

## **Determinants of Women Participation in Livelihood Development Activities: A Case of Kinango Sub-County, Kwale County, Kenya**

**Rukia Chimerah**

Department of Sociology  
Pwani University  
Kenya

**Halimu Shauri**

Department of Sociology  
Pwani University  
Kenya

**Francis Wokabi**

Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies  
Pwani University  
Kenya

**Mumini Dzoga**

Department Environment and Health Sciences  
Technical University of Mombasa  
Kenya

### **Abstract**

*Worldwide, women experience numerous constraints in development compared to their male counterparts. Due to these constraints, women are deprived of opportunities such as employment and possession of properties which are fundamental for human developmental wellbeing. This study investigated the factors that deter women in Kinango Sub-County from participation in livelihood development activities. A survey was conducted among women of Kinango Sub-County where semi structure questionnaires with interview were used to collect data. Cluster sampling and simple random sampling procedures were used to select 370 participants during the study. Results showed that poor education, inferiority position of women in the society, poverty, as well as tradition were the key challenges that determined participation of women in livelihood development activities. As a result of these challenges, the study area experience low participation of women in development activities. In order to decrease these constrains, we recommend community sensitization against retrogressive tradition and culture that put women in inferiority position. This will enhance participation of women in development activities.*

**Keywords:** Women participation constraints, Livelihood development activities, Kwale County, Kinango Sub-County, Kenya

### **1.1. Introduction**

Livelihoods may be defined as capabilities, assets and strategies that people use to make a living (Carney, 1998). Their aim is on developing a self-reliance culture as well as enhancing living standards (UNECA, 2007). Women livelihood development activities may also be viewed in terms of employment and ownership of properties (ICRW, 2005). For instance, possession of property such as land may provide collateral for bank loans accessibility thus broadening windows of investments (ICRW, 2005). On the other hand, employment is a source of income to women enabling them to support their households (IFC, 2013). There is an increasingly high percentage of female headed households especially in East Africa (Jiggins, 1989). In this condition, women are compelled to engage in livelihood development activities to support their families (Ibid). The participation of women in various fields of livelihood development activities have shown positive outcome in the society worldwide (Hoare, 2009). The parliament of Norway, for instance, women members advocated for 'politics of care' which resulted to an increase of sponsored child-care services and extended parental leave by the government (Ibid).

Another study in Brazil found that the likelihood of a child’s survival increased by 20% when the household income is controlled by a mother (United Nations, 2009). However, women participation in livelihood development activities experience constraints such as lack of education as well as social and cultural barriers (Suda, 2002; Basic Education Coalition, 2004). These constraints determine their degree of participation and therefore, their living standards. For example, King *et al.* (2008) stated that, most female headed households have minimal access to education, land property, credit facilities and labour market thus resulting to extreme poverty compared to the male headed households.

Similarly, Kinango Sub-County is the most top rated county in Kenya with a poverty gap of 41.8 % (KNBS, 2013; Makoti and Waswa, 2015). Women comprise the majority (52.58%) of the population in the area (County Government of Kwale, 2013). Consequently, this study was conducted to find out what factors (determinants) hinders women from participation in livelihood development activities as well as describing the demographic characteristics of Kinango Sub-County.

**2. Materials and methods**

This study was conducted in Kinango Sub-County, Kwale County (Figure 2.1).

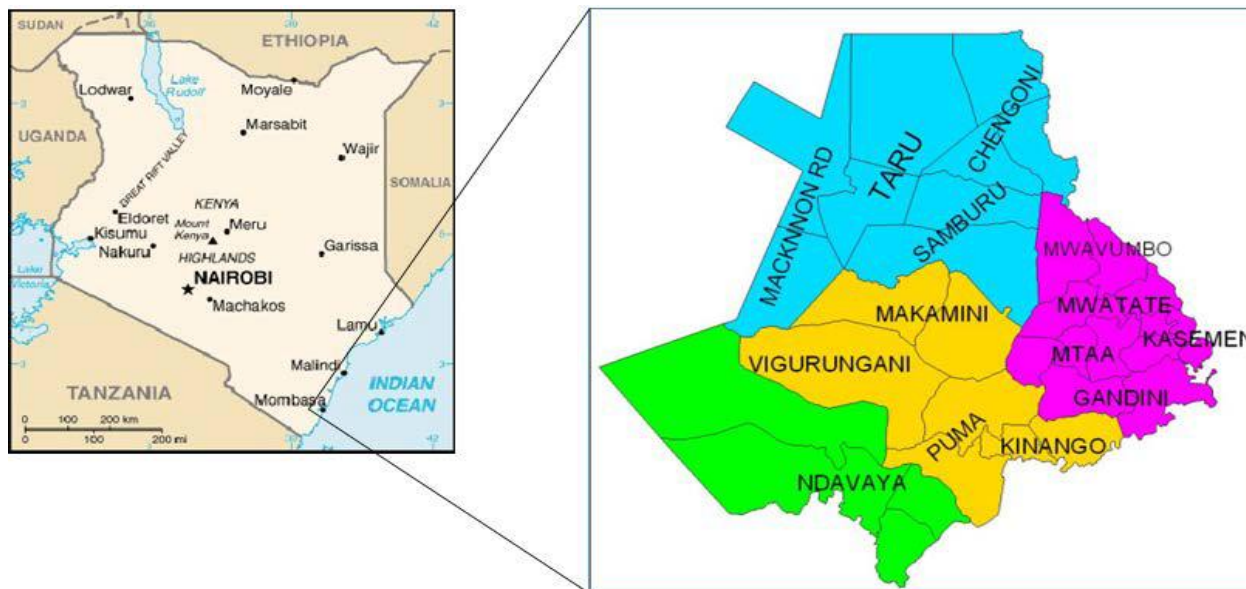


Figure 2.1: Map of Kwale County, Kasemeni Ward, Kenya. Source : (Makoti and Waswa, 2015)

It is a constituency that borders Lunga Lunga constituency to the South and Matuga Constituency to the south east. The total population of females is 132,796 (County Government of Kwale, 2013). It is an arid and semi-arid zone where the community depends on livestock for nutrition, employment and income (Ibid).

The study adopted a descriptive research design. The overall sample size was determined by Fisher *et al.* (1991) formula for an infinite population sample size determination.

$$n = (Z^2 pq) / d^2 \dots \dots \dots (i)$$

Where:

n = sample size

Z= the standard normal deviate at the required confidence level (1.96)

p= the proportion in the target population estimated to have characteristics being measured

q = 1.0-p

d= the level of statistical significance set at (0.05)

A sample size of 384 women was established, however, 370 respondents accepted to participate which comprised 96.4% of the targeted sample. Kinango Sub-County (Kasemeni Ward) has a total of 7 sub locations namely: Chigato, Mazeras, Mabesheni, Mtaa, Bofu, Mnyenzi, and Mwamdudu. The sample size for each stratum was determined by the following formular:

$$W = \{n/N\} * \text{overall sample size} \dots \dots \dots (ii)$$

Where:

W = sample size for each stratum

n= total population for each stratum

N = total population of Kinango Sub-County (Kasemeni Ward)

However, with the 370 respondents which participated in the research, the following sample was established in each sub-location. Chigato (56), Mazeras (77), Mabesheni (27), Mtaa (47), Bofu (45), Mnyenzi (96), Mwamdudu (22).

Cluster sampling procedure was adopted to determine the number of households selected for the study. All sub locations in Kinango Sub-County (Kasemeni Ward) were considered as clusters and were all selected for the study. With the assistance of local government administration, a list of households names (the sampling frame) in each cluster (sub locations) was compiled. Simple random process was then employed to select the sample size of the households in each cluster. The names of the households in each cluster was assigned numbers. Then, a table of random number generator was used to produce the list of numbers required for the study. The names of the households coinciding with the sample size number generated were then selected to participate in the study.

### 2.1 Data collection

Data collection was conducted through administration of questionnaires. The questionnaires were administered by one on one basis in a semi structured interview between the researcher and the respondent. Data collected included the demographic characteristics of the respondents and factors affecting their participation on livelihood development activities.

### 2.2. Data analyses

Data analysis was done using Statistical package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Percentages were used to describe age distribution, level of education and religion affiliation of women. Correlation analysis was used to determine significant association between development activities and factors hindering women from participation on the development activities.

## 3. Results and discussion

### 3.1 Demographic characteristics of women in Kinango Sub-County (Kasemeni Ward)

**Table 3. 1: Age distribution of women**

Age bracket	Frequency	Percent (%)
18-24 Years	97	26.2
25-31 Years	125	33.8
32-38 Years	79	21.4
39-45 Years	51	13.8
46-52 Years	6	1.6
53+ Years	12	3.2
Total	370	100.0

Kasemeni Ward is highly composed of young adult women whom majority (33.8%) belongs to the age group of 25-30 years, followed by 26.2% of 18-24 and 21.4% of 32-38 years cohort, respectively (Table 3.1). However, this is contrary to the age group distribution of women in developed countries. Risteska and Raleva (2012) observed that the majority (21.9%) of rural women in Switzerland belongs to the cohort of 40-49 years. The age group distribution of women in Kasemeni Ward symbolizes the demographic characteristics of developing countries where the majority population is composed of young people (Coast, 2002).

The education level of women shows that majority (70%) have acquired primary education (Fig 3.1). According to the report of Commission of Revenue Allocation (2011), 70.5% of Kwale County population had achieved primary level of education while 6.3% had secondary level of education. Similar trend is observed in Kasemeni Ward which is part of Kwale County thus justifying the findings made in this study. Globally, the Labour Force Survey (2010) in the Republic of Kosovo also confirmed similar findings where majority (46%) of rural women have attained elementary level of education. On religion affiliation, 60% of women have Islamic faith while 40% have Christianity faith (Figure 3.1).

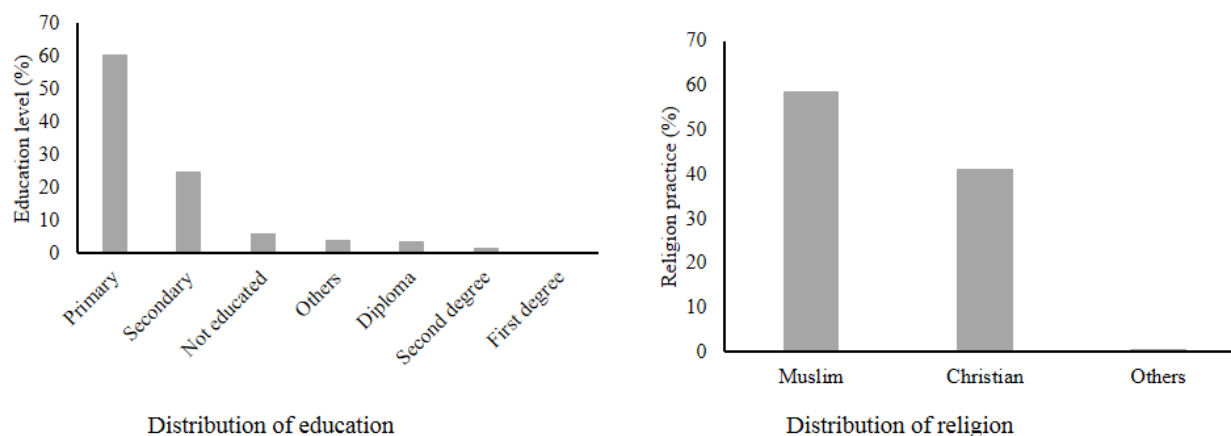


Figure 3.1: Distribution of levels of education and religion on women in Kasemeni Ward

This may be attributed by the arrival of Arab traders in the Kenyan coast line. Lodhi (1994) showed that Arab traders arrived in the East African Coast which resulted to the spreading of Islamic religion in the region and extended to the interior after 1729 on arrival of Portuguese. Consequently, the Islamic based faith has more followers compared to Christianity.

### 3.2 Factors hindering women participation in livelihood development activities

#### 3.2.1 Land Ownership

Lack of formal education ( $P = 0.022$ ), religion ( $P = 0.001$ ), tradition and culture ( $P = 0.001$ ), and inferiority of women position ( $P = 0.001$ ) were the key factors limiting women from acquisition of land properties (Table 3.2).

**Table 3.2: Factors hindering women participation in land ownership**

	Land ownership		
Spearman's rho	Correlation Coefficient	Sig. (1-tailed)	N
Lack of formal education	-.104*	.022	370
Religion	-.241**	.000	370
Tradition and culture	.209**	.000	370
Poverty	.059	.127	370
Individual Attitude	.044	.197	370
Inferiority of women position	.207**	.000	370
Assigning specific tasks for women	-.077	.071	370

With the elementary level of education as observed above, women in the study area may have limited knowledge of property ownership rights. Additionally, under the traditional and cultural perspective, women have been viewed as domestic workers (Risteska and Raleva, 2012). This has resulted to their low involvement in other development activities (Ibid). Coupling with the inferiority position in Africa, the inheritance of property especially land is mostly through patrilineal lineage which is a customary tradition that denies women from land accessibility (Kuusana *et al*, 2013).

#### 3.2.2 Livestock ownership

Despite the fact that livestock has been described as an asset that can be easily owned by women, this ownership is however restrained due to several factors (Njuki and Sanginga, 2013). The key factors observed to hinder women from participating in livestock ownership in Kasemeni Ward were lack of formal education ( $P = 0.001$ ), poverty ( $P = 0.001$ ), individual attitude ( $P=0.005$ ) and inferiority position of women ( $P = 0.001$ , Table 3.3).

**Table 3.3: Factors hindering women participation in livestock ownership**

	Livestock ownership		
	Correlation Coefficient	Sig. (1-tailed)	N
Spearman's rho			
Lack of education	-.203**	.000	370
Religion	-.119*	.011	370
Tradition and culture	-.059	.130	370
Poverty	-.269**	.000	370
Individual Attitude	.133**	.005	370
Inferiority of women position	.279**	.000	370
Assigning specific tasks for women	.012	.408	370

Njuki and Sangina (2013a) noted that due to limited access of information triggered by lack of formal education among women, inaccessibility of land, water and credit facilities, livestock production has been a challenge for women.

### 3.2.3 Credit facilities accessibility

Credit services are viewed as tools for effective empowerment of women in terms of development (Bezboruah and Pillai, 2013). Accessibility of the credit services has resulted to growth of self help groups which is fundamental for women development (Pathak and Pant, 2018). In Kasemeni Ward, however, the credit service accessibility among women is restrained as a result of poor formal education (P= 0.001), tradition and culture (P = 0.001), poverty (P = 0.001), individual attitude (P = 0.001), inferiority position of women (P = 0.001), and assignment of specific tasks for women (P = 0.001, Table 3.4).

Table 3.4: Factors hindering women participation in credit facilities accessibility

	Bank facilities		
	Correlation Coefficient	Sig. (1-tailed)	N
Spearman's rho			
Lack of education	-.381**	.000	370
Religion	.000	.500	370
Tradition and culture	-.204**	.000	370
Poverty	-.310**	.000	370
Individual Attitude	.184**	.000	370
Inferiority of women position	.220**	.000	370
Assigning specific tasks for women	.243**	.000	370

Individual attitude in this study refers to women who are not determined in accessing the bank facilities. This may be due to the physical location of the bank facilities which tend to be distant from the rural communities (County Government of Kwale, 2013). In addition, household responsibilities may preoccupy women time thus distracting them from accessing the facilities (Njuki and Sangina, 2013b). Poverty is attributed to lack of employment and education thus lack of sufficient income to enable savings in the bank facilities. Biased lending practices for women in this credit facilities is a challenge as some institutions consider them minor, less experienced and less attractive clients (Fletschener & Kenney, 2011). Tradition and culture is also a challenge as some women are strictly tied down by socially accepted norms and behaviors and their roles in the society (Ibid).

### 3.2.4 Decision making

This study found that inferiority of women position (P = 0.001) and assignment of specific tasks for women (P = 0.013) were the important factors hindering women from participation in decision making (Table 3.5).

**Table 3.5: Factors hindering women participation in decision making**

Spearman's rho	Bank facilities		
	Correlation Coefficient	Sig. (1-tailed)	N
Lack of education	.027	.301	370
Religion	.050	.166	370
Tradition and culture	-.031	.276	370
Poverty	.070	.089	370
Individual Attitude	.012	.406	370
Inferiority of women position	-.278**	.000	370
Assigning specific tasks for women	.116*	.013	370

Inferiority position of women affects decision making in women as they are considered to be ruled by men who mostly make all the decisions. Specific tasks assigned to women make it difficult to make decisions. Women task perception means that the fact that being a woman in itself denies a woman a chance to participate in decision making position (Meaza, 2009). Risteska and Raleva (2012) made similar observations where women especially rural based are denied the opportunity to participate in development activities by being excluded in important decision making process.

### 3.2.5 Leadership

Significant correlations were observed between religion ( $P=0.025$ ) and inferiority view of women ( $P=0.007$ ) against leadership (Table 3.6).

**Table 3.6: Factors of women participation in leadership**

Spearman's rho	Bank facilities		
	Correlation Coefficient	Sig. (1-tailed)	N
Lack of education	-.047	.181	370
Religion	.102*	.025	370
Tradition and culture	.037	.241	370
Poverty	.073	.082	370
Individual Attitude	.004	.469	370
Inferiority of women position	-.126**	.007	370
Assigning specific tasks for women	-.071	.087	370

Inferiority position of women is a factor that symbolizes patriarchal nature of the society, therefore, denies women to take up honored and utilitarian roles such as leadership (Hora, 2014). Hora (2014) also observed that the leadership position in religion perspectives viewed as men's task. The ideology of women to be considered as domestic workers has hampered their participation in leadership role (Lovenduski, 2000).

### 3.2.6 Employment

Employment is an indicator of economic empowerment particularly in women which is well known for its capacity to achieve and widen developmental goals (Golla et al., 2011). The attainment of employment, however, is still a challenge among many women globally (Sarkar et al., 2017). Accordingly, Kasemeni Ward experience similar challenges. Lack of education ( $P=0.001$ ), individual attitudes ( $P=0.009$ ), and assignment of specific tasks for women ( $P=0.006$ ) were the key challenges to employment accessibility in the study area (Table 3.7).

**Table 3.7: Factors of women participation in employment**

Spearman's rho	Bank facilities		
	Correlation Coefficient	Sig. (1-tailed)	N
Lack of education	.319**	.000	370
Religion	-.027	.303	370
Tradition and culture	.046	.187	370
Poverty	.082	.057	370
Individual Attitude	-.123**	.009	370
Inferiority of women position	.000	.498	370
Assigning specific tasks for women	-.132**	.006	370

Sarkar et al. (2017) observed that women tend to pull out from working when a member of their family receive a salary increment. This clearly explains the attitude among women towards working. In addition, lack of education limits women from accessing employment opportunities (ILO, 2016). Individual attitude coupling with the assignment of specific tasks restrain women from seeking employment. Sultan (2013) also observed that social attitude is one of the factors which negatively affects employment in women. This is linked with the perception of specific tasks assigned to women including reproductive roles and secondary earners, therefore, not fully committed towards working (ILO, 2016).

**Conclusion**

Kasemeni Ward in Kwale County, Kenya is characterized by high number of women with elementary level of education. Majority of them are working age groups who could be productive in development. However, their participation in developmental activities is limited due to several challenges. These include low level of education attainment, negative aspects of cultural traditions, inferiority view of women, negative individual attitudes as well as the ideology that there are specific roles for women. Consequently, there is minimal participation of women in developmental activities particularly in land ownership, livestock ownership, credit service accessibility, decision making, leadership and employment. Therefore, there is need for more sensitization of the community on the importance of educating a woman and the need for women inclusiveness in developmental activities.

**Acknowledgement**

We are indebted for the generous support provided by the Kenya Coastal Development Project (KCDP) which made possible for the completion of this research. To all those who participated in this research, we are grateful for your assistance.

**References**

Basic Education Coalition. (2004). *Teach a child transform a Nation*. Washington DC: Basic Education Coalition.

Bezboruah, K., & Pillai, V. (2013). *Assessing the Participation of Women in Microfinance Institutions – Evidence from a Multi-National Study*. *Journal of Social Service Research*, 18.

Carney, D. (1998). *Implementing the Sustainable Rural Livelihoods: What Contribution Can We Make?* Department of International Development. Northingham: Russell Press Ltd.

Coast, E. (2002). *Population Trends in Developing Countries*. In V. a. Desai, *The Arnold Companion to Development Studies* (pp. 360-367). London: Hodder Arnold.

Commission of Revenue Allocation. (2011). *Kenya County Fact Sheets*. Nairobi, Kenya: Government of Kenya.

County Government of Kwale. (2013). *First Intergrated Development Plan*. Nairobi: Republic of Kenya.

Fisher, A., Laing, J., & Townsend, J. (1991). *Handbook for Family Planning Operations: Research Design* 2nd Ed. New York: Population Council.

Fletschener, D., & Kenney, L. (2011, March). *Rural women's access to financial services: credit, savings and insurance*. *Agricultural Development Economics (ESA)*, 11(07), 1-28.

- Golla, A. M., Malhotra, A., Nanda, P., & Mehra, R. (2011). *Understanding and Measuring Women's Economic Empowerment: Definition, Framework and Indicators*. New Delhi: International Center for Research on Women.
- Hoare, J. G. (2009). *Women Leadership and participation*. Warwick: oxfam GB.
- Hora, E. (2014). Factors that affect Women Participation in Leadership and Decision Making Position. *Asian Journal of Humanity, Art and Literature*, 1(2), 97-118.
- ILO. (2016). *Factor's Affecting Women's Labour Force Participation in Sri Lanka*. Sri Lanka: international Labour Organisation.
- International Center for Research on Women. (2005). *Property Ownership for Women, Enriches, Empowers and Protects*. Washington DC: International Center for Research on Women.
- International Finance Corporation. (2013). *Investing in Women's Employment: Good for Business, Good for Development*. Washington D.C: World Bank Group.
- Jiggins, J. (1989). How poor women earn income in Sub-saharan Africa and what works against them. *World Development*, 17(7), 953-963.
- King, E., & Lomborg, B. (2008). *Women and Development*. Copenhagen: Copenhagen Consensus Center.
- KNBS. (2013). *Exploring Kenyas Inequality: Pooling Apart or Pooling Together?* Nairobi: Kenya National Bureau of Statistics.
- Kuusana, E. D., Kidido, J. K., & Adam, E. H. (2013). Customary land Ownership and Gender Disparity: Evidence from the Wa Municipality of Ghana. *GJDS*, 10(1 & 2), 63-80.
- Labour Force Survey. (2010). *Social Statistics*. Republic of Kosovo: Statistical Office of Kosovo.
- Lodhi, A. Y. (1994). Muslims in Eastern Africa: Their Past and Present. *Nordic Journal of African Studies*, 88-98.
- Lovenduski, J. (2000). *Feminizing Politics*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Makoti, A., & Waswa, F. (2015). Rural community coping strategies with drought-driven food insecurity in Kwale County, Kenya. *Journal of Food Security*, 3(3), 87-93.
- Meaza, A. (2009). *Factors affecting Women Participation in Politics and Decision Making*.
- Njuki, J., & Sanginga, P. (2013a). *Women, Livestock Ownership and Markets*. Canada: Routledge.
- Njuki, J., & Sanginga, P. C. (2013b). Gender and livestock: Key issues, challenges and opportunities. In J. Njuki, & P. C. Sanginga, *Women, livestock ownership and markets* (pp. 1-8). New York: Routledge.
- Pathak, P., & Pant, V. (2018). An assessment of bank credit literacy, accessibility and service quality among women self help groups. *Academy of Entrepreneurship Journal*, 4(1), 13.
- Risteska, M., & Raleva, A. M. (2012). *Perspectives of women in rural areas: Baseline study of the status and livelihoods of women in rural areas and recommendations for gender responsive policy responses*. Switzerland: Center for Research and Policy Making.
- Sarkar, S., Sahoo, S., & Klasen, S. (2017). *Employment Transitions of Women in India: A Panel Analysis*. Germany: IZA Institute of Labor Economics.
- Suda, C. (2002). Gender Disparities in the Kenyan Labour Market: Implications for Poverty Reduction. *Nordic Journal of African Studies*, 11(3), 301-321.
- Sultan, A. M. (2013). Constraints faced by Working and Non-Working in their Families. *Australian Journal of Basic and Applied Sciences*, 7(6), 719-722.
- UNECA. (2007). *Women Access to Land and Credit: Discussions and Key Findings of the African Gender Development Index in Selected African Countries*. Ethiopia: United Nations Economic Commissions for Africa.
- United Nations, (2009). *2009 World Survey of Women's role in development; Women's control over economic resources and access to financial resources including microfinance*. New York: United Nations.