UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

A STUDY TO ESTABLISH THE CHALLENGES FACING FEMALE ADMINISTRATORS IN ORGANIZATIONS:
A CASE OF SELECTED ORGANIZATIONS IN KENYA

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A Project Report Submitted To The School Of Continuing And Distance Education, Department Of Extra Mural Studies In Partial Fulfillment Of The Requirement For The Award Of Diploma In Purchasing And Supplies Management Of The University Of Nairobi

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this is my original research document and has never been submitted credential for academic qualification to any learning institution.

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SIGNATURE........................................DATE 02/08/2011

This research project has been submitted for examination with my approval as University of Nairobi supervisors.

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ABSTRACT

This study sought to investigate challenges facing female administrators in selected organizations in Kenya with specific reference to variables such as family related issues, cultural bias, gender stereotypes, attitudes of subordinates, the top management’s attitudes and personality traits of the female administrators.

Literature is reviewed in chapter two based on the variables such as women in leadership and management, gender and cultural stereotypes, support staff and managerial attitudes, family issues and personality traits of female administrators.

The researcher employed a descriptive survey design and stratified sampling techniques to obtain the target population. The researcher used a sample study of 57 respondents drawn from three organizations (I.H.R.M., ICRAF, and Mwalimu Co-operative Society) which had a total of 190 employees. Twelve female administrators were purposefully sampled and used in the study against 35 support staff. The study sought the opinions of the administrators and their subordinates about the challenges they face in the course of performing their duties. Separate questionnaires were designed for female administrators and their support staff. The support staff was asked to opine on what they felt about the female administration in their organizations.

The researcher distributed 57 questionnaires to the selected organizations; out of which 50 were responded upon. This represented a response rate of 88%. Findings from the research were analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) specifically descriptive statistics. The results have been presented using tables, graphs and pie charts.

The findings show that family related issues such as sickness of a member of the family (child or spouse) formed the major challenge to female administrators. Other factors such as divorce, separation, absence of spouse from home, cultural bias, and gender stereotypes did not pose serious challenges to female administrators. The findings also show that educational qualification and personality traits of the administrators were key to countering to challenges posed to them at the workplace. Finally, it appears that the negative perception of society towards female leadership is fast changing.