

DETERMINANTS OF GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS' PROJECTS IN MERU COUNTY: A CASE OF COMPASSION INTERNATIONAL ASSISTED PROJECT

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©2017

**International Academic Journal of Information Sciences and Project Management
(IAJISPM) | ISSN 2519-7711**

Received: 24th November 2017

Accepted: 27th November 2017

Full Length Research

Available Online at:

http://www.iajournals.org/articles/iajispm_v2_i2_181_198.pdf

Citation: Mungania, P. K. & Luketero, S. W. (2017). Determinants of gender mainstreaming in non-governmental organisations' projects in Meru County: A case of compassion international assisted project. *International Academic Journal of Information Sciences and Project Management*, 2(2), 181-198

ABSTRACT

Gender mainstreaming is a practice and concept that is contested yet a mandatory requirement that has been accepted by both international and government organizations. The purpose of this study was to investigate the determinants of gender mainstreaming in development projects with reference to Compassion International assisted projects. This study was based on Broad-based Participation and Consultation model and Alternate Approach model theory. The proposed study was modeled on a descriptive design. The study targeted the 703 respondents that are served by Compassion International Kenya Meru County. Data was collected both from primary and secondary source. The main instrument was questionnaire. A sample size of 240 respondents drawn from a targeted population of 703 formed the sample size for the study. The research employed self-administered questionnaires to collect data. The data was processed and analyzed using statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) version 22. Descriptive statistics and binary logistic regression were used for analysis. The results are presented in summary reports and tables. All the respondents indicated that there is written gender equality policy. Socio-cultural practices and historical factors were found to be significant determinants of gender mainstreaming in Compassion International. Gender mainstreaming requires a need to build up the necessary gender knowledge among all policy-makers and learning

processes to develop the capacity to put mainstreaming strategies into practice. The study recommends action has been taken to promote change in cultural practices and values and these include; changes in the law particularly, with regard to inheritance, property ownership and marriage, public education campaigns, and program redesign which entails incorporation of gender equality themes in HIV/AIDS prevention initiatives, policy makers need to come up with a curriculum that include gender issues for purpose of sensitizing the community on the cultural barriers which hinder gender mainstreaming. The study also recommends eliminating discrimination in employment, civil status, public life, education, healthcare, and various aspects of women's social and economic life, as the first step toward gender mainstreaming. Another recommendation is that every project manager in Compassion International should engage a gender expert to steer and advise on gender-related aspects in the project and educate employees on the various details with regard to equality. Finally, the study recommends existing gender committees in Compassion International in liaison with the external organizations that deal with gender, social development and children affairs to hold regular workshops to sensitize as many stakeholders as possible and promote public awareness on gender issues in development.

Key Words: *gender mainstreaming, non-governmental organisations' projects, Meru County, compassion international assisted project*

INTRODUCTION

Gender mainstreaming is a practice and concept that is contested yet, a mandatory requirement that has been accepted by both international and government organizations. Recognition of the significance of gender equality is a recent and satisfying goal sought across many avenues globally and international development practice (UN Women, 2014). Gender mainstreaming can be explained as the re-branding, re-invention and restructuring of an essential feminism part in the modern era (Walby, 2004). During the promotion of the Beijing Platform for Action strategy from the United Nations 4th global conference on Women in Beijing in 1995: Gender mainstreaming, it was established that inequality between men and women is unacceptable. As elaborated in the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) agreed conclusions from 1997, the United Nations defined gender mainstreaming as, "... the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality." (United Nations, 2002).

In a nutshell, gender mainstreaming means that gender equality is embraced in its entirety as part of common policies. Gender inequality issues need to be dealt with in every aspect of programming and organizational structure instead of them being an isolated, add-on activity (Ravindran & Kelkar-Khambete, 2007). Over the decades, awareness and commitment in regard to gender mainstreaming has been on the rise. The term gender means the state of being either male or female. Gender defines and characterizes all human beings in society and is distinguished by physical/biological and sexual/ reproductive differences. The term 'gender' has however, increasingly acquired a social meaning where it defines how males and the females relate in society. The social meaning of "gender" refers to prescribed social norms and roles based on a person's sex (Mehra & Gupta, 2006).

However, McCall (2005) argues that no particular gender should make decisions based on stereotypical roles. Thus, people should not have to abide by gender expectations. Hence, as addressed by UNESCO (2000), equality exists when both men and women are able to: share power and influence equally, have equal opportunities for financial independence through work or via business, can access equal right to education and the opportunity to develop personal ambitions, interest and talents, and where children are free from coercion, intimidation and gender based violence both at work and at home.

Globally, women have suffered numerous disadvantages based on socially imposed factors such as culture and religion. These disadvantages vary depending on country or region sadly; women and girls from developing countries have relentlessly endured the repercussions of gender based

prejudice for ages (Grigorian, 2007). Gender mainstreaming has provided opportunities for many people living in developing countries. Asian countries such as South Korea, India, Japan, Thailand and China have embraced gender mainstreaming and it has proven to be an essential driving force aimed at motivating both women and men to find a diplomatic mechanism to work as a unit so as to overcome challenges (Grigorian, 2007).

In South Korea, the gender mainstreaming movement was accepted as a fundamental strategy for achieving women's empowerment followed by the issuing of the Gender Mainstreaming in the Platform for Action Statement at the 4th World Conference on Women held in Beijing in 1995 by the United Nations (Lee, 2016). In Russia, issues with regard to gender particularly, if taken in the aspect of women's empowerment and overcoming discriminatory global perceptions of lower social status accorded to women, as well as questions that pertain to culture, belong to the periphery of the general population and political interests and awareness. However, in Russia, issues with regard to gender and culture tend to compound. In the general sense, Russia has been plagued by professional and educational segregation as pertains to women, lower female salary levels, women significantly under-represented in decision-making and the overall gender asymmetry, more often than not, these issues are pertinent to the cultural sector (Fedorova, Savitskaya, & Yakovleva, 2016).

In 1941, equal rights and gender parity of women for creativity were recognized and respected within the educated circles in Europe as women fought for liberation from domestic labor, equal rights to get educated, improvements in women's living standards and abolition of domestic slavery. Gender roles and careers are assigned by the society and these roles often reflect the cultural, economic, religious, and political teachings and beliefs of a particular society (Ravindran & Kelkar-Khambete, 2007).

Despite gender roles being standard in many cultures, role attribution differs from culture to culture. Gender roles have certain dynamic characteristics and these are; they change over time, they are learned behavior, and they differ between cultures. Consequently, due to differing cultural attribution as pertains gender roles, gender mainstreaming becomes necessary to ensure gender equality considerations and perspectives become a norm (UNESCO, 2015).

There is no hope of obliterating poverty without significant and rapid improvements to the lives of girls and women globally (Ravindran, 2007). Unfortunately women make up 70% of the world's poorest individuals indicating the dire need to empower them (Canadian Council for International Co-operation, 2015). Women are relegated to the most precarious and lowest paying jobs due to unequal power relations and unpaid labor which often goes undervalued and unrecognized, especially domestically. Furthermore, women still experience exclusion socially, politically and economically with their limited voice unlikely to influence any decision-making power both domestically and at work. Globally, women between ages 15 to 24 are at higher risk of; contracting HIV, suffering due to unintended early pregnancy, and experiencing violence in

addition to having their needs in regard to reproductive health ignored (Ravindran & Kelkar-Khambete, 2007).

In 2013, only a mere 3% of all aid worldwide was used on projects mainly aimed at women's right and gender equality advancement. Organizations and institutions primarily aimed at helping women such as UN Women, receive a disappointing sum of less than 0.3% of all Official Development Assistance (ODA). The total annual income combined of independent women's organizations globally, is a meager USD\$106 million (Canadian Council for International Co-operation, 2015).

Globally, only 1-2% of Canada's aid budget is specifically allocated to aid programs that advance women empowerment and gender equality. Despite more women graduating from university, getting into new professions, and running for public office in Canada than experienced in yester-years, access to economic opportunities, political leadership, and job security has been regressing additionally; abuse towards women remains unchecked (Canadian Council for International Co-operation, 2015).

In Liberia, women are seen as victims of war as they immensely suffered from intensified violence and workload during the 1989-2003 civil wars. Gender mainstreaming in Liberia has been a slow but progressive effort as women struggle to fight victimization brought about by continued physical and sexual abuse, lack of education for adolescent girls, loss of economic assets, as well as denial of access to infrastructure systems. However, Ellen Sirleaff Johnson who is Africa's first female president and current Liberian president has been working closely with international organizations in a bid to abolish victimization due to gender and encourage mainstreaming in various avenues. She has partnered with Michelle Obama on her "Let Girls Learn" global initiative to ensure girls have an equal opportunity to access quality education as their male counterparts in rural and urban Liberia and pursue their dreams (United Nations Mission in Liberia, 2010).

In Kenya, all organizations are mandated to ensure gender analysis is integral in all its activities, strategies are developed to ensure there is capacity for gender mainstreaming, and gender equality is a fundamental element of policy dialogue with stakeholders. Though strides are being made to bridge the gap between gender inequalities in the country, disparities are still seen in some areas such as: economic, political, education, and health fields as well as access to infrastructure systems, land ownership and an apparent lack of job security (Okumu, 2012).

Attainment of gender equality demands: recognition that economic, social, political and cultural systems are gender sensitive which is crucial so as to incorporate both men and women priorities, specificity and values into all major institutions. In 1976, the Kenyan government established the Women's Bureau in the department of Social Services. In 2007, Ministry of Gender, Sports, Culture and Social Services now known as Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Development, was created. It is mandated to spearhead mainstreaming of gender in public

policy, plans and programmes by playing an advisory role to all ministries and state corporations to ensure gender mainstreaming is appropriately done at all levels (Frosina & Mwaura, 2016).

Despite inclusion of women in science, technology and innovation fields serving as key actors, beneficiaries and drivers of technological innovation, their inclusion is yet to reach parity as compared to their male counterparts. Lack of equality can be attributed to systemic barriers that marginalize women within society, learning institutions, and formal economy roles. However, the government of Kenya has taken steps in ensuring these barriers are completely removed so as to allow inclusion and equality of women in the thriving economy. The Kenyan government has been keen on the empowerment of women by enactment of a new national policy framework meant to advance gender equality. The 2010 Kenyan Constitution is the cornerstone of this framework where equality for all is reaffirmed and a quota for female representation in the Kenyan government is mandated. In 2011, a new gender policy was passed by the Government, which is the chief policy statement that outlines efforts by the government to ensure gender mainstreaming and equality (Frosina & Mwaura, 2016).

Compassion International

Compassion International is a nonprofit organization began in 1952 and registered in twenty-six countries in Asia, Africa, Central America, North America, South America and the Caribbean. Compassion International Kenya started in 1980 and has since spread to various parts of the country. Compassion International is a Christian based organization providing aid to more than 1.3 million children across the globe. Compassion International Kenya has helped many poor children from various regions around the country. In Meru County, Compassion International has been instrumental in helping the poor have access to better health, training and education programs through sponsorship programs. The organization's mission is to sponsor 3.6 million children by 2020 (Compassion International, 2015).

Compassion International has championed equal education to all, empowerment of the girl child, and employment opportunities for all. The Kenyan constitution prohibits all forms of discrimination including violence against women and any customary law such as Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) that perpetuates such acts or takes power away from the female gender and compassion International has been a loyal advocate Therefore, affirmative action measures through programmes and policies are important in breaking the historical injustices that women have faced. Affirmative action policies and programmes will significantly aid in bridging the poverty gap between men and women. The establishment of a Kenya National Human Rights and Equality Commission enhances the framework for the promotion of gender equality and equity and in coordinating gender mainstreaming in national development (Constitution of Kenya(2010) Article 59).

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Despite policy measures being taken into account, disparities for women who make up a majority 51% of the Kenyan populations still exist. Kenya was ranked 48th out of 148 countries in the 2015 Global Gender Gap Report, attaining a score of 0.719, with 1.0 being a representative figure of full equality. In a different survey, Kenya was ranked first in the 2014 UNDP Gender Inequality Index, amongst Low Human Development Countries for gender equality with an impressive value of 0.552 and was ranked 126 overall (Frosina & Mwaura, 2016). These indexes are an indication that Kenya is more progressive as compared to most African countries, however, there is a lot of room for development. Policies have been formulated though they remain ineffective if not properly implemented. Gender mainstreaming remains a top priority agenda for all organizations involved in humanitarian work. Radical change is not achieved overnight; feminists need to continue fighting to challenge both the government and other NGOs to adopt strategies which focus on full redistribution of power for both men and women. However, for women and men to achieve economic, political, educational, and civil equality, the environment is either a hindrance or a source of empowerment. Cultural practices also play a huge role in gender equality. As the Kenyan Government strives to spearhead implementation of these policies and creation of other corresponding policies so as to fully implement the constitution and other strategies in relation to gender mainstreaming, it is imperative that every citizen bears in mind the restraints deterring this goal. Hence, the reason for the study as the researcher seeks to establish factors influencing gender mainstreaming in Compassion International Assisted Projects in Meru County.

GENERAL OBJECTIVE

The purpose of this study was to investigate the determinants of gender mainstreaming in Compassion International Assisted Projects in Meru County system to ensure gender mainstreaming.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

1. To establish the influence of socio-cultural practices on gender mainstreaming in Compassion International assisted projects.
2. To examine the influence of socio-economic factors on gender mainstreaming in Compassion International assisted projects.
3. To determine the influence of historical factors on gender mainstreaming in Compassion International assisted projects.
4. To investigate the influence of organisational procedures on gender mainstreaming in Compassion International assisted projects.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study was based on Broad-based participation consultation model and alternate approach model.

Broad-Based Participation Consultation Model

Broad-based participation consultation model deals with involving of an array of organizations, communities, and individuals in order to accomplish gender mainstreaming. Gender mainstreaming is a collaborative activity whereby actors who do not have a privileged policy arena, are given a voice to share their concerns. Participation not only deals with consultation and establishment of partnership between two or more interests, it unites a common interest. Participation offers every individual a platform and opportunity to be heard and respected (Kirima, 2012).

Participation also results in; delivering of appropriate and relevant services as it is every citizen's right to be given an opportunity to participate in making of decisions, ensuring every individual is well informed about current affairs, making sure developmental issues truly reflect the people's immediate needs and wishes, a mechanism for conflict resolution is provided, and every individual is given a sense of ownership in policy development and coming up with initiatives (Schalkwyk, 2015).

Governance becomes more complex every day therefore; there is greater need for involving every individual by providing the right to participate in the decision-making process. With regard to gender mainstreaming, every organization, government, and society whole needs to support gender equality. Unity accelerates implementation as each partner becomes an important player. This model is important in this particular study as it helps to understand that gender mainstreaming requires stakeholders and partners' participation through consultation (Kirima, 2012).

Alternate Approach Model Theory

The alternate approach model is based on fundamental ideas that implementation of gender mainstreaming needs new perspectives, knowledge, innovative ways of project facilitation and employing of current methodologies so as to improve operations. This means that gender mainstreaming is refocused in operations based on the experiences of implementation. The alternate operation model emphasizes that gender mainstreaming can be successful if strategies and policies are re-examined (Kirima, 2012).

This model requires actors to be strategic at every stage of the development process. The first step is establishment of the development issue that needs to be worked on. It needs identification and subsequent acting on the opportunity that is most likely to yield tangible results to the target population. One main advantage of this approach is that gender mainstreaming issue is already

relevant. It requires neither approval nor effort in convincing stakeholders of its importance. Another main advantage of the strategic approach is that it facilitates in ordering of priorities for gender-based input as well as intervention (Lee, 2016).

The issue is then selected and gender expertise is required to lay out a course of action. The gender expert should specialize in the sector so that they can gain credibility with sector specialists. The course of action is then determined in line with the broader operational goals and the expert is required to offer technical assistance with regard to mainstreaming project affairs. Gender experts are required to design monitoring and evaluation systems and to document outcomes. After the completion of the project, gender expertise is required for documenting results strategically and effectively. The documentation is crucial for filling the existing gap in knowledge of gender mainstreaming operations (Kirima, 2012).

Appropriate finances are then allocated for the completion of the projects and ensuring that resources are available to fund components and activities deemed crucial for the success of gender mainstreaming. The finances are also required to ensure the necessary expertise is available for the operations. As gender mainstreaming becomes successful, accountability is very important and outcome indicators are needed to assess whether the project goals have been met and the extent at which the social and economic conditions and well-being of target populations have improved. Ultimately, leadership is the most important and critical aspects of the model to garner the resources required and ensure that gender mainstreaming projects are carried out effectively (Kirima, 2012).

The researcher is making use of these models as they integrate all the necessary elements required for effective gender mainstreaming. The models are vital for the study's theoretical framework to outline and analyze the expected results as pertains to gender mainstreaming. The models have been selected as they outline better framework for analyzing factors that affect gender mainstreaming in Non-Governmental organizations.

RESEARCH GAP

The researcher wishes to bridge the gap between policy and practice in advancing gender equality in informal urban settlements and rural areas where Compassion Assisted Projects are located. Gender disparities remain high in relation to access of education for girls, participation of women in decision-making, economic divisions based on gender, and underlying cultural and religious attitudes, especially in rural areas and informal urban settlements. It is in this regard that the researcher seeks to bridge the gap in terms of meeting commitment on gender equality and women empowerment.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The research adopted a descriptive survey design. In descriptive research study, one needs to define clearly what he is to measure and provide clear definition of the target population providing adequate methods of measure. The descriptive research design assisted the researcher to find out the determinant of gender mainstreaming in Compassion International Assisted Projects by use of the questionnaires, interviews and observations.

Target Population

The study targeted the following 703 respondents that are served by Compassion Kenya Meru County.

Sample Size Formula for Population

Sampling was done by the researcher to determine the members or items of the target population that were included in the study. A combination of cluster and then simple random sampling method were used. The projects were categorised into clusters of similar nature then simple random sampling was used to select the respondent projects. This helped in determining the probability of each elementary unit of each category of the population which was chosen hence, increasing the possibility of collective representation and accuracy. The sample size was 240.

Data Collection Instruments and Procedure

Data was collected both from primary and secondary source. The main instrument used was the questionnaire. Secondary data was collected through desk studies, from publication and honorary. The questionnaire was hand delivered and collected after a few days. Both open-ended and closed questions were used. Questions were clearly phrased in order to make clear dimension along with respondent to analyze. With regard to open-ended questions, space was provided for respondent to express their feeling. Closed-ended questions were used to ensure that the given answers were relevant.

Validity of Research Instruments

The researcher looked into content validity of the research instruments through constant consultations with supervisors from University of Nairobi with respect to variables and tests. Consultations also assisted the researcher in making modifications to the structure of research tools as advised by experts. Construct was achieved through checking on adequacy of the operational definition of variables by checking on clarity, vagueness and quality of instructions in the questionnaires. Face validity was established by skimming through the surface of the research instruments; it involved the application of a subjective and subjective overview of the questionnaire by the researcher's supervisor.

Reliability of Research Instruments

The study adopted internal consistency procedure, through which the researcher used Cronbach Alpha to check the reliability of instruments that was used in the study. To check reliability of the research instruments, the researcher conducted a pilot study on a total of 24 respondents from different strata in main sample size. The results of the pilot study were discussed with experts and supervisors from University of Nairobi to come to a conclusion on the reliability of the research instruments. Alpha values range from 0 to 1 and a co-efficient of 0.7 is acceptable with 0.8 and or higher indicating good reliability of the instruments.

Pilot Test

The researcher conducted a pilot study to address any unclear and or ambiguous items in the research instruments. By conducting a pilot study, the researcher examined the feasibility of the intended approach that the researcher used in the main study. The first step done when conducting the pilot study was involving selection and recruitment of participants by employing convenience sampling. The next step was administering the research instrument (questionnaire) to the 24 pilot participants. Data entry and analysis was done and results were discussed with supervisor for ironing of errors and spotting of weaknesses in the research instruments.

Data Analysis Procedure

The researcher sorted, edited, coded and analyzed primary data collected so as to ensure that errors and points of contradiction were eliminated. Quantitative data for each research question was also tabulated for purposes of providing the researcher with a comprehensive picture of how the data was to look like and also assisted the researcher in identifying patterns. For reliable analysis, SPSS version 22.0 was used to analyze collected data and was presented using descriptive statistic such as frequencies, mean, variance and standard deviation. Results of the analysis made it easy for the researcher to make valid conclusions on the topic of study. Content analysis was used to analyze data from open ended questions and the results from this analysis were presented in themes as per the study's objectives. Frequencies and percentages were used to summarize information.

The researcher used a multivariate regression model to determine the relationship between the four variables and their relationship to the topic under study. This is an adjustable method of data analysis that is appropriate in the occasion that the researcher seeks to examine the relationship between the dependent variable any other factors. Functions for the regression model are presented as:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1X_1 + \varepsilon$$

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_2X_2 + \varepsilon$$

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_3X_3 + \varepsilon$$

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_4X_4 + \varepsilon$$

The regression model is presented as:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1X_1 + \beta_2X_2 + \beta_3X_3 + \beta_4X_4 + \varepsilon$$

Where: Y = Gender Mainstreaming; β_0 = Constant Term ; β_1 , β_2 , β_3 and β_4 = Beta coefficients; X1=Cultural practices; X2= Gender Awareness; X3= Resource Availability; X4= Organizational Procedures; ε = Error term

RESEARCH FINDINGS

Multivariate Analysis

To determine the factors significantly associated with gender mainstreaming in Compassion International Assisted Projects in Meru County, logistic regression was utilized since the dependent variable was dichotomous. The model summary and Omnibus test of model coefficient were used to test the goodness fit of the logistic model.

Table 1: Model Summary

Cox & Snell R Square	Nagelkerke R Square
.665	.886

The Nagelkerke R Square shows that about 88.6% of the variation in the outcome variable is explained by this logistic model, hence this is a good model fit. Nagelkerke’s measure gives us a higher value than does Cox and Snell’s since Nagelkerke’s measure is a modification of Cox and Snell’s, allowing the measure to use the full 0-1 range.

Determinants of Gender Mainstreaming

The variables for the study were: socio-cultural practices, socio-economic factors, Historical Factors and organizational procedures. The output of the binary logistic regression indicating the significance of each of the predictor variable is shown in table 2 below.

Table 2: Determinants of gender mainstreaming

	B	S.E.	Wald	df	P-values	Exp(B)
Organizational Procedures	-.411	.520	.626	1	.429	.663
Socio-Cultural	-3.280	1.000	10.756	1	.001	.038
Historical Factors	-4.914	1.938	6.432	1	.011	.007
Socio-Economic	.068	.398	.029	1	.865	1.070

For a binary logistic regression, the “wald”, “P-value” and “Exp (B)” columns are important for interpretation of the predictor variables. These are discussed below;

Wald and P Value

These columns provide the wald chi-square and p-value. The p-value is compared against a critical value of 0.05. A predictor would be statistically significant if its p-value is less than the critical value.

Logistic Regression Coefficient B and Exp (B)

The logistic regression coefficient indicates the direction and strength of the relationship between the independent and dependent variable. It represents the influence of a one unit change in the independent variable on the log – odds of the dependent variable. Exp (B) is the exponentiation of the B coefficient which is an odds ratio. Odds ratio are easier to interpret than the coefficient. Odds describe the ratio of the number of occurrence to the number of non-occurrences. It has some relationship with probability since probability is the ratio of the number of occurrences to the total number of probabilities. Probability ranges from 0 to 1 whereas odds range from 0 to infinity. The relationship between probability and Odds can be summarized in the formulae below,

$$\text{Probability} = \text{Odds} / 1 + \text{Odds}$$

It is hence possible to convert findings to probability when they are reported as odds. Odds of one indicate equal probability of occurrence and non-occurrence. An odds less than one indicates that occurrence is less likely than non-occurrence. Odds greater than one indicates that occurrence is more likely than non-occurrence. Hence, Exp (B) indicates how many times higher the odds of occurrence are for each one unit increase in the independent variable.

DISCUSSION

Socio-Cultural Practices

This study sought to establish the influence of socio-cultural practices on gender mainstreaming of Compassion International Assisted Projects This variable was found to be significant at 0.001 level of significance and [Exp (B) 0.038] indicating that it was important in influencing gender mainstreaming of Compassion International Assisted Project. This means that there is a negative relation between socio-cultural practices and the gender mainstreaming of Compassion International Assisted Project. This agrees with the argument of CCGD (2007) who noted that the Meru culture and traditions discriminates women in terms of participation in areas of decision making and added that women’s role is mainly seen to be in home and in farms. It also corresponds well with the finding of Jeffreys (2012) who observed that Meru tradition had always separated sexes. In childhood, boys played at being worriers while girls played at being

wives by working ceaselessly at home. As they grew to the impending adulthood, both gender played apart. Girls were taught to look down and fall silent in the presence of men.

The finding of this study agrees with the UNFPA State of World Population Report (2008) that noted that traditional norms are a major obstacle to develop gender equity, most of these values change only gradually within long term processes. The report indicates that culture is a central component of successful development of poor countries, and must be integrated into development policy and programming. It then becomes the responsibility of the development practitioners and advocates treading with caution and applying a cultural lens to their work.

In the Meru context, traditional beliefs and cultural attitudes regarding the role and status of women in society are still prevalent and many women are part of this system finding it difficult to dislocate from this culture and tradition lest they be ostracized. Despite women's education and entry into the job market, the woman's role is typically one of homemaker. The man, on the other hand, is bread winner, head of household and has a right to public life. Women in Meru and Kenya in general are said to be nurturers and caregivers. Many working mothers must therefore multitask. Distractions creep into the work day, phone calls to school between meetings, trip to the bank at lunch time, taking care of the children and the elderly. This is a major setback to gender mainstreaming.

Historical Factors

This study sought to establish the influence of historical factors on gender mainstreaming of Compassion International Assisted Projects. This variable was found to be significant at 0.011 level of significance and [Exp (B) 0.007] indicating that it was important in influencing gender mainstreaming in Compassion International Assisted Projects. This corresponds well with the findings of MOPND (2011), who noted that one of the barriers to gender mainstreaming is a lack of information on various levels including; about the situation from a gender perspective, about government or organizational mandates for gender equality, about policies and programmes targeting gender equality, about stakeholders and efforts of other actors in promoting gender equality. It also agrees with the finding of Council of Europe (2004) who argued that lack of sufficient knowledge and historical data about gender equality issues will lead to a bad implementation of gender mainstreaming.

It is worth noting that when the strategy of gender mainstreaming is implemented, the matters relating to gender equality will no longer be only in the hands of a specific division, but will be present in all divisions in a given project and hence, historical factors are key in ensuring gender mainstreaming. This argument is supported by Tariique (2014) who noted that gender mainstreaming is an extraordinarily demanding strategy requiring the inclusion of a gender perspective by all the central actors in the policy process, many of whom may have least interest in gender issues. The actors are no longer specialists in equality issues, which entail the danger

that they might fail to identify gender interests or to implement good gender equality policies. It could even mean that they lack a proper understanding of the mainstreaming strategy itself.

Socio-Economic Factors

This study did not establish any significant relationship between socio-economic factors and gender mainstreaming in Compassion International Assisted Projects. The p-value of this predictor was more than 0.05.

Organizational Procedures

This study did not establish any significant relationship between organizational procedures and gender mainstreaming in Compassion International Assisted Projects. The p-value of this predictor was more than 0.05.

CONCLUSIONS

The study concluded that Compassion International has a written Gender Equality Policy as all (100%) the respondents affirmed. Socio-cultural practices and historical factors were found to be significant determinants of gender mainstreaming in Compassion International Assisted Projects.

Cultural Practices

Socio-cultural practices were found to be a key determinant of gender mainstreaming in Compassion International Assisted Projects. In the Meru context, traditional beliefs and cultural attitudes regarding the role and status of women in society are still prevalent and many women are part of this system finding it difficult to separate themselves from this culture and tradition lest they be ostracized. Traditionally, a woman's role has been limited to giving birth and taking care of their homes and families. Women have strived to fight for their rights by ensuring gender mainstreaming in every aspect. Although there has been an increase in the number of women in legislative bodies, generally women tend to be under represented in all structures of power and decision-making. They are subject to cultural and religious attitudes that do not recognize the right of women to lead while policies that promote gender equality in appointments to decision making positions are in place but implementation lags behind. Kenyan communities have inculcated into their people the assumptions that leadership rightfully belongs to men (Mazrui, 2004). This is a major setback to gender mainstreaming. In addition, Meru tradition had always separated sexes. Basic aspects in elimination of discrimination are undermined by cultural values which take precedence and fail to agree with human rights norms.

Historical Factors

Historical factors were found to be crucial elements as pertains to influencing gender mainstreaming in Compassion International Assisted Projects. Gender as a thoroughly discussed concept through history, provides an analytical framework that focuses on the process that

reinforces and recreates inequalities between men and women. Inequalities between men and women not only impact women but society as a whole and must be regarded as a societal issue not “women’s concerns”. In retrospect, Compassion International Assisted Projects according to the findings indicated that women still have a long way to go before full inclusion in leadership roles and embracing of gender equality policies has not been witnessed subsequently, there is impediment of gender mainstreaming in Compassion International. Historical factors need to be acknowledged with regard to gender mainstreaming as they highlight failures and obstacles witnessed as organizations have attempted to achieve gender equality and areas where improvement is needed. Consequently, gender mainstreaming builds on the premise that in order for gender equality to be achieved, drastic measures have to be taken to ensure both women and men have the same opportunities and enjoy the same privileges, rights and decision-making responsibilities in every social aspect. Policies with regard to gender equality address gender imbalances by looking at particular needs of men and women Gender mainstreaming focuses on building a balanced society by accelerating strengthening the process of transforming gender relations to equality between both genders. (Kirima, 2012).

Gender mainstreaming requires the need to build up the necessary gender knowledge among all policy-makers and learning processes to develop the capacity to put mainstreaming strategies into practice. As mainstreaming is not a goal in itself, but a strategy to achieve gender equality, it presupposes that the necessary knowledge of gender relations is available for policy-makers. This study did not establish any significant relationship between organizational procedures and socio-economic factors with gender mainstreaming in Compassion International Assisted Projects.

RECOMMENDATIONS

From the analysis, findings, and discussions of the study, it was found out that Socio-cultural Practices and Historical Factors had a significant relationship with gender mainstreaming in Compassion International.

Socio-Cultural Practices

Based on the study findings, socio-cultural practices are significant factors in influencing gender mainstreaming in Compassion International, the researcher wishes to make the following recommendations:

Change in gender roles are potent symbols of cultural continuity or cultural change. Hence, action has been taken to promote change in cultural practices and values and these include; changes in the law particularly, with regard to inheritance, property ownership and marriage, public education campaigns, and program redesign which entails incorporation of gender equality themes in HIV/AIDS prevention initiatives.

Policy makers need to come up with a curriculum that includes gender issues for purpose of sensitizing the community on the cultural barriers which hinder gender mainstreaming. This will enable women to change their self-perception and view themselves as economically inclined and leaders just like their male counter-parts.

The study recommends eliminating discrimination in employment, civil status, public life, education, healthcare, and various aspects of women's social and economic life, as the first step toward gender mainstreaming. Women should form professional networking clubs where they mentor each other in order to assist in confidence building, enhancing self-esteem and socialization.

Historical Factors

From the research findings, historical factors are significant as pertains to influencing gender mainstreaming in Compassion International Assisted Projects, the researcher wishes to make the following recommendations:

Every project manager in Compassion International should engage a gender expert to steer and advise on gender- related aspects in the project and educate employees on the various details with regard to equality. Compassion International should simplify the gender policy for it to be easily understood and operationalized. More importantly, the project managers should be sensitized on gender mainstreaming practices and be encouraged to adhere to gender policy guidelines and set targets to be assessed as part of performance contracting.

Gender experts together with every informed personnel on gender mainstreaming strategies should engage other stakeholders in sensitization efforts. At each management level, every manager should develop simple workable gender mainstreaming strategies. Project beneficiaries should be included in the decision – making process and in the problem-solving forums. There is need for the existing gender committees in Compassion International in liaison with the external organizations that deal with gender, social development and children affairs to hold regular workshops to sensitize as many stakeholders as possible and promote public awareness on gender issues in development. The study indicates a need for Compassion International management and stakeholders within the organization to sensitize all those in project management committees that funds should be availed to train all employees on gender issues at their workstations.

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