

# **School Participation by Gender: Implications for Occupational Activities in Kenya**

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## **Introduction**

THIS PAPER EXAMINES participation in schooling and selected occupational activities by gender in Kenya. The major concern is equity of access to schooling by gender. 'Schooling' refers to the process of attending an institution of learning in the formal education system, that is, primary, secondary and tertiary, with the hope that the individual doing so is gaining something worthwhile. The gains of formal education are normally evident in the acquisition of necessary skills, attitudes and values that are fundamental to the existence of an individual. The author concluded that the issue of education of girls in Kenya particularly has to be redressed.

The first part of this paper gives an overview of the education system, examining the national population estimates and government expenditure on education in Kenya. This is followed by a discussion of participation at primary, secondary and tertiary levels by gender. Thereafter, the paper discusses participation by gender in selected activities namely, the civil service and other sectors of the economy. Efforts to alleviate gender disparities are also discussed. Conclusions are deduced, which culminate in suggestions towards redressing the issues raised and discussed throughout the paper.

## **The Education System: An Overview**

Prior to 1985, the Kenyan system of education entailed 7 years of primary education, 4 years secondary education, 2 years of high school and 3 years of minimum university education. Currently, the system of education, referred to as the 8:4:4 system of education, involves 8 years of primary education, 4 years of secondary education and 4 years of minimum university education. This was

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implemented in January 1985, after the government accepted the recommendations of the Mackay Commission (1981). This Commission was required to make general recommendations regarding the implementation of government's decision to establish a second university in the country.

Presently, there are five public universities in Kenya: the University of Nairobi, Moi University, Kenyatta University, Egerton University and Jomo Kenyatta University. These universities do not meet all the admissions demands of qualified applicants. Consequently, those who do not gain access to public universities enrol in post-school education institutions, generally referred to as middle-level colleges. These colleges include: teacher training colleges; the Government Secretarial college; the Christian Industrial Training Centre; Institute of agriculture; the Animal Health and Industrial Training Institute; the Kenya Institute of Mass Communication; medical training schools; vocational training units; polytechnics and 'harambee' (self-help) institutes of technology. Most of the educational activities in the country are co-ordinated by the Ministry of Education.

### **Population and Government Expenditure**

Table 1 shows the population distribution by gender in 1989. This trend has not drastically changed as most people still live in the rural areas, with women as the majority. On the other hand, the women form the smaller proportion of the population in urban areas.

The Government of Kenya attaches great importance to education and its expenditure policies have also favoured education (UNICEF 1989). It spends more money on education than any other social service ministry and this expenditure increases every subsequent year (Republic of Kenya 1993a). The Social Service Ministries take a large part of the government expenditure both recurrent and development. In 1988/89 for example, a total of K641.77 million shillings was allocated to social service ministries for both recurrent and development expenditure and the Ministry of Education alone consumed 76 per cent. While in 1991/92, of a total estimated amount of K887.94 million shillings spent by social service ministries on both recurrent and development expenditure, the Ministry of Education was allocated and spent 73.3 per cent (Republic of Kenya 1993a).

**Table 1: Population Distribution by Gender 1989**

	Male	Per Cent	Female	Per Cent	Total	Per Cent
Rural Dwellers	9,733,000	49.0	10,137,000	51.0	19,870,000	100
Urban Dwellers	1,993,000	54.7	1,650,000	45.3	3,643,000	100
	11,726,000	49.9	11,787,000	50.1	23,513,000	100

**Source:** Republic of Kenya (1992).

The most rational justification for the Government allocating and spending such huge amounts of money on education is to develop human resources. The development of human resources depends on the level and intensity of formal and non-formal education and training (Republic of Kenya 1992a). The guiding philosophy of education is that in general, 'the education system should aim at producing individuals who are properly socialised, who possess the necessary knowledge, skills attitudes and values to enable them to participate in nation-building' (Republic of Kenya 1988:210-211).

Besides, it is clearly articulated and documented that one of the key elements of Kenya's 'education policy is ensuring equity of access to schooling' (UNICEF 1989:16). Equity of access to schooling by gender is the concern of this paper. Essentially, the focus is on formal education which ranges from primary through high school to university.

### **Participation at Primary School Level by Gender**

Primary school level is the foundation of education and officially starts at six years old. Table 2 shows the enrolment figures of both girls and boys at this level of education 1963 to 1992.

Table 2 shows that at independence (1963), the enrolment of girls in primary schools was much lower than that of the boys. That is, 34.2 per cent of the total school population were girls. Over the years the participation rate of girls steadily increased. Since 1978, the enrolment imbalances by gender were reduced considerably, to near parity. In recent times, there has been, in fact, no significant difference between the enrolment rate of boys compared to girls.

**Table 2: Primary School Enrolment by Sex, 1963-1992 ('000)**

Year	Total No. of Students	No. of Boys	No. of Girls	Percentage of Boys	Percentage of Girls
1963	891.5	586.7	308.8	65.8	34.2
1964	1,014.7	657.6	357.1	64.8	35.2
1965	1,010.9	631.5	379.4	62.5	37.5
1966	1,043.4	663.9	379.5	63.7	36.3
1968	1,209.7	725.0	484.7	59.9	40.1
1969	1,282.3	762.8	519.5	59.5	40.5
1970	1,427.6	836.3	391.3	58.6	51.4
1971	1,525.5	881.0	644.5	57.7	42.3
1972	1,675.9	956.6	719.3	57.1	42.9
1974	2,703.9	1,491.5	1,212.3	55.2	44.8
1975	2,881.2	1,561.5	1,319.7	54.2	45.8
1977	2,971.2	1,583.8	1,387.4	53.3	46.7
1978	2,995.0	1,500.5	1,494.5	50.2	49.8
1979	3,698.2	1,953.7	1,744.5	52.8	47.2
1989	5,389.3	2,766.0	2,623.3	51.3	48.7
1990	5,392.3	2,766.3	2,626.0	51.3	48.7
1991	5,456.1	2,797.1	2,659.0	51.3	48.7
1992	5,530.2	2,806.8	2,723.4	50.7	49.3

Source: Republic of Kenya (1993a:12).

It must be noted at this point that this is a very general picture at the national level. The situation is, however, different for specific regions in the country. In a study by Eshiwani (1985), it was found that girls were most represented in Central and Nairobi Provinces. However, there was very low enrolment of girls at this level of education in the arid and semi-arid areas and in poor agricultural regions. In these regions, populations are predominantly pastoralists and have strong cultural and religious norms and traditions that depress female enrolment. Various reasons account for the lagging behind of the enrolment of girls in these regions namely, a negative attitude towards the education of women, an early

age of marriage for girls, the withdrawal of girls from school to help in family chores and mistrust of school discipline (Republic of Kenya 1993a).

Regarding the primary school curriculum, the following subjects are studied: Mathematics, English, Kiswahili, GHC (Geography, History and Civics), Science and Agriculture, Business Education, Home Science, Art and Craft and Religious Education (Christian Religious Education and Islamic Religious Education). Apart from Religious Education, where learners have a choice between Christian and Islamic Religious Education, they all have to learn the rest of the subjects and are examinable in the KCPE (Kenya Certificate of Primary Education) examination. The next section focuses on the secondary school level of education.

### **Participation at Secondary School Level by Gender**

Secondary education constitutes a consolidation and transition between elementary (primary) education and higher education and/or the world of work. Over the years secondary education has expanded almost two-fold. Secondary schools in the country are classified according to the district from which they draw their pupils.

Under this classification, students hope to gain access to national, provincial or district schools, depending on how they perform in the national examination, the KCPE. The national schools draw pupils from all over the Republic irrespective of the school's locations or home districts of the pupils. The status of these schools has remained high due to the high level of performance in public examinations required of pupils enrolling in them. They are given first priority in Form I selection and have a high level of supply of equipment and teaching aids. They also offer boarding facilities.

In total, there are eight national schools exclusively for boys and seven exclusively for girls. Three of these schools offer co-educational facilities. Of the total student population who attended national schools from 1987 up to completion of the secondary school cycle in 1990, 37.7 per cent were girls and 62.3 per cent were boys (Republic of Kenya 1993a). The girls' schools with an average of 128 girls per school tend to be smaller in size compared to the boys' school which have an average of 186 boys per school.

The competitive schools after the national schools are provincial schools. They draw 85 per cent of their Form I intake from their home districts, reserving the other 15 per cent for pupils from the rest of the province. These schools pick the best students in the province who have not been selected by national schools.

The district schools are usually the last to make Form I selections. Logically, therefore, they would be picking the students with the lowest KCPE performance. They are required to have a student population that is entirely from the home district of the pupils. On average, they tend to have poor educational facilities both with regard to physical development, teaching aids and sometimes teaching staff. These schools do not have any Government subsidy and, therefore, are comparatively more expensive than the national and provincial schools for individual students.

**Table 3: Estimated School Places by Gender, 1990**

Province	Boys only	Per Cent	Girls only	Per Cent	Mixed	Per Cent	Total	Per Cent
Central	46	9.1	56	11.1	404	97.8	506	100
Coast	16	17.8	10	11.1	64	71.1	90	100
Eastern	37	23.1	42	26.3	81	50.6	160	100
North Eastern	8	66.7	4	33.3	0	0	12	100
Nyanza	37	13.4	30	10.8	210	75.8	277	100
Rift Valley	71	23.4						
Western	35	12.2	49	17.1	202	70.6	286	100
Total	250	15.3	247	15.1	1137	69.6	1634	100

**Source:** Republic of Kenya (1993).

Table 3 shows the national estimated school places by gender. Nationally, there is no big difference in the school places for boys only and girls only. Co-education school places are quite substantial as they constitute approximately 70 per cent of the national places.

Table 4 shows that the enrolment of boys was usually higher than that of the girls. However, the total enrolment of girls had been steadily increasing, although at a lower rate. In 1989 the female enrolment dropped. This was the year when the first 8:4:4 secondary component sat for the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) examination. It is possible that this was caused by preference for boys in enrolment, particularly in co-educational schools where both sexes compete for the same places.

**Table 4: Enrolment in Secondary Schools, 1988-1992**

Year	Male	Female	Total	Percentage Male	Percentage Female
1988	318,001	222,191	540,192	58.9	41.1
1989	383,135	257,600	640,735	59.8	40.2
1990	353,695	264,766	618,461	57.2	42.8
1991	345,788	268,373	614,161	56.3	43.7
1992	355,079	266,364	621,443	57.1	42.9

Source: Republic of Kenya (1993a:23).

The education policy in Kenya requires that pupils enrolling in Form I in the secondary schools be at least 14 years of age. Once enrolled, they are expected to undergo a 4 year course and sit for the KCSE examination. All things being equal, the same number of students that enrolled in Form I should sit for KCSE in Form IV. However, a number of factors affect a cohort's transition from Form I to Form IV. Some of these include:

1. (a) In-migration and out-migration from the country;  
(b) In-migration and out-migration from one district to another;
2. Repeating;
3. Dropping out of school due to lack of fees, teenage pregnancies, early marriages or for any other reason;
4. Joining school after a long period of absence; and
5. Mortality.

Source: Republic of Kenya (1993a: 52).

Of all these reasons, the high drop-out (wastage) rates for girls is an issue of concern. The more popular theory advanced for the high drop-out rates among the girls is that parents still see boys as fetching greater financial gain on successful completion of school since they are culturally entitled to family land and, therefore, remain in their birth homes. This assumption requires problematisation as general observation has shown that the level of family

support does not depend on gender and location of the person. On the other hand, since the girls marry off, they are assumed to have little need for academic qualifications as they are traditionally not supposed to work outside homes and should depend on their husbands. Even when they do work outside homes, they are more likely to benefit families into which they marry than their natal families. This assumption tends to be stronger in some ethnic groups than others. In the event of scarce funds, therefore, this theory contends that the parents prefer to pay fees for the boys than for girls.

In addition, most families in Kenya are poor, or at least do not have enough financial resources considering the recent implementation of the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP). The great majority of households derive most of their income from farming and, therefore, demand the labour services of their children on the farm in order to be able to raise some money for school fees (Raju 1973). Those poor families which cannot afford to hire labour sometimes find it necessary to withdraw children from school to work on the family farm or look after cattle. Those withdrawn are mainly girls because they are seen as more able to help with work around the home than boys. Consequently, between the age of 15-16.3 years, the probability of female participation in the labour force has been found higher than that of males (Republic of Kenya 1993b).

Teenage girls also drop out of school because of pregnancies and/or forced early marriages in some communities. The problem of teenage pregnancies has been prevalent and causes public concern. Currently, some effort is being made to facilitate such girls rejoining the main-stream to avoid further damage to them. On the other hand, the problem of forced early marriages is not rampant nationally but affects those communities that have not yet properly appreciated the value of educating their children and specifically the girls. This is the case particularly among the pastoralists. However, where such cases have been known, the Government has intervened to save the girls involved.

The issue of repetition is more common among boys than girls. It may be, and to a large extent is true, that parents worry a lot about their daughters dropping out of school and so tend to push them through the school system as fast as possible. Secondly and finally, is that, since repetition of classes is meant to enhance the student's academic achievement, this phenomenon seems to reinforce the notion that society sets higher goals for boys and gives them more chances within which to achieve the goals than it does with the girls (Republic of Kenya 1993b).

Concerning the curriculum, the following subjects are offered: English, Kiswahili, History and Government, Geography, Mathematics, Biology, Physics, Chemistry, Physical Sciences, Biological Sciences, Christian Religious



Education, Islamic Religious Education, Social Education and Ethics, Home Science, Art and Design, Agriculture, Woodwork, Building Construction, Power Mechanics, Electricity, Drawing and Design, French, German, Music, Accounting, Commerce, Economics, Typewriting with Office Practice. Apart from the first five, which are compulsory, the other subjects are electives which are offered in those schools that have the required facilities. For KCSE, eight or nine of these subjects (including the compulsory five) must be studied. It is worth noting that there are more science and technical places in boys' schools than in girls' schools. This arrangement tends to affirm the status quo, i.e. boys are given more chances to enrol for science and technical subjects than is the case for girls.

Moreover, the limited facilities, equipment and materials for science and technical subjects in girls' schools automatically excludes them from such subjects. Instead, they enrol in fields that are already over-subscribed, have low status, are less challenging, provide them with fewer chances of advancing professionally and consequently limit their opportunities to influence policies that affect their situation. All these tend to influence the girls' effective participation in school and consequent loss of benefits that go with schooling.

### **Participation at Tertiary Level by Gender**

Tertiary level education includes education offered in all middle-level colleges and universities. This paper targets and focuses on university education.

In the foregoing discussion, it was noted that the rate of participation of girls at secondary school level is lower than at primary school level. This rate is even lower at the university level. It is further complicated by the attitude that some disciplines like Engineering, Sciences, Law and Business are unsuitable for women. As a result, there are very low enrolment rates for women in some disciplines. Table 5 shows the enrolment differentials in various disciplines during the 1989/90 academic year.

Table 5 shows that most women enrolled in liberal arts. Nonetheless, their total enrolment was only 36.9 per cent of the total enrolment in these disciplines. In Law and Business (26.8 per cent), Science and Engineering (14.9 per cent) the situation was much worse. This can partially be accounted for by the fact that there are few science places in girls' secondary schools in the country and boys still compete with the girls in the remaining available places. As a result, therefore, at university level few girls end up in these fields that are already over-subscribed. On the whole, the women participation at this level of education is very low (29.4 per cent).

**Table 5: 1988/90 Academic Year Enrolment in the Various Disciplines by Gender**

Discipline	Both Sexes	Male	Female	Percentage Male	Percentage Female
Liberal Arts	12,743	8,040	4,703	63.1	36.9
Law & Business	2,312	1,693	619	73.2	26.8
Science & Engineering	8,170	6,951	1,219	85.1	14.9
Agriculture	2,237	1,483	754	66.3	33.7
Others	2,110	1,287	823	61.0	39.0
Total	27,572	19,454	8,118	70.6	29.4

Source: *Women's Bureau Newsletter* No. 2, 1990:3.

It was noted early in this paper that at primary school level, the participation of girls and boys was almost at parity. However, the gender disparity in school participation begins to emerge at secondary school level. This is even complicated by the curriculum arrangement where most boys are encouraged and facilitated to study the sciences and technical subjects while most girls are channelled into subjects that are thought to be 'suitable' for them. At university level, the disparity worsens. Firstly, the female participation is very low (29.4 per cent). Secondly, their participation in each of the selected disciplines was far below parity. This situation raises certain concerns for instance, how do women perform in occupational activities? Do they still lag behind? The next section focuses on these concerns.

### **Participation in Occupational Activities by Gender**

The colonial legacy of schooling and employment was such that all those with a given level of education could be employed. This has since changed as more and more people have access to education. School leavers until recently have been employed in the civil service at all levels. Table 6 gives the information on the representation by gender in the civil service.

**Table 6: Number of Civil Servants by Sex and Grade as at  
31st March, 1991**

Job Group	Male	Female	Total	Percentage Male	Percentage Female
A	41,477	12,060	53,537	77.5	22.5
B	9,235	2,815	12,050	76.6	23.4
C	18,257	6,004	24,261	75.3	24.7
D	24,885	10,457	35,342	70.4	29.6
E	15,122	3,318	18,440	82.0	18.0
F	62,470	14,296	76,766	81.4	18.6
G	18,249	4,595	22,844	79.6	20.1
H	9,931	2,344	12,275	80.9	19.1
J	5,460	823	5,948	84.4	15.6
K	5,032	916	5,948	84.6	15.4
L	2,748	472	3,220	85.3	14.7
M	1,203	163	1,366	88.1	11.9
N	603	47	650	92.8	7.2
P	280	15	295	94.9	5.1
Q	140	6	146	95.9	4.1
R	78	5	83	94.0	6.0
S	17	0	17	100.0	0.0
T	4	0	4	100.0	0.0
Total	215,191	58,336	273,192	78.8	21.4

**Note:** Job group is a classification category used for people of the same cadre in the civil service. Job group 'A' is the lowest (includes messengers, cleaners, etc.) while job group 'T' is the highest grade (Permanent Secretary, Secretary to the Cabinet and Head of Public Service). Most graduates enter the service at point 'H'.

**Source:** Republic of Kenya (1993b:28).

Table 6 shows that women are under-represented at all job groups and the situation worsens as one moves from the lowest job group 'A' to the highest (T). At all levels, the number of men employed exceeded that of women. The percentage of female representation becomes smaller and smaller and eventually falls to zero at job group 'S' and 'T'. The highest representation of females (29.6 per cent) is in job group 'D' (see appendix showing grading of posts in the civil service: Posts common to Ministries and Departments). Although this is the job group in which the female representation is highest, the males are still dominant (70.4 per cent).

As for the top two job groups 'S' and 'T' (not delineated in the appendix) the female representation is nil. Job group 'S' includes: Chair-Public Service Commission, Controller and Auditor-General, Auditor-General (Corporations), Permanent Secretary-Office of the Vice President and Ministry of Finance, etc. While job group 'T' includes Permanent Secretary, Secretary to the cabinet and Head of the Public Service Commission, Attorney General, etc. All these top jobs and others in the same calibre are acquired by Presidential appointment. No woman has held such jobs in the history of Kenya.

Women are also involved in the labour market in other sectors of the economy, ranging from professionals to labourers. They are generally underrepresented in professional, technical, administrative and managerial jobs (*Women's Bureau Newsletter* No. 2, 1990:8).

Agriculture is the principal area which uses female labour. Here women mainly do the back-breaking jobs of planting, weeding and harvesting while men operate mechanical equipment such as tractors, ploughs, harvesters and harrows. It is worth noting that in agriculture, industry and services, women are normally clustered in unskilled dead-end jobs with low pay and little potential for training and advancement (UNICEF 1989).

As highlighted earlier in this paper, more girls drop out of school than boys. This partly explains why more women are found in petty trading and provision of services. This may be so because they can not get employment in the formal sector. It is also possible that most women do not apply due to cultural inhibitions and/or are discriminated against in the formal sector. Women usually have to combine their earning role with that of wife and mother which includes domestic labour whereas husbands and fathers do not. It is also possible for them to carry out such jobs which have few overheads like provision of services. But the multiple responsibilities of women make it difficult for them to take time off for training in small business management (UNICEF 1989). All these factors facilitate the creation of a vicious circle of poverty in which women suffer continuous marginalisation.

### **Improvement Efforts**

There have been deliberate efforts to improve the situation of girls and women in the country. This section examines the various attempts made to improve education generally, including that of girls, their limitations and affirmative action.

In 1985, the Government implemented the 8:4:4 system of education to strengthen the practical aspects of the school curriculum in order to make the students self-reliant and make the curriculum relevant to the needs of the society regardless of gender. However, boys are still channelled into scientific and technical subjects while most girls continue to learn the social sciences. Home Science, for example, is still a popular curriculum area for the girls while boys who enrol for this subject at secondary school level face disapproval from parents and their colleagues (Otunga 1993).

The Government has tried to establish primary boarding schools in the semi-arid and other parts of the country and to improve the selection of students from these areas to national schools, to improve the level of access and opportunity for all students from all areas. In reality, however, these schools are mainly filled by children of well-to-do parents from other regions of the country.

Primary education is considered a basic human right that should be provided to all Kenyans. Consequently, the Government abolished direct payment of fees in primary schools gradually from 1974, and this was fully achieved for all classes in 1985. However, the payment of development funds, the purchase of learning equipment, materials and uniforms are not less expensive as they amount to more than what was previously paid as school fees. This is due to the recurrent nature of some of these payments such as development funds with no definite amount set for all schools. This arrangement leaves parents still at the mercy of heads of institutions. As a result, poor parents still have to make a choice of which child should go to school. Due to the cultural orientations of most Kenyans, the girls are more likely to be disadvantaged.

By policy, students in secondary schools can choose and study any discipline so long as it is offered and the facilities are available. In practice, boys' secondary schools are better provided for in terms of equipment, materials and personnel, particularly for science and technical subjects. As a result, it is not practically possible that every student at this level of education can enrol and learn any subject, especially if she is a girl, or in a district school.

It has been suggested by Government officials that girls who drop out of school due to pregnancy could possibly be allowed to re-join the mainstream after some time. However, it has not been explicated exactly how this is to be

implemented and the victims are still disappearing from the school system except for those whose parents make individual efforts to facilitate their re-joining the school system.

At university level, there is the Joint Admission Board (JAB) which reduced the female entry cut-off points in order to offer more opportunities for women. This took effect starting in 1992/93 academic year. This affirmative action was welcome by people from many quarters as it targeted the improvement of female participation at this level of education. However, this move may also have negative implications as those girls who join university as a result of this action could be resented by the rest of the student community. This resentment may exert socio-psychological pressures on the girls concerned.

There is a giant 'Maendeleo ya Wanawake' (Women in Development) national body with sub-branches at provincial and district levels which concentrates mainly on women affairs and has the Government's support in their activities. This body has been highly politicised and does not appropriately focus on women's issues. Its past activities demonstrate that it is more concerned with promoting the status quo especially when it temporarily changed its name to 'Kanu Maendeleo ya Wanawake' during the campaign and election period in 1991-92. 'Kanu' being the ruling party in the country, it meant that this women's organisation was open to manipulation. It has since dropped the 'Kanu' tag but, its activities have remained partisan.

The Women's Bureau was established in 1976 in the Ministry of Culture and Social Services. Its goal is the formulation of policies and programmes designed to ensure that women's needs and interests are identified and taken care of. It is also concerned with research in gender issues. In 1993 for example, this Bureau carried out research and produced reports on gender analysis at primary and secondary levels of education, literacy and adult education. Hopefully the findings in these works will be used at education policy levels.

There have also been the establishment of women's sections in Government ministries and the appointment of women in key positions in Government and parastatals. It is hoped that efforts in this direction will continue as gender awareness and sensitivity education continue gaining ground.

By policy, women can work at any level of the economy so long as they qualify. From the data so far presented in this paper, this is not possible as women are categorically underrepresented right from school level. In practice, very few women are working at highly professional and decision-making levels.

## **Conclusion**

It has been presented in this paper that the underrepresentation of female or girls in formal education can be attributed to a number of factors. Among the most important are: the socio-cultural perspectives within society and the limited number of educational institutions for females compared to those of males. Women are also underrepresented in science and technical fields due to inadequate provision of necessary facilities, equipment and materials.

The education policy in Kenya has operated within the broad national framework laid down in the Government's Sessional Paper No. 10 of 1965. The key features of this policy include, 'the need to be free from want, ignorance and disease' (UNICEF 1989:103). All these are supposed to be effected regardless of gender. However, the gender-neutral language of the State does not operate in the same way for both sexes. In practice, the state operations are gender-blind as they do not take into account the specific circumstances of the girls. In implementing this policy, the State is also gender-biased as there are more schools and/or science places for boys than for girls. In effect, women are not adequately represented at policy decision forums and their participation in nation-building is not properly appreciated and projected. Thus, it is here suggested that there is a need for gender awareness and sensitivity on the part of the Government machinery to take on board both sexes with a bias-free perspective.

Education influences women's economic participation and earning power, and also the number of children they have and the health their children will have. In fact, education develops human potential and it is vital for a fully productive role in life for women as well as men (Sivard 1985).

Women's economic contribution on a global basis, ranges from 10-58 per cent of full household income. Full household income, cash income, income in-kind, and the value of labour devoted to unpaid activities carried on by and for its members, which might be replaced by market goods and services (McGuire 1990). In fact, women engage in more total productive time than men. Although the amount of time in paid activities is less for women, sometimes considerably less, women spend a large amount of time in home production relative to men.

Apart from reproduction and healthcare, women are actively involved in food production, processing, purchasing and preparation. In effect, they are 'the major actors in human resource development.... assuring proper nutrition, health and cognitive development of children during their crucial pre-school years' (McGuire 1990).

From the foregoing facts, it is in order to assert at this point that the issue of education in general and the education of women in particular needs to be redressed in Kenya. Acknowledging that women play an important role in the development of the smallest social institution — the family, and also at the national and global levels, gender biases require problematisation. Consequent to this, more bold steps should be taken and strategically implemented to improve the participation rates of women at all levels of formal education. If anything, their participation rates should be highest considering their central position in human resource development.

Having problematised the participation in schooling and selected occupational activities by gender, the following would go a long way in alleviating the situation: provision of more schools for girls, provision of more science and technical subjects for girls, intensification of the guidance and counselling services in the school system to specifically focus on building deserving confidence in girls. There is also the need for gender sensitisation of all those at policy decision-making levels down to the grassroots.

More important, however, is the education and re-education of the masses through public lecturers, mass media, etc., to change their attitudes towards females. This is pertinent because those females who venture into non-traditional fields, for example, normally face an uphill task as all odds are stacked against them and they have to constantly prove themselves. Continuous gender sensitisation and education of the masses appear to provide a promising long-term solution in this direction.

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**Appendix**  
**Grading of Posts in the Kenyan Civil Service\* (August 1990)**  
**Posts Common to Ministries and Departments**

<b>Description</b>	<b>Job Group</b>
Subordinate Staff II	A
Subordinate Staff I	B
Receptionist Assistant II	C
Data Machine Operator III	C
Grounds/Garden Assistant III	C
Plant Operator III	C
Driver III	C
Photographic Assistant III	C
Fireman III	C
Cinema Operator III	C
Housekeeping Assistant III	C
Cook III	C
Coxswain III	C
Security Warden III	C
Senior Subordinate Staff	C
Housekeeping Assistant IIB	D
Copy Typist II	D
Clerical Officer	D
Audit Examiner III	D
Storeman II	D
Receptionist Assistant IIB	D
Junior Survey Assistant IIB	D
Telephone Operator II	D

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\* Office of the President, Kenya

<b>Description</b>	<b>Job Group</b>
Plant Operator IIB	D
Driver II	D
Ground/Garden Assistant IIB	D
Cook II	D
Laundry Assistant IIB	D
Fingerprint Assistant (Trainee)	D
Social Welfare Assistant IIB	D
Coxswain IIB	D
Data Machine Operator II	D
Security Warden IIB	D
Fireman II	D
Tailor III	D
Laundry Assistant III	D
Carpenter III	D
Mechanic III	D
Mason III	D
Electrician III	D
Boiler Assistant III	D
Laboratory Technician (Trainee)	D
Junior Survey Assistant IIA	E
Higher Clerical Officer	E
Telephone Operator I	E
Storeman I	E
Driver I	E
Boiler Assistant I	E
Plant Operator IIA	E
Copy Typist I	E
Data Machine Operator I	E
Grounds Garden Assistant IIA	E
Photograph Assistant IIA	E

<b>Description</b>	<b>Job Group</b>
Fireman I	E
Cinema Operator IIA	E
Housekeeping Assistant IIA	E
Cook I	E
Laundry Assistant IIA	E
Fingerprint Assistant IIA	E
Technician II (Electronic)	E
Rigger II.	E
Security Warden I	E
Receptionist Assistant IIA	E
Social Welfare Assistant IIA	E
Coxswain IIA	E
Mechanic II	E
Electrician II	E
Carpenter II	E
Tailor II	E
Boiler Assistant II	E
Laboratory Technician IV	E
Library Assistant	F
Audit Examiner II	F
Statistical Assistant I	F
Senior Data Machine Operator	F
Ground/Gardens Assistant I	F
Assistant Draughtsman I	F
Plant Operator I	F
Social Welfare Assistant I	F
Photographic Assistant I	F
Audio Visual Assistant I	F
Cinema Operator I	F
Senior Clerical Officer	F
Senior Telephone Operator	F
Supplies Assistant II	F
Shorthand Typist II	F

<b>Description</b>	<b>Job Group</b>
Senior Copy Typist	F
Assistant Housekeeper	I F
Assistant Cateress I	F
Senior Cook	F
Laundry Assistant I	F
Laboratory Technician III	F
Fingerprint Assistant I	F
Senior Security Warden	F
Assistant Receptionist	F
Survey Assistant IV	F
Mechanic I	F
Electrician I	F
Carpenter I	F
Tailor I	F
Mason I	F
Technician II (Electronics)	F
Rigger I	F
Senior Boiler Assistant	F
Senior Fireman	F
Accounts Assistant	G
Personnel Assistant	G
Executive Assistant	G
Audit Examiner I	G
Supplies Assistant I	G
Senior Statistical Assistant	G
Draughtsman III	G
Social Welfare Officer III	G
Photographer III	G
Laboratory Technologist III	G
Inspector (Buildings)	G
Inspector (Mechanical)	G
Inspector (Electrical)	G

<b>Description</b>	<b>Job Group</b>
Inspector (Electronics)	G
Inspector (Rigging)	G
Foreman	G
Data Machine Supervisor III	G
Senior Plant Operator	G
Audio Visual Aids Officer III	G
Housekeeper III	G
Cateress III	G
Senior Fingerprint Assistant	G
Shorthand typist I	G
Receptionist III	G
Fire Officer III	G
Security Officer III	G
Survey Assistant III	G
Telephone Supervisor III	G
Assistant Superintendent of Gardens	G
Commercial Instructor	G
Chief Cook	G
Senior Library Assistant	G
Foreman	G
Laboratory Technician II	G
Chargehand	G
Assistant Secretary Cadet	H
Personal Secretary II	H
Executive Officer II	H
Senior Audit Examiner	H
Data Machine Supervisor II	H
Security Officer II	H
Draughtsman II	H
Social Welfare Officer II	H
Photographer II	H
Telephone Supervisor III	H

<b>Description</b>	<b>Job Group</b>
Housekeeper II	H
Fingerprint Officer II	H
Commercial Teacher II	H
Senior Inspector (Buildings)	H
Senior Inspector (Mechanical)	H
Senior Inspector (Electrical)	H
Senior Inspector (Electronics)	H
Senior Inspector (Rigging)	H
Librarian III	H
Receptionist II	H
Assistant Librarian	H
Sports Officer II	H
Audio Visual Aids Officer II	H
Fire Service Officer II	H
Laboratory Technologist II	H
Laboratory Technician	H
Assistant Secretary III	J
Executive Officer I	J
Statistical Officer I	J
Survey Assistant I	J
Draughtsman I	J
Social Welfare Officer I	J
Photographer I	J
Laboratory Technologist I	J
Security Officer I	J
Sports Officer I	J
Receptionist I	J
Personal Secretary I	J
Audio Visual Aids Officer I	J
Data Machine Supervisor I	J
Fingerprint Officer I	J
Housekeeper I	J
Telephone Supervisor II	J

<b>Description</b>	<b>Job Group</b>
Superintendent (Buildings)	J
Superintendent (Mechanical)	J
Superintendent (Electrical)	J
Superintendent (Electronics)	J
Superintendent (Rigging)	J
Fire Service Officer I	J
Accountant II	J
Auditor II	J
Personnel Officer II	J
Senior Laboratory Technician	J
Supplies Officer II	J
Statistical Officer II	J
Librarian II	J
Senior Personal Secretary	K
Senior Statistical Officer	K
Senior Executive Officer	K
Senior Housekeeper	K
Senior Survey Assistant	K
Assistant Secretary II	K
Senior Draughtsman	K
Senior Social Welfare Officer	K
Senior Photographer	K
Senior Laboratory Technologist	K
Senior Superintendent (Buildings)	K
Senior Superintendent (Mechanical)	K
Senior Superintendent (Electrical)	K
Senior Superintendent (Electronics)	K
Senior Superintendent (Rigging)	K
Senior Security Officer	K
Senior Data Machine Supervisor	K
Senior Fire Services Officer	K
Lecturer I (Training Institutions)	K
Economist II	K



<b>Description</b>	<b>Job Group</b>
Assistant Engineer	K
Staff Surveyor II	K
Biologist II	K
Telephone Supervisor I	K
Senior Catering Manager	K
Senior Fingerprint Officer	K
Accountant I	K
Personnel Officer I	K
Supplies Officer I	K
Librarian I	K
Auditor I	K
Senior Lecturer (Training Institutions)	L
Chief Executive Officer	L
Senior Librarian	L
Chief Laboratory Technologist	L
Chief Fire Service Officer	L
Chief Fingerprint Officer	L
Economist/Statistician I	L
Engineer	L
Staff Surveyor I	L
Biologist I	L
Assistant Secretary I	L
Chief Superintendent	L
Senior Accountant	L
Senior Personnel Officer	L
Senior Auditor	L
Senior Supplies Officer	L
Principal Auditor	M
Superintending Engineer	M
Senior Economist/Statistician	M
Senior Biologist	M
Senior Assistant Secretary	M

Description	Job Group
Chief Accountant	M
Chief Supplies Officer	M
Chief Personnel Officer	M
Principal Librarian	M
Under Secretary	N
Principal Economist	N
Assistant Director of Audit	N
Accounts Controller	N
Senior Superintending Engineer	N
Principal Personnel Officer	N
Deputy Secretary	P
Senior Principal Personnel Officer	P
Permanent Secretary	R