

Mount Kenya University

**A HISTORICAL STUDY OF THE PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN
IN PROVINCIAL ADMINISTRATION LEADERSHIP IN
KAKAMEGA COUNTY, KENYA SINCE INDEPENDENCE (1963
TO 2013)**

BY

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REG.NO. KAK/S/MHIS/212/00008

**A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF ARTS IN HISTORY OF MOUNT KENYA
UNIVERSITY**

JUNE 2015

ABSTRACT

After Kenya gained its independence in 1963, many women have shown great power in their ability to lead. The road to leadership has not been an easy one as such. It began in the traditional set up where a woman was expected to take the back seat as decisions regarding her life were taken by her male counterparts. The task became a little easier with the coming of the colonialist who paved way for the woman by showing that gender equality was essential. When the colonialist left it was a much easier task for the woman to participate in leadership albeit with a myriad of problems. Presently, there is a constitutional stalemate on the one third gender rule of women representatives in various echelons of leadership. The study sought to find out the trends in the rise of women participation in provincial administration leadership since independence and the challenges faced with reference to Kakamega Central District of Kakamega County. The objectives of the study were to: Establish the trend in the rise of women in provincial administration in Kenya from 1963 to the present; find out the problems that women in provincial administration face while performing their administrative roles; examine the strategies adopted by women in provincial administration leadership to overcome the challenges faced in leadership; and assess the contribution of women in provincial administration leadership to the well-being of women in the district. The Liberal feminist theory formed the theoretical base for the study. The study employed historical research design complemented by the descriptive survey research design. Purposive sampling was used to select 25 women in provincial administration leadership and 20 women in other leadership positions. In addition, 5 men were sampled purposively to give the study a male perspective of women in provincial administration leadership. The interview was the principal tool for data collection. Descriptive statistics, including frequencies and percentages, were used to present the quantitative data, which were presented in summary form using frequency tables, histograms and pie charts. Qualitative data were presented in form of themes. The results of the study formed a basis for making recommendations on how women in leadership could be empowered to perform their leadership roles more effectively. The study established that there was a significant evolution in the rise of women in provincial administration leadership in the District. Many more women were taking up positions despite the many challenges faced.