular.

3. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

- i. To assess the extent to which legislation influence women inclusion in natural resource management in Mara North conservancy
- ii. To determine the intervening effect of organizational policies on women inclusion in natural resource management in Mara North conservancy

4. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The study's conceptual framework is as shown by Figure 1. The independent variables were legislation and organizational policies. Dependent variable was women inclusion.

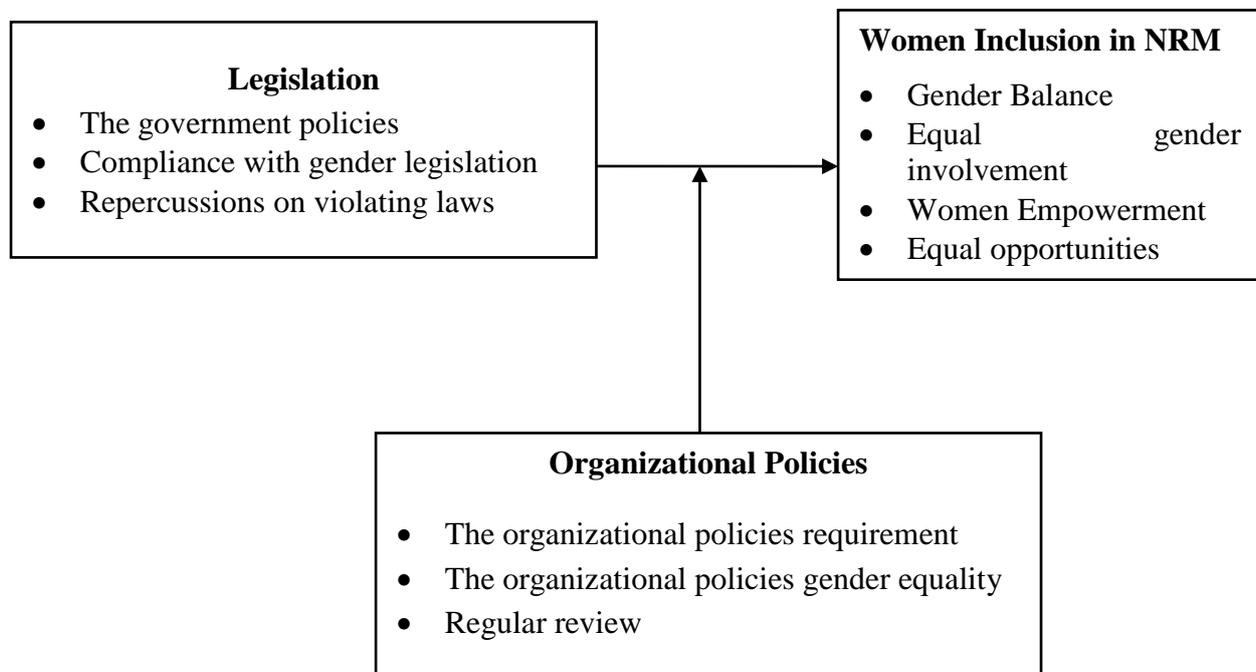


Figure 11: Conceptual Framework

5. REVIEW OF THEORY APPLIED

The researcher selected Fullan's Theory of Change. This theory was introduced by Fullan (2001) and holds that policy once developed should be implemented and put into practice. The theory focuses on the human participants taking part in the change process (Ellsworth, 2001). Fullan (2001) indicates that a change agent is an individual who influences clients' innovation-decisions in a direction desirable by a change agency. Fullan views every stakeholder in the educational change as a change agent. The theory give a promise for the change agent that there is enormous potential for true, meaningful change simply in building coalition with other change agents, both within one's own group and across all group (Ellsworth, 2001). The theory recognizes a number of key ingredients to ensuring successful

change management. These include the ability to work with polar opposites (dealing with uncertainty and problems), dynamic interdependency of state accountability and local autonomy, combination of individuals and societal agencies and internal connection within oneself and within one's organization and external connections to others and to the environment (Ellsworth, 2001). Thus the theory's implication to the study is that women inclusion in natural resource management requires change from the traditional practice. For inclusion to happen there should be mechanisms to managing the perceived uncertainties and risks with the change. Thus, women inclusion in the organization may have challenges in the development processes while the managers have challenges in putting into practice. Therefore, the theory presents and discusses factors that affect implementation of policies especially, those that deal with women inclusion in the natural resources management. Critics of Fullan's model argue that for change to happen there must be powerful social attractors. That is, if people genuinely feel they are being asked to do something that is laudable and worthwhile they are more likely to be better motivated and put in extra effort to help achieve success (Ellsworth, 2001). Ellsworth (2001) relating this theory to societal challenges of social exclusion argues that change may not happen since the society may not perceive the worthiness of promoting social inclusion. Cultural practices often promoted social exclusion.

6. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A case study research design was used for this study. A case study involves the study of a unit/person or small group, a situation or a specific case. Kothari (2007) further describes a case study as a form of qualitative analysis that involves a careful and complete observation of a social unit which may be a person, family or institution. The design was appropriate for this study due to its holistic approach which aims to capture all the details of a particular individual or group as presented in real life situation. This was necessary in analyzing and understanding what undermines women inclusion in natural resource management. Study was done at Mara North Conservancy. Mara North Conservancy is a 30,000 Hectares conservation area was established in 2009 and borders the Maasai Mara National Reserve. MNC leases land from approximately 850 land owners, to whom it guarantees stable revenue, transparent financial management and the preservation of the historical balance between wildlife and traditional pastoralism. MNC accommodates twelve member camps in a sustainable way that benefits the environment, the wildlife, and the community. Mara North Conservancy has one of the lowest tourist and vehicle densities in the ecosystem due to managed volume and strict land-use plans. This necessitates to constantly evaluate their structures so as to thrive.

The target population was 20 employees working at the Mara North conservancy, 850 community members, 80 county government officials and 150 project stakeholders at the conservancy. These population was targeted due to the fact that they are they are the ones directly involved on operations at Mara North Constituency thus the most conversant for the study. A sample size of 92 respondents of the population was selected using simple random technique from the identified target population. The study used primary data which was collected using questionnaires and interviews. Interviews were administered to the Mara North Conservancy Managing Director and community leaders. Questionnaires were used since they are fast to administer and respondents can fill them at their convenience time. Questionnaires are also cost effective and give the respondents an opportunity to confirm the information being sought before responding to the questions. Interviews were conducted with key informants in the sector, and these included the management at the conservancy and elders in the community nearby. Interviews were conducted using the developed checklist that helped to direct and guide the interviewer.

In addition, field observation was also used by the researcher in collecting data. This involved the researcher's physical in data collection by observing the study area which largely formed a strong base of data collected. This method was additionally used to gather information during the study within the area. Observations such as number of women involved in the natural resource management, the community's perception of women being involved in natural resources and the entire conservation process at Mara Conservancy was observed. The researcher first obtained a letter from University allowing field data collection. Permission was then obtained from the relevant authorities before the study. The questionnaires were distributed to the respondents who were the selected sample of employees at the Mara North Conservancy and community members. A visit was paid to the conservancy on designated dates during which the questionnaires that had earlier been distributed be collected for analysis. For members of the community who may not be literate, questionnaires were administered through interviews where the interpretation of the questions was done. Interviews were conducted to a specific set of respondents to get clarifications of some significant issues that may arise from the responses. Multiple linear regression was used to determine the relationship between the factors examined by this study on women inclusion in natural resource management.

7. DATA ANALYSIS FINDINGS

7.1 Influence of Legislation in Natural Resource Management in Mara North Conservancy, Narok County, Kenya

The study sought to determine the influence of legislation in women inclusion in natural resource management in Mara North Conservancy, Narok County, Kenya. To achieve this, a five point Likert Scale was applied. The findings of the study are shown by Table 1.

Table 1: Legislation

Legislation	VSE	SE	ME	LE	VLE	Mean	SD
The government policies favor gender balance in the natural resource management	1	3	19	57	21	3.94	0.78
There are regulatory considerations that are considered when choosing who gets involved in natural resource management	3	10	25	42	21	3.69	0.996
Regular reviews are undertaken to ensure that the legislation enhances women inclusion in natural resource management	7	11	37	21	24	3.42	1.182
There is a set limit by the law on the number of women to be included in natural resource management	7	10	25	33	25	3.58	1.182
There is legislative repercussions on violating women inclusion in natural resource management	20	9	16	28	27	3.35	1.468

Key: VSE=very small extent, SE= small extent, ME= Moderate extent, LE= Large extent, VLE= very large extent, SD=Standard Deviation

The findings obtained revealed that government policies favour gender balance in the natural resource management to a very large extent with a mean of 3.94 and standard deviation of 0.78. The respondents also agreed on being regulatory considerations that are considered when choosing who gets involved in natural resource management to a great extent with a mean of 3.69. They were however neutral on regular reviews being undertaken to ensure that

the legislation enhances women inclusion in natural resource management and there being a set limit by the law on the number of women to be included in natural resource management with means of 3.42 and 3.58 which indicated a moderate extent. On there being legislative repercussions on violating women inclusion in natural resource management, the respondents indicated a small extent with a mean of 3.35. This shows that despite there being legislations which favored gender inclusion in the natural resource management, there was minimal consequences of gender exclusion being practiced. The regulatory considerations were thus important in putting across restriction onto how the women were included in resource management.

A notable response was given by a respondent who was a community member. The respondent said: *“Our constitution guarantees representation of women in all elective and nominated positions. The government and its organs have no much of an option than to ensure women inclusion in natural resources management. The county government has been formulating policies and encouraging women inclusion which is commendable. However, more need to be done and the existing laws be fully implemented. After all, success in natural resource management cannot succeed without women. Have you heard of the saying that behind every successful man there is a woman?”* he posed

7.2 Influence of Organizational Policies in Natural Resource Management in Mara North Conservancy, Narok County, Kenya

The study sought to determine the influence of Organizational Policies in women inclusion in natural resource management in Mara North Conservancy, Narok County, Kenya. The findings of the study are shown by Table 2.

Table 2: Organizational Policies

Organization Policies	VSE	SE	ME	LE	VLE	Mean	SD
The organization has women inclusion policy in the organization	3	5	35	38	20	3.68	0.933
The organizational policies determines the number of women to be included in the natural resource management	5	15	28	38	14	3.41	1.058
The organizational policies favor men inclusion more as compared to the men inclusion in resource management	11	12	22	35	20	3.4	1.252
The organizational polices are constantly evaluated to ensure that they enhance the women inclusion	12	11	21	36	20	3.4	1.272
The organizational policies highly determine who gets involved in then natural resource management	9	17	21	25	28	3.47	1.305

Key: VSE=very small extent, SE= small extent, ME= Moderate extent, LE= Large extent, VLE= very large extent, SD=Standard Deviation

To a large extent, the respondents indicated that the organization has a women inclusion policy in the organization with a mean of 3.68. The respondents however indicated moderate extents of influence on the organizational policies determines the number of women to be included in the natural resource management with a mean of 3.41, the organizational policies highly determine who gets involved in then natural resource management with a mean of 3.47, organizational policies favour men inclusion more as compared to women in resource management and organizational polices are constantly evaluated to ensure that they enhance

the women inclusion with means of 3.4 each. The results imply that there exist organizational policies to facilitate women inclusion in natural resource management in Mara North Conservancy, Narok County, Kenya. However these organization policies were yet to be fully effected to ensure that women were constantly included in the natural resource managements.

7.3 Regression analysis

The regression analysis was used to establish the relationship that exists between the research variables. The regression model summary results obtained are shown by Table 3.

Table 3: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	R		Change Statistics		Sig. F Change
					Square	F	df1	df2	
1	.522a	0.272	0.263	0.66173	0.272	29.585	1	79	0.00
2	.741b	0.549	0.537	0.52459	0.276	47.703	1	78	0.00

a. Predictors: (Constant), Legislation

b. Predictors: (Constant), Legislation, Organizational Policies

The coefficient of determination R square is 0.272 and R is 0.552 when legislation was regressed separately. With inclusion of organization policies, coefficient of correlation improved to 0.741 and R² 0.549. This implied that legislation had a positive impact on women inclusion in natural resource management (NRM). The F-change was significant implying that organization policies had significant moderating effect on the relationship between legislation and women inclusion in NRM. The findings were as shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Model ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	12.955	1	12.955	29.585	.000a
	Residual	34.593	79	0.438		
	Total	47.548	80			
2	Regression	26.082	2	13.041	47.389	.000b
	Residual	21.465	78	0.275		
	Total	47.548	80			

a. Predictors: (Constant), Legislation

b. Predictors: (Constant), Legislation, Organizational Policies

c. Dependent Variable: women inclusion in NRM

The ANOVA results for regression coefficients indicated that model was significant since the p-value was 0.000 which was less than both 0.01 (99% confidence level) and 0.05 (95% confidence level). This thus shows that the model was significant in explaining factors which influence Women inclusion in NRM. Hence, implying a good fit for the model since it shows a significant influence of; Organizational Policies, Legislation on women inclusion in NRM. The model coefficients obtained by the study are shown in Table 5.

Table 5: Model Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	1.391	0.4		3.475	0.001
	Legislation	0.595	0.109	0.522	5.439	0.000
2	(Constant)	0.561	0.339		1.653	0.102
	Legislation	0.194	0.104	0.17	1.861	0.066
	Organizational Policies	0.655	0.095	0.632	6.907	0.000

a. Dependent Variable: women inclusion in NRM

From the results obtained, legislation and organizational policies had significant positive coefficient. This implied that legislation and organization policies improved women inclusion in NRM.

7. CONCLUSIONS

The study thus concludes that the low women inclusion in NRM that has persistent in the recent past could due to inappropriate legislation and organization policies. Thus, adoption of appropriate policies founded on supportive legislation at National and County level will improve women inclusion at Mara North Conservancy.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

The study found a positive and significant influence of legislation on inclusion of women in natural resource management. Having positive legislation would improve inclusion of women in NRM. The study therefore recommends for existence of mechanisms to monitor compliance in the set legislation is also crucial. Additionally, since inclusion of women is a constitutional requirement, it must be done. The study thus recommends that Laws and policies should be formulated to enforce equal participation in the natural resource management. This will ensure that their legal consequences for those who are still promoting women exclusion in the natural resource management at the conservancy. Hence more women will get the opportunities to give there valued contributions geared towards a better resource managed society. On the intervening effect of organizational policies on women inclusion in natural resource management in Mara North conservancy, the study found out that the organization had women inclusion policy in the organization to facilitate women inclusion. However these organization policies were yet to be fully effected to ensure that women were constantly included in the natural resource managements. The study therefore recommends for full implementation of gender inclusion policies with the aim of enhancing women inclusion in natural resource management.

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