

**SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHALLENGES AFFECTING WOMEN EMPOWERMENT IN
MATHIRA EAST CONSTITUENCY, NYERI COUNTY, KENYA**

BY

SHELMITH NYAGUTHII KABIRU

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DECLARATION

This research is my original work and has not been presented for award of a degree or for any similar purpose in any other institution.

Signature: 


Date: 31/12/2024

Shelmith Nyaguthii Kabiru

SSC-G-4-1428-21

Supervisor

This research has been submitted with my approval as university supervisor

Signature: 

Date: 31/12/2024

Mr. Peter Gakwa

School of Education, Humanities and Social Sciences

Cretsa University

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

FGM- Female Genital Mutilation

GBV- Gender Based Violence

DV - Domestic Violence

OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS OF TERMS

Women- a lady or a female adult

Empowerment- process of powerful and having control over one 's life and having the ability to assert for ownership of one 's right.

ABSTRACT

Women empowerment has been highly affected by socioeconomic challenges that has resulted to stagnation or delay of implementation of activities or programs that empower women. Some of the socioeconomic challenges include cultural barriers, domestic violence, economic status and so on. The socioeconomic challenges affect areas such as education, economy and health status of most women. The study was conducted in Mathira East Constituency, Nyeri County, Kenya. The respondents required for the study were women ranging from the age of eighteen years and above. Yamane's formula was used to determine the number of respondents fit for the study. After the calculation, the respondents were three hundred and ninety-seven, inclusive of the elderly, primary school girls and children. Afterwards, the number of respondents that we settled on was one hundred and fifty participants. Questionnaires were the research instrument that was used mostly in the study and was formulated in close ended format. Descriptive research design was used for data analysis. Findings reveal significant obstacles such as cultural constraints, high rate of domestic violence, and poor economic status, which hinder women's progress. The study highlights the necessity for support structures and policy interventions to address the obstacles. Conclusions highlight the need for financial stability through development for assistance programs, holistic GBV prevention, and women political empowerment. The recommendations emphasize on implementing assistance programs for women, GBV support services, political reforms, and gender-specific poverty alleviation measures. Future research should focus on occupational segregation, economic vulnerabilities, comprehensive GBV studies, political participation barriers, and gendered approaches to poverty reduction.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Women in Mathira East Constituency, Nyeri County, Kenya, face multifaceted socioeconomic challenges that hinder their empowerment. The research is aimed at finding out how cultural practices, and poverty expand gender differences, which bar women from schooling, employment, and political positions. Through the analysis of these factors this research offers important understanding of women's quotidian experience of lived, demonstrating the need for specific strategies and initiatives to drive change and eradicate gender hardship. The findings underlined the importance of adopting the integrated approaches to such acute social issues as gender-based violence, poverty and systemic discrimination to provide the women with an appropriate environment.

1.1 Background of the Study

The term 'empowerment' is when opportunities are equitably availed to all irrelevant of their gender orientation. Empowerment applies mostly to the marginalized groups in the society such as; women, children, people living with disability. The marginalized groups are mostly discriminated and excluded thus having poor accessibility to political, economic, cultural and social power as compared to the acclaimed groups. Most of the resources that the marginalized groups lack include lack of quality healthcare services, poor education, few job opportunities and lack of access to basic needs. As a result, the marginalized groups are impacted by negative effects such as engaging in criminal activities and developing mental issues.

Women, are among the marginalized groups that have been highly affected in the community due to the dominant patriarchal family system in which women are only supposed to be seen but not heard. Among other factors, culture has affected women negatively in many ways and has been passed on from generations to generations thus becoming a norm that has been adopted by many societies (Nigam, 2014). Activities such as Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) has led to loss of lives as a result over bleeding and also a hastened adulthood leading to early (teenage) marriages. Further, in some communities, women 's education has been neglected as they get commoditized for hefty dowry pay. Therefore, women are less privileged as compared to men thus being discriminated against.

It is also clear that women have been denied access to better job opportunities as they lack vocational training, which was a major demand by women when they convened for the first

International Women Conference in 1910 at Copenhagen, Denmark. Women have also been looked down and believed to not be able to get into STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics). They have been relegated to History, CRE, Home science and so on, subjects that are not in demand leading to many women staying jobless. At times, the few educated women, are denied job opportunities on the basis of gender discrimination (Hill et al., 2010). Some people recognize jobs like Engineering to be fit for the men thus women who have specialized in such fields end up not being hired due to the perspective of them being weak. As a result, women's abilities, dreams and talents are shuttered thus lowering their self-esteem. Moreover, the men end up having better living standards as compared to women.

Krook & True (2012) states that, Women empowerment has promoted women 's worth and their capability in making their own decisions. Many countries have initiated women empowerment with an aim of improving their lives and enhance gender equity. United Nations played a huge role in the years 1970s and 1990s by creating awareness on the importance of women empowerment globally where they hosted four Women conferences. The four conferences were held in Mexico City, Copenhagen, Nairobi and Beijing. Among the four conferences, the Beijing conference, 1995, acknowledged women by creating 'gender mainstreaming' where the strategy discouraged discrimination thus shedding some light and attention on women participation in activities that involved the citizens as well as having equal access to resources in the society. The Nairobi conference, 1985, 'World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the UN Decade for women' mandated establishment of measures too overcome barriers to achieving advancement of women and gender equity.

According to Esquivel (2016), Kenya enhanced women empowerment after the formulation of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) specifically, goal number five which states that 'Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.' Through the Sustainable Development Goals, Kenya has managed to promote equal access of resources and job opportunities to women which has helped in improving the economy of the country and the living standards of many women. Further, the fight against Female Genital Mutilation has been implemented as well as initiation of sanitary towels program. Nyeri County government has as well-made efforts of empowering women by developing projects that has impacted women lives. Some of these projects include; a cooking oil ATM that was launched in Aguthi-Gaaki ward. Further, in Konyu ward, Mathira East

constituency, His Excellency William Samoei Ruto supported women Self-help groups in the ward with funds where most women benefited from the funds.

Women empowerment has brought changes to women 's lives as in many countries; women can readily access quality education just as the male gender. The perspective of women being weak is now being erased as many women are getting their dream jobs and actually doing great thus impacting the respective organization, the country and themselves. In Kenya, according to the 2010 constitution, women are now included in the government which has led to gender equality (Esquivel, 2016). To enhance the two thirds gender rule can now be elected both nationally and at county level.

However, socio economic challenges have affected women empowerment thus leading to lagging of women 's progress both socially, politically and financially. Some of the socioeconomic challenges that women empowerment faces include; poor quality of education, low job opportunities, cultural barriers, social barriers, existence of societal norms, high population rate, and economic growth. Regardless of the effort put by organizations and governments fighting for gender equality and recognition of women, the socioeconomic barriers find a way of stagnating women progress. As much as the women are directly affected by the socioeconomic challenges, the world is as well affected especially in terms of economy. There is need for the government to address the challenges not only for the sake of women but also for the country (Shahbaz et al., 2017). To manage eradicating most of the socioeconomic challenges, there is need for campaigning against gender inequality thus ensuring both genders benefit from the public resources equally.

1.2 Statement of the Research Problem

Shahbaz et al., (2017) claims that, regardless of the gender equality women continue to face challenges that act as obstacles to their empowerment. These limitations are portrayed in different forms; limited access to education, gender based violence, high unemployment rate and restriction to political participation and decision making. The high poverty levels yields issues that makes it difficult for women to acquire basic needs and improve their living standards. Addressing the socio-economic limitations is not only vital to women but also to the community at large. This calls for urgent need to for interventions and policies that aim at the barriers to create a conducive environment for women where they can flourish their lives.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The study aimed to examine the socioeconomic challenges affecting women empowerment in Mathira East Constituency, Nyeri County, Kenya.

1.4 Conceptual Framework

INDEPENDENT VARIABLE

DEPENDENT VARIABLE

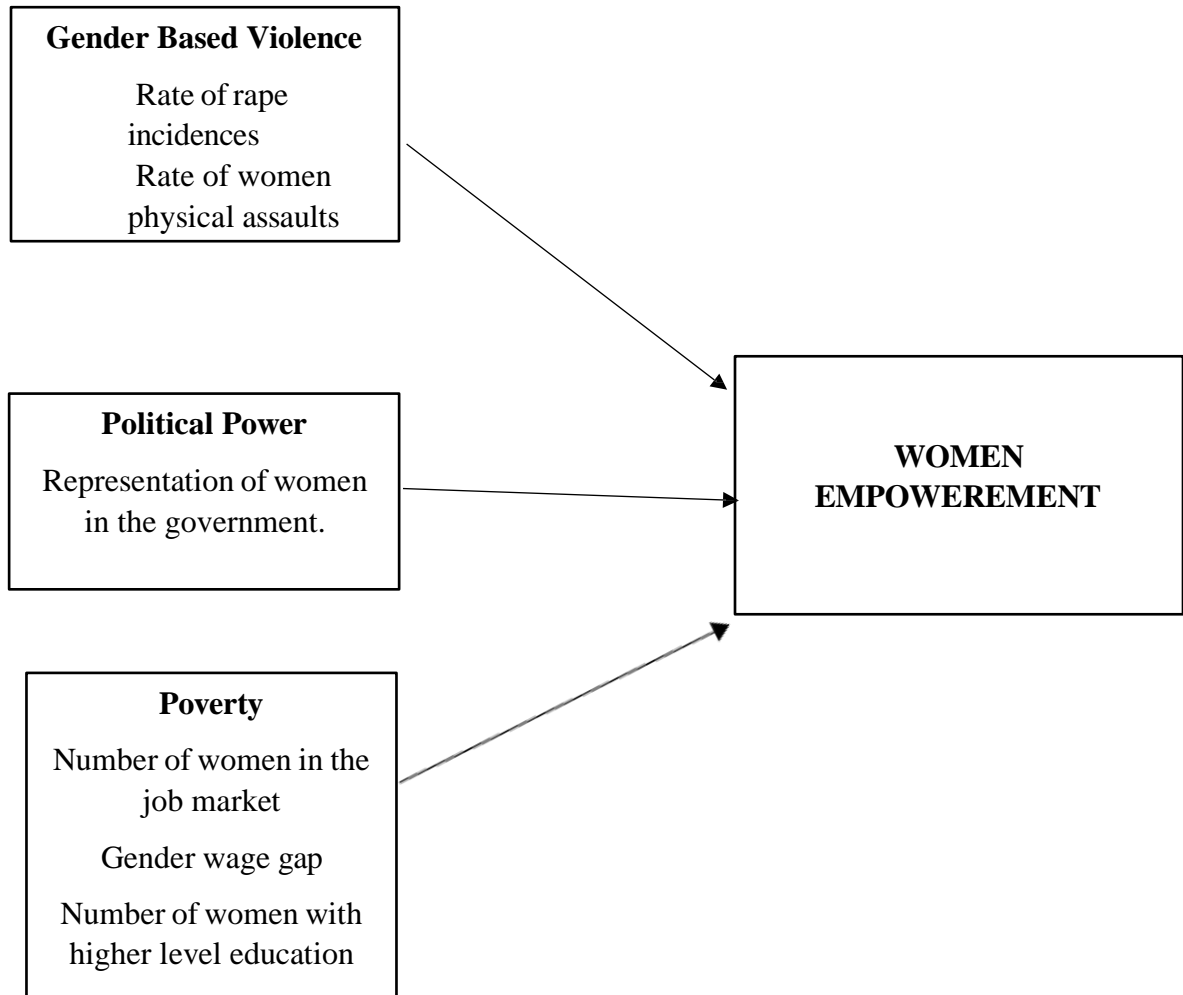


FIGURE 1 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

1.5 Research Questions

1. How does Gender Based Violence contribute to the socioeconomic challenges affecting women empowerment?
2. How does political power affect women empowerment?
3. How is does poverty affect women empowerment?

1.6 Objectives of the Study

1.6.1 General Objective

To investigate on the socioeconomic challenges affecting women empowerment in Mathira East Constituency, Nyeri County, Kenya.

1.6.2 Specific Objectives

1. To analyse the influence of Gender Based Violence on women empowerment.
2. To assess the effect of political power on women empowerment.
3. To analyse the influence of poverty on women's empowerment.

1.7 Hypothesis of the Study

(H₀1): There is no relationship between Gender Based Violence and women empowerment.

(H₀2): There is no relationship between political power and women empowerment.

(H₀3): There is a no significant relationship between poverty and women empowerment.

1.8 Significance of the Study

The study ought to help women and the community understand the need for women empowerment in the constituency. The study helps the women understand the problems that are ailing them, the reason they are facing the problem and how they can address their problems. Further, the women get to understand the ways to follow to make their lives better. The women understands that there is need for them to be supportive to their families as they play a huge role in ensuring their families remain intact.

The study also helps the people from Mathira East Constituency understand the benefits that came with addressing the socioeconomic challenges affecting women empowerment as many of those challenges were affecting the whole constituency. As a result, addressing the socioeconomic challenge not only is it beneficial to women but to the whole constituency. The study also is of essence to the future scholars who might explore on the same area of research and may find it necessary for referencing.

1.9 Scope of the Study

The study focused on the socioeconomic limitations that highly affected women empowerment. The variables included culture, economic status and physical violence. The study took place at Mathira East Constituency, Nyeri County, Kenya. The target population were young ladies and women ranging from the age of 18 years and above. Purposive and snowballing sampling was used when selecting participants where the methods of research was interviews and questionnaires.

1.10 Limitations of the Study

There was a bit of withholding as far as the domestic details were concerned. This was however resolved by the researcher reassuring them that all information will remain confidential and made them understand that the information they give would be of benefit to the community at large.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The chapter reviewed on Literature of various scholars based on conceptual framework, study objectives and theoretical framework.

2.2 Women Empowerment

Women being among the marginalized groups in the society, has been highly despised or discriminated by the society. However, women empowerment has been introduced to strengthen women and build their ability in making their own decisions and claiming their rights. Empowering women has been implemented by ensuring the girl child and young women accesses quality education, being included in decision making to matters that concern them or the society, abolishing Female Genital Mutilation and creating job opportunities for women. As a result, a high population of women 's lives have improved thus improving of many families 'status (Cornwall, 2016). Further, the health status of women has improved due to easy access of quality health services and abolition of FGM. Most of the women have achieved their dream jobs due to creation of job opportunities for women.

However, women empowerment has been affected due to challenges to do with culture, economic status, Gender Based Violence, poor education and domestic violence that has directly affected women. The challenges result women to encounter divorces in their marriages, early pregnancies for teenagers, dropout from schools, poverty, high crime rates and trauma. At this point, not only are the women affecting but also their families at large as women have a significant role in their families and the society (Williams et al., 2010). As a result, implementation of women empowerment has drastically slowed and is highly affecting the lives of many women.

2.3 Culture

In most societies, culture is patriarchal meaning thus the men had the power and the authority over the society and the property. As a result, women were controlled by men and were highly considered to be wealth as they could be married off at an early age with an aim of getting bride price in return. Therefore, the male gender highly accesses societal resources readily as compared to the female gender. As far as education is concerned, the female gender did not get access to quality education as compared to the male gender. Since according to the culture girls or young ladies were a source of wealth for their families, their parents did not see the need of educating them. Lack of education for many women has led to high rate of unemployment to many women

thus affecting their living conditions. Female Genital Mutilation which is still in practice up to date in some communities have led to loss of lives for many young women (Kakela, 2023). According to the culture, when a lady undergoes the circumcision, she is fit for marriage thus being married off and in exchange their dreams and goals are ruined.

As a result, due to the few who lack the chance to be enrolled to school, have limited opportunity to leadership as education is highly valued in leadership. On the other hand, leadership has been stereotyped by culture to fit for the male gender only. That is why, most of the politicians and administrators are men and women fit in the women representative seats which are meant to be occupied by women to promote two third Gender rule in the country. Culture views women to be weak thus they are not fit to rule over a society. regardless of education playing a role in leadership, culture has painted the men being fit for leadership. As a result, there are cases of women who have tried vying for political seats and failed. Culture has influenced the leadership roles in the society even before independence (Koenig et al., 2011). Such cultural stereotypes have limited the excellence or progress of women empowerment as the women 's voices or views are not considered.

Patriarchal influence in the society also plays as big role in women empowerment. Since culture is dominated by men, women 's participation in making decisions and airing of their grievances is not considered. Further, patriarchal domination is highly portrayed through domination of land and agriculture by men. For example, women in the Kikuyu society are not allowed to own land or even fight for land as land is known to be men 's property. Further, agricultural products such as coffee and tea farms are originally owned by men. All the shares in the factory ought to be owned by men (Parsons, 2019). The only way a woman can participate in agricultural sector is by owning a land through purchase or by acquiring job in the agricultural sector. The chances of a woman securing a job in agricultural farms or offices is minimal thus the male gender still dominates.

Gender roles is a socio-cultural practice that has reigned most cultures since before independence. Gender roles is when duties and responsibilities are divided according to the gender. The male gender ought to perform duties that require masculinity and power such as agricultural activities administration. On the other hand, women role was to perform the household duties, conceive and nurture children. Due to the division of roles, most of the times women were always at home

taking care of the children and taking care of the home while the men could have ample time to spend with each other and share ideas. In today 's life, gender roles have advanced now that many women are educated and are specialized in fields that are stereotyped to specific for men. As a result, many women are having challenges securing jobs in fields such as Engineering since the field is dominated by men. Further, such fields are viewed to be fir for people with physical strength and in this case, the men (Bobbitt-Zeher, 2011). Therefore, gender roles being part of the cultural activities carried out, have led to lagging of women empowerment since many women fail to work to their dream career due to culture that is still in existence.

2.4 Domestic Violence

Domestic violence has been an issue that has been known to be affecting women globally. At some point, there are arguments that women are the sole initiators of domestic violence thus the men being victims. However, the rate of women who have been recorded being victims of domestic violence is high as compared to that of men. According to statistics, 1 in 4 women and 1 in 9 men experience intimate partner violence. Therefore, women are highly affected by domestic violence as compared to men and has contributed to delay or failure of women empowerment. One of the causes of elevation of domestic violence in the society is weak administration (Garcia-Moreno et al., 2015). Since domestic violence highly affected the people who are rarely recognized in the society, the administrators rarely address the grievances of the people who are viewed to be of low class. As a result, domestic violence elevates affecting the lives of women, children and families at large.

According to Costa et al (2015), Societal victimization contributes to domestic violence through affecting people 's relationships and status. In research conducted, 29% of participants claim that societal victimization has fueled domestic violence in Nyeri. Some of the ways that societal victimization affects relationships is through gossip, manipulation by friends, being despised by others and social exclusion. The above ways may initiate domestic violence as they tend to have influence to both the victim and the initiator of violence. On the other hand, the actions that one may take in a situation of domestic violence is also influenced by societal victimization. That is why, women may decide to leave their abusive relationships or marriages for the sake of the children. Others may walk out of their toxic relationships after realizing that harmful or violent acts cannot play part in a successful marriage.

Poverty highly contributes to domestic violence and has also been a hinderance to implementation of resolving domestic violence. The number of victims who suffer from domestic violence due to poverty is common and most of them are women. The high number of female victims of domestic violence has dragged behind the implementation of women empowerment. Poverty leads to factors such as lack of education an unemployment. Women suffer from domestic violence as most me try to cover their failure as the breadwinners of the family. Further, women who are not educated are in higher risk as compared to mane as their rate of being taken advantage of is very high (Eswaran & Malhotra, 2011). Most women who are in marriages and relationships suffer from domestic violence since they depend on their spouses for the sake of the welfare of their children.

Some of the effects that domestic violence leads to include; loss of lives, Trauma and psychological issues and high rate of divorce. Loss of lives mostly occur when the violence gets severe leading to physical violence and in the process, the victim ends up losing their lives. Further, trauma and psychological issues are evident in family members of the victims of domestic violence as well as the victims of domestic violence (Bancroft et al., 2011). High rate of violence has also been recorded as many victims of domestic violence tend to leave their relationships or marriages while they search for peace or more peaceful relationships.

2.5 Economic Status

Economic status is determined by class, occupation and income earned by individuals. Further, the economic status influences the economic standards of women. In Kenya has improved in terms of economy thus indicating that there are women who have benefitted in terms of job opportunities or entrepreneurship. In 2017, the percentage of the employed women was 27% while that of men was 28% indicating that there has been progress for gender equality has increased and the number of educated women has also risen. However, the higher percentage of women fall in the category of economically inactive, unemployed and those who are not classified (Lock & Lawton, 2016). The above data concludes that the number of women who are economically unstable s higher than that of those stable.

Chant (2014) states that, some of the reason why many women are unemployed include lack of skills and knowledge, lack of education, many responsibilities at home and poverty. Most women are housewives thus they are economically dependent to their husbands since they have no jobs. Moreover, many girls have only attained the primary education and secondary education thus not

being equipped with the knowledge and skills needed for specific fields. Poverty has led to many failures of many factors that have affected economic status, most importantly education. Due to lack of fees many children and in this case, girls end up dropping from school. Irresponsibility of some parents especially the fathers who have become addicts of drug abuse has led to many children suffering in the society.

The high percentage of women who are unemployed have affected the economy of the constituency as well as Nyeri County at large. Therefore, due to the affected economic status in Mathira East Constituency, implementation of women empowerment in the constituency has slowed down. Low economic status in the constituency has driven many girls and ladies to look for ways to earn income thus many have ended up in illegal businesses such as prostitution (Raphael,2015). Other have been taken advantage of by men where they have ended up being pregnant thus leading to more economic issues. Some of the women being affected by early pregnancies are the young women in schools.

2.6 Theoretical Framework

2.6.1 Feminist Theory

Feminist theory offers a prism through which to view gender dynamics, social injustices, and power hierarchies. It emphasizes how crucial it is to comprehend how patriarchal structures limit women's agency, create socioeconomic conditions, and maintain gender inequality (Donovan, 2012). The necessity of gender-sensitive strategies for tackling socioeconomic issues and advancing women's empowerment is emphasized by feminist philosophy.

2.6.2 Social Capital Theory

Social Capital Theory emphasizes the importance of relationships, social networks, and resources in promoting both individual and group empowerment. Social capital theory emphasizes on how community organizations and interpersonal relationships give women access to chances, resources, and knowledge in the factors of women's empowerment (Lin, 2017). The theory spotlights how important it is to create and utilize social capital in order to overcome socioeconomic obstacles and improve women's agency and involvement in decision-making.

2.6.3 Human Capital Theory

According to the human capital theory, investments in training, skill development and education raise people's earning capability and ability to move up the socioeconomic ranking. Human capital theory highlights the value of funding women's education and potential-building programs in the context of women's empowerment in order to improve their economic independence and empowerment (Tan, 2014). Human capital theory spotlights the necessity of laws and gambit that support women's equal access to opportunities for education and skill-building, therefore resolving socioeconomic gaps and promoting inclusive growth.

2.6.4 Policy Priorities Theory

Women's participation in politics guarantees that problems impacting women such as childcare, gender equality, reproductive rights, and violence against women get the proper attention and consideration during the policy-making process (Jann & Wegrich, 2017).

2.7 Summary of Identified gaps

2.7.1 Education Disparities

Gender equality depends on providing equal access to high-quality education. Girls' education is disproportionately impacted by obstacles such lack of infrastructure, prejudice, poverty, and cultural norms. Through educational investment and barrier removal, society may equip women with the information and skills needed for both personal and professional development (Chant, 2014). This results in better health outcomes, lower rates of poverty, and more advancement in general.

2.7.2 Economic Participation

Women rate of employment is quite low as compared to that of men as there is a norm of men being fit for specific jobs. Women are also viewed by the society to be at-home wives to take care of household chores and her family thus many women are dependent to their husbands. As a result, due to low participation of women in economic world, the economy of the country tends to be low as well as the living standards of women (Eswaran & Malhotra, 2011). Lack of skills and knowledge is also a reason as to why women do not fit in many jobs especially the white- and blue-collar jobs.

2.7.3 Cultural Norms and Stereotypes

Women's earning potential and professional choices are significantly influenced by cultural and societal standards. Expectations, opportunities, and the perception of women's positions in the workforce are frequently shaped by these standards. Traditional gender roles are frequently imposed by cultural conventions, which give men and women certain expectations and obligations (Kakela, 2023). These expectations have the power to sway women's job decisions, pushing them into fields that are seen as more "traditional" or "suitable" for their gender.

2.7.4 Access of Resources

Because of the gender division of labor, women's access to and use of natural resources are likely to differ from men. Men and women are affected differently by environmental degradation and programs involving the development of natural resources. Traditionally, women have had access to forests for firewood collection and foraging as well as agricultural land for the production of food and income crops (Parsons, 2019). However, women are rarely granted legal tenure. Any modifications to land use patterns have the potential to significantly impair women's access to resources required for household survival as well as their legal and customary rights.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

Target population, sample size, research design and sampling procedure are the main topics of this chapter. Additionally, the chapter was focusing on logic and reliability and research tools. Further, ethnic considerations, data analysis and logistics was covered in this chapter.

3.2 Research Design

The study used Descriptive research design. Descriptive research design explored more on the topic, socioeconomic challenges affecting women empowerment in Mathira East Constituency, Nyeri County, Kenya. Further, the research design created a relationship between socioeconomic challenges and women empowerment among women ranging from the age of 18 years and above. The study used research tools to collect primary and secondary data to tackle the problem at hand.

3.3 Study Area

The study area was at Mathira East Constituency, Nyeri County. According to (Njenga & Njoroge, 2021), most women in Nyeri County and in this case, Mathira East Constituency, face challenges that lead to difficulty in empowering them. The biggest socioeconomic challenge faced by women in the constituency was domestic violence and poor economic status thus the area being fit for research.

3.4 Target Population

The research targeted 50, 992 women. The target group was comprised of women in school, that is secondary level and tertiary level, the married, the unmarried and the divorced and widowed women in Mathira East Constituency.

3.5 Sampling Technique

Purposive sampling technique was used during research since the study had a specific target and specific objectives to be achieved. Moreover, snowball sampling was also applied to help the research get to other participants through referrals from the respondents.

3.6 Sample size

Yamane's formula was used to calculate sample size.

The Yamane sample calculation is a technique for figuring out how big of a sample a study needs. It bears the name Satoru Yamane in honor of the Japanese statistician. The formula determines the proper sample size required for a study by taking into account the size of the whole population as well as the desired level of confidence.

The equation is:

$$n = N / (1 + N(e)^2)$$

n= Sample size

N= Population size (According to the Kenya Bureau of Statistics, 2019)

e= Margin of error

n=?

N= 50,992

e= 0.05

$$n = 50,992 / (1 + 50,992(0.05)^2)$$

$$(0.05)^2 = 1 / 400$$

$$1 / 400 * 50,992 = 127.48$$

$$127.48 + 1 = 128.48$$

$$50,992 / 128.48 = 396.88$$

$$n = 397$$

3.7 Measurement of variables

Variable	Measures/Indicators	Measurement Scale	Question Number
Gender Based Violence	Rate of Rape cases	Ordinal	1.1
	Rate of women physical assault	Ordinal	1.2
	Rate of divorces	Ordinal	1.3
Political Power	Representation of women in the government	Nominal	2
Poverty	Number of women in the job market	Interval	3.1
	Gender wage gap	Ratio	3.2
	Number of women with higher level education	Interval	3.3

TABLE 1 VARIABLES MEASUREMENT SCALES.

3.8 Research instruments

The study comprised of collecting primary data through structured questionnaires from the respondents. The questionnaires were formatted in closed ended questions. There was four sections in the questionnaires that is personal details, culture, economic status, domestic violence. The closed ended questionnaires were saved on time to avoid inaccurate and incompetent answers from the respondents.

3.9 Validity of Measurement

Before collecting actual data, the researcher experimented the research instruments by using seven respondents to ensure that all errors were identified and corrected. The researcher also enquired from the supervisor to ensure that the content of the research was accurate and valid.

3.10 Reliability of Measurements

Further, the measurement of reliability, Cronbach Alpha was applied to validate that the research instruments were reliable and that internal consistency was acceptable. By the help of Cronbach, the researcher ensured reliability by having alpha values ranging from 0.7 and above.

3.11 Data Collecting Techniques

The researcher was borrowed permission from the institution to collect data and later came up with a list of respondents that participate in the research. The researcher later explained to the respondents on the reason for the study and its importance and asked for their willingness to participate in the study. After that, the researcher issued the questionnaires to the respondents and agreed with them on when to collect the questionnaires.

3.12 Data Analysis

Both descriptive and inferential data analysis was done by the researcher and later the data was cleaned and sorted. Afterwards, the data was entered into an Excel sheet by the researcher according to every component of the questionnaires. Following analysis, the data was presented on frequency tables and reported on themes. The researcher also employed inferential statistics like percentages. Further, a correlation analysis was carried out since the researcher was hypothesizing the study.

The following is the methods of analysis of each research question;

Research Questions	Hypothesis	Hypothesis test	Statistical model
How does culture contribute to the socioeconomic challenges affecting women empowerment in Mathira East	Null Hypothesis (H ₀): In Mathira East Constituency, there is no discernible correlation between socioeconomic difficulties and cultural norms that	Chi-square test of independence	The chi-square test was used to ascertain whether cultural norms (an independent variable) and the socioeconomic obstacles that women

<p>Constituency, Nyeri County, Kenya?</p>	<p>hinder women's empowerment. Alternative Hypothesis (H1): The socioeconomic issues influencing women's empowerment in Mathira East Constituency are greatly influenced by cultural norms.</p>		<p>face in their quest for empowerment (a dependent variable) had a meaningful relationship.</p>
<p>How has domestic violence affected women in the constituency thus playing a part in the fall of women empowerment?</p>	<p>Null Hypothesis (H0): In Mathira East Constituency, there is no discernible link between the decline in women's empowerment and domestic abuse. Alternative Hypothesis (H1): The decline in women's empowerment in the Mathira East Constituency is largely caused by domestic abuse.</p>	<p>Logistic regression analysis</p>	<p>The possibility that women's empowerment (the dependent variable) declined in relation to domestic violence (the independent variable) was ascertained by logistic regression, which was accounted for any possible confounding variables.</p>
<p>How has economic status been a</p>	<p>Null Hypothesis (H0): In Mathira East</p>	<p>Linear regression analysis</p>	<p>The effect of women's empowerment (the</p>

<p>challenge that is affecting women empowerment in Mathira East Constituency, Nyeri County, Kenya?</p>	<p>Constituency, there is no discernible correlation between women's empowerment and economic position. Alternative Hypothesis (H1): In the Mathira East Constituency, women's empowerment is strongly impacted by economic status.</p>		<p>dependent variable) and economic position (the independent variable) was evaluated using linear regression, which also established the direction and intensity of the association.</p>
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TABLE 2 DATA ANALYSIS AND TECHNIQUES THAT WAS USED IN THE RESEARCH STUDY.

3.13 Logistical and Ethical Considerations

To ensure that the study was conducted on time, the research broke down work plan and budget estimate. The budge and the work plan helped in ensuring that the researcher was provided with the finances needed on time to complete the research in the time span given and without being rushed. Further, the researcher alerted the teachers and the parents of the respondents in school. The researcher asked for green light to conduct the study from the legal authority and also ensured that the respondents understood the reason and the importance of the study being carried out. The researcher also assured the respondents confidentiality of the information they provided and let them know that the study was for academic purpose.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS.

4.1 Introduction

This chapter is an attempt to examine some of the results that our empirical research into women's empowerment showed with respect to how socio-economic changes affected women, and to elucidate them better. The data gathered from detailed measures was examined in detail and sectored equitably based on the research questions and hypotheses designed previously. This chapter did not intend to present only the results, but also start a more profound discussion that connected these findings with the broader socio-economic context of women's empowerment.

Results were later interpreted, comparing them to the initial hypotheses and their importance for existing research in this field. In the sections that follow, the research was systematically unpacked and their implications for policy with respect to women's empowerment. The in-depth examination seeks to critically examine the socio-economic obstacles women encounter and identify potential avenues for surmounting these hurdles.

4.2 Overview of Findings

Studies about socio-economic problems related to the empowerment of women employ various types and degree of barriers including income difference, shortage in education level, disparity for employment positions and social cultural constraints. Furthermore, there are few opportunities for GBV support and less representation in political empowerment. These challenges also emphasize the importance of powerful support structures, which is a theme from this data and underscores that women face multi-dimensional barriers to empowerment.

4.3 Discussion of Findings

4.3.1 Response Rate

The table below presents the distribution and percentage of questionnaires returned and spoilt in a survey, providing insights into the response quality.

Questionnaire Status	Number of Questionnaires	Percentage
Returned Used	365	92%
Spoilt	32	8%
Total	397	100%

TABLE 3 RESPONSE TABLE

4.3.2 Level of Poverty in Mathira Constituency

The bar chart below illustrates the distribution of poverty levels across the constituency, highlighting varying degrees of socio-economic conditions.

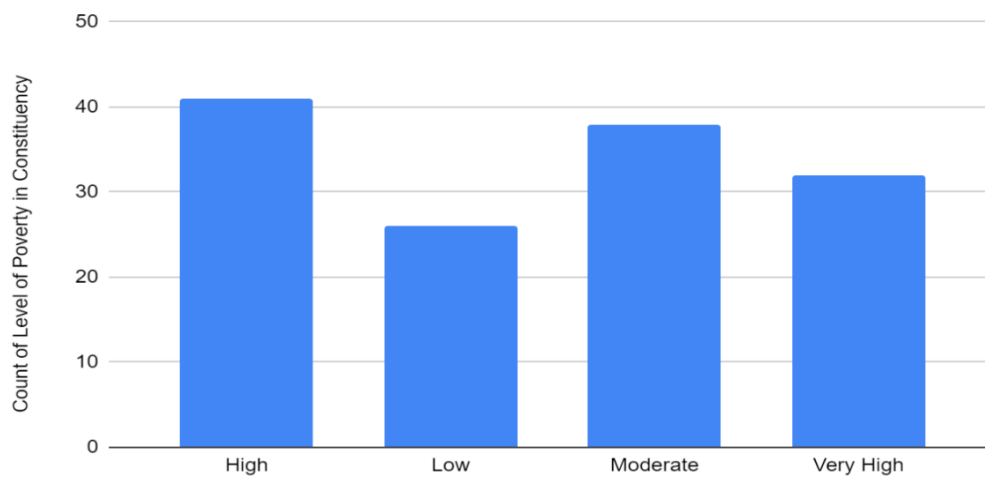


FIGURE 2 LEVEL OF POVERTY CHART

4.3.3 Type of gender-based violence experienced.

The bar chart below shows the prevalence of different types of gender-based violence (GBV) experienced, emphasizing the varying impacts on individuals.

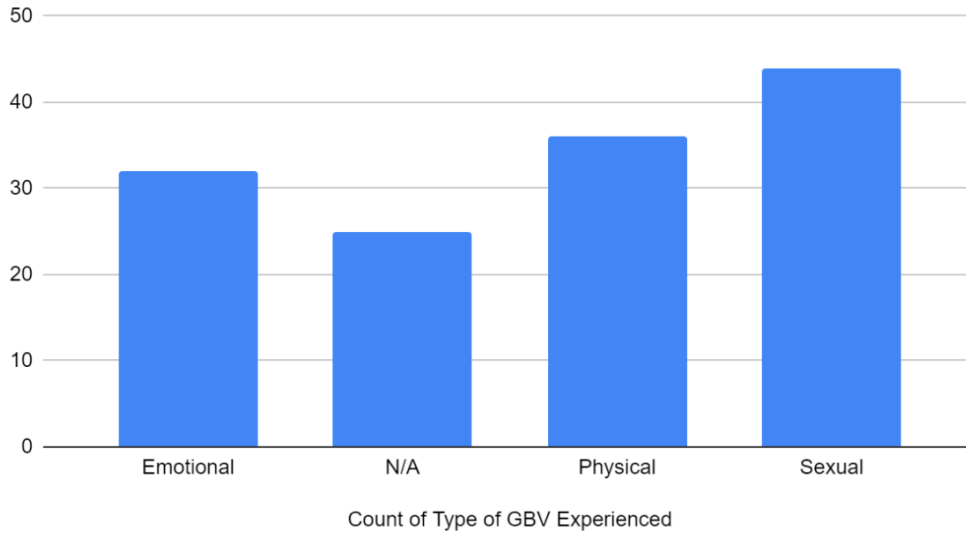


FIGURE 3 TYPE OF GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE EXPERIENCED CHART

4.3.4 Support Services for Gender-base-Violence Victims

The pie chart illustrates the availability of support services for gender-based violence victims.

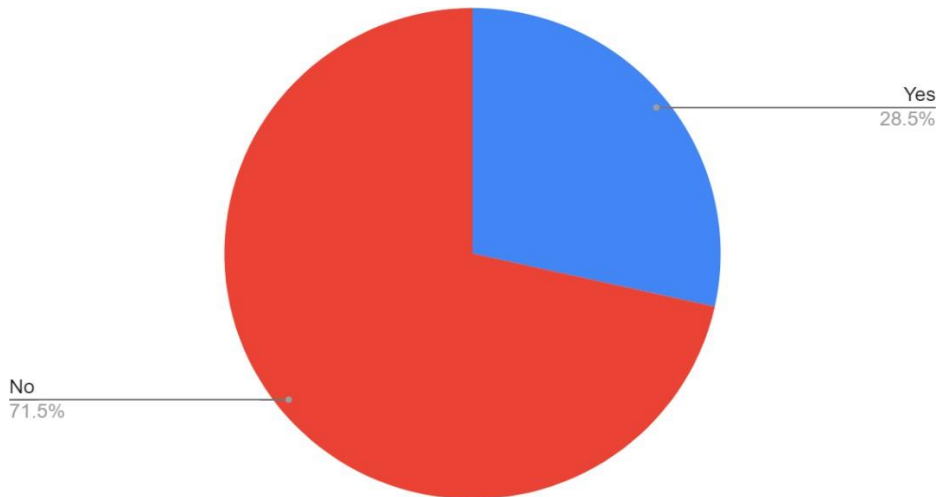


FIGURE 4 SUPPORT SERVICE FOR GBV VICTIM CHART

4.3.5 Equal Possibilities for Women in Politics

The pie chart depicts responses regarding how women are represented in politics. It shows that 61.3% of participants believe women are not well represented in politics, while 38.7% reported that women are well-represented in politics.

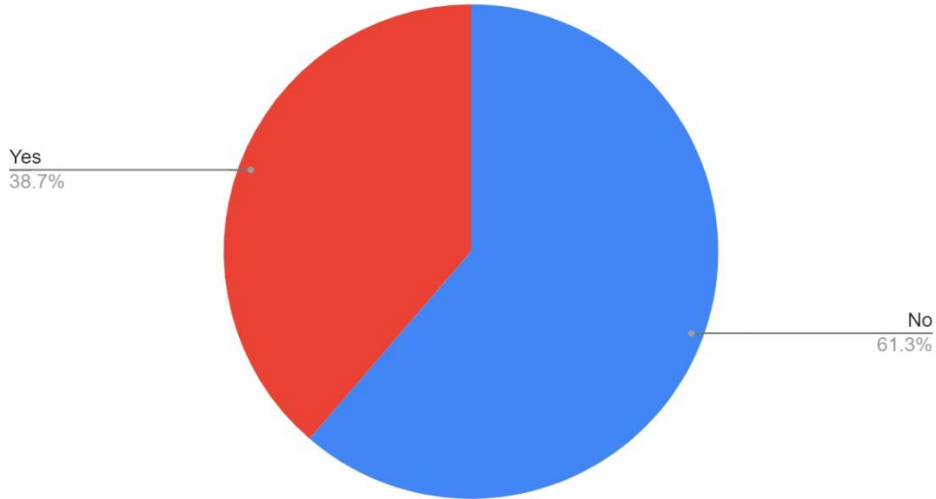


FIGURE 5 EQUAL POSSIBILITIES FOR WOMEN IN POLITICS CHARTS

4.3.6 Difficulties Getting Basic Essentials

The pie chart displays the survey results on a specific service's availability. According to the data, 72.3% of respondents confirmed the service's presence, while 27.7% indicated its absence.

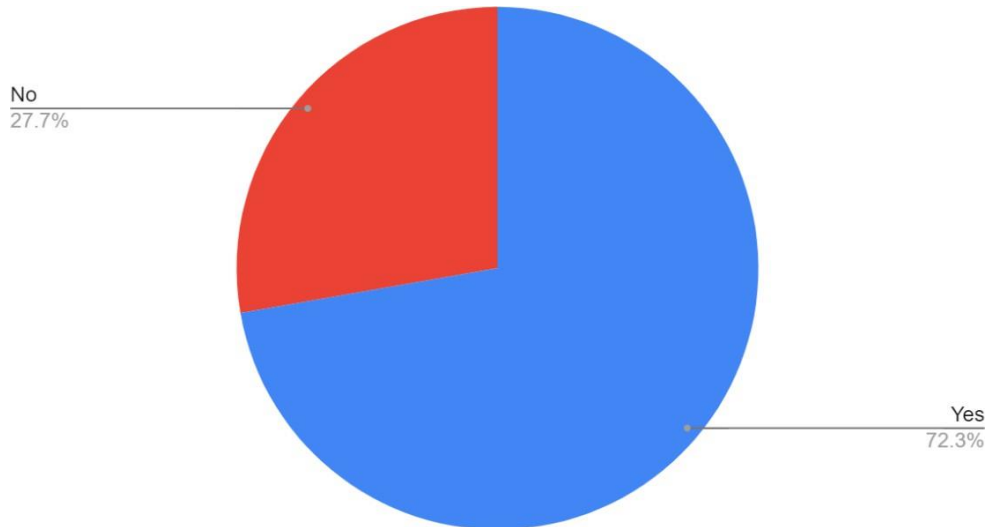


FIGURE 6 DIFFICULTIES GETTING BASIC ESSENTIALS

4.4 Descriptive Statistics

The table presents descriptive statistics for three variables: "Type of GBV Experienced," "Equal Possibilities for Women in Politics," and "Level of Poverty in Constituency," based on a sample size of 365. It shows the minimum and maximum values, means, and standard deviations for each variable. These statistics provide an overview of the data distribution and variability within the sample.

	N	MINIMUM	MAXIMUM	MEAN	STD. DEVIATION
TYPE OF GBV EXPERIENCED	365	0	3	1.61	1.113
EQUAL POSSIBILITIES FOR WOMEN IN POLITICS	365	0	1	.61	.489
LEVEL OF POVERTY IN CONSTITUENCY	365	0	3	1.58	1.048
VALID N (LISTWISE)	365				

TABLE 4 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

4.5 Regressions

The table displays the results of a regression analysis examining the impact of various factors on "Equal Possibilities for Women in Politics." The predictors include "Type of GBV Experienced," "Level of Poverty in Constituency," and "Obstacles for Women in Power." The coefficients, standard errors, standardized coefficients (Beta), t-values, and significance levels (Sig.) are provided to show the strength and significance of each predictor's influence on the dependent variable.

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.075	.095		11.340	<.001
	Type of GBV Experienced	-.230	.031	-.524	-7.338	<.001
	Level of Poverty in Constituency	-.103	.033	-.222	-3.126	.002
	Obstacles for women in Power	.094	.083	.081	1.132	.260

a. Dependent Variable: Equal Possibilities for Women in Politics

TABLE 5 REGRESSION

4.6 Correlations

The table shows a significant negative correlation between the type of GBV experienced and equal possibilities for women in politics, and between the level of poverty and equal possibilities for women in politics. The relationship between GBV experienced and poverty level is weak and not statistically significant. This indicates that reducing GBV and poverty may enhance women's political opportunities.

		TYPE OF GBV EXPERIENCED	EQUAL POSSIBILITIES FOR WOMEN IN POLITICS	LEVEL OF POVERTY IN CONSTITUENCY
TYPE OF GBV EXPERIENCED	PEARSON CORRELATION	1	-.534**	.092
	SIG. (2-TAILED)		<.001	.286
	N	365	365	365
EQUAL POSSIBILITIES FOR WOMEN IN POLITICS	PEARSON CORRELATION	-.534**	1	-.265**
	SIG. (2-TAILED)	<.001		.002
	N	365	365	365
LEVEL OF POVERTY IN CONSTITUENCY	PEARSON CORRELATION	.092	-.265**	1
	SIG. (2-TAILED)	.286	.002	
	N	365	365	365

****.** CORRELATION IS SIGNIFICANT AT THE **0.01** LEVEL (2-TAILED).

TABLE 6 CORRELATION ANALYSIS

4.7 Testing the hypothesis

The table presents the hypothesis testing results for three factors affecting women's empowerment in Mathira East Constituency. The analysis shows no significant correlation between socioeconomic difficulties and cultural norms that hinder women's empowerment (value: 0.081, verdict: accept). However, there is a significant negative correlation between women's empowerment and both domestic abuse (value: -0.524, verdict: reject) and economic position (value: -0.222, verdict: reject), indicating these factors significantly impact women's empowerment.

Hypothesis Number	Value	Verdict
There is no significant relationship between political power and women empowerment.	0.081	Accept
There is no relationship between Gender Based Violence and women empowerment.	-0.524	Reject
There is no relationship between poverty and women empowerment.	-0.222	Reject

TABLE 7 TESTING THE HYPOTHESIS

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a summary of the findings, conclusions drawn from the study, and recommendations for policy, practice, and further research. It aims to provide an integrated view of the study outcomes and their implications, suggesting directions for future research.

5.2 Summary

The study investigated various socio-economic and political issues faced by women in the constituency, focusing on factors such as education, employment, income, experiences of gender-based violence (GBV), political participation, and poverty levels. The findings of the study are as follows:

1. **Demographics and Employment:** Most of the participants ranged from the age of 18-45, some of them had attained education up to tertiary level and others up to secondary level. Most of the participants were unemployed.
2. **Gender-Based Violence:** A good number of women had experienced sexual, emotional and physical GBV, and no support services are available for victims.
3. **Political Participation:** According to the data, women have inadequate have opportunities in politics and there are several obstacles identified.
4. **Poverty and Basic Needs:** There were high levels of poverty reported in the constituency and many women face difficulties in obtaining basic essentials.

5.3 Conclusions

The clinical relevance of these findings would propose -

1. **Financial Stability:** Quite a number of women being low wage earners for every woman who finds it difficult to afford basic needs, shines a light on the financial insecurities deep down within.
2. **Sexual and Physical GBV is rampant,** especially Gender-Based Violence reflecting the need for holistic care in addition to preventive measures.
3. **Women in Power & Decision-making:** There are structural challenges that prevent women from accessing to politics and, therefore, it is vitally necessary targeted efforts towards gender equality within political spaces.
4. **Poverty Impact:** Over the same period very low reported poverty levels are observed but persistently high and increasing differential effects on women mean that specific

5.4 Recommendations for Policy or Practice

Conclusions from the Study Implications Recommendations

1. **Workplace policies:** Organizations should design and implement workplace policies that will attract women to diversify across different career paths than those traditionally dominated by females.
2. **Making Economic assistance Programs:** The government should organize programs that ought to handle women financial issues by creating job opportunities for the or providing financial aid.
3. **GBV Prevention and Support:** There should be development of services for the prevention of sexual, physical and emotional violence, thus aiming at strengthening GBV prevention programs.
4. **Political Empowerment:** The government should enhance political reforms that will enable participation of women in the government and enhance their participation in decision making.

5.5 Recommendations for Further Research

The study points to four areas that require more research:

1. **Occupational Segregation:** Research the causes of occupational segregation among women and suggest ways to reduce it.
2. **Economic vulnerabilities:** Identify what factors are leading women in low-wage jobs to face economic vulnerabilities?
3. **UCL Research for Gender and Sexual Violence:** conduct comprehensive studies across all forms of GBV including intervention strategies.
4. **Political Participation Barriers:** Identify specific barriers to women's political participation and effective strategies to overcome them in different contexts.
5. **Poverty Measurement:** What works to reduce poverty for women through the gendered approach, and how can this lead to better outcomes in the long run?

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APPENDICES

Appendix I: BUDGET

Transport	3000
Questionnaires	2000
Meetings	1500
Accommodation	4000
Refreshments	1500
Transport within the area of study	2000
TOTAL	14000

TABLE 9 BUDGET

APPENDIX III: QUESTIONNAIRES
SECTION A: BIODATA

1. AGE GROUP

- 18-25 []
26-35 []
36-45 []
45 and above []

2. WHAT LEVEL OF EDUCATION YOU HAVE ATTAINED?

- No formal education
- Primary school
- Secondary school
- Vocational training
- College/University

3. OCCUPATION

a. Are you currently employed?

Yes, full-time

Yes, part-time

No, unemployed

b. If employed, what is your occupation?

c. What is your average monthly income?

Below 10,000 KES

10,000-20,000 KES

20,001-30,000 KES

Above 30,000 KES

4. WHAT IS YOUR MARITAL STATUS?

Single

Married

Widowed

Divorced

SECTION B: GENDER BASED VIOLENCE

Have you or someone you know experienced gender-based violence (GBV) in your area?

- Yes
- No

If yes, please be specific of the type of gender-based violence experienced

- Emotional
- Sexual
- Physical
- Other

Are there support services given to the victims of gender-based victims?

- Yes
- No

SECTION C: POLITICAL POWER

According to your opinion, do you think there are equal possibilities for women to engage in political processes and decision-making in the Mathira East Constituency?

- Yes
- No

Have you seen any obstacles that keep women from entering or occupying roles in politics?

- Yes
- No

Do you think there is enough representation of women in Mathira East Constituency political leadership positions?

- Yes
- No

SECTION D: POVERTY

How would you describe the level of poverty in Mathira East Constituency?

- Very High
- High
- Moderate
- Low
- Very low

Have you or your family encountered difficulties getting basic essentials because of financial limitations?

- Yes
- No

Do you believe that in your area, women are disproportionately affected by poverty as opposed to men?

- Yes
- No