Involvement of Girls in Leadership in Primary Schools in Voi Sub-county, Kenya

Florence Kanorio Kisirkoi and Angela Ndunge Kamanga

Abstract

Women in Kenya are underrepresented in decision-making positions, which appears as a remnant of persisting cultural gender roles that limit women from participating in activities critical for personal, societal, and national development. Such retrogressive ideas regarding a large number of the country's citizens have to be addressed early in the life of a girl to build in girls' self-esteem and facilitate them to develop leadership skills. This study investigated the extent to which girls in primary schools in Voi sub-county are involved in leadership in their schools. The study was based on the 2010 Kenya's constitution which ruled that no more than two-thirds of elected or appointed public institutions leaders should consist of one gender. The new legal framework seeks to break down the barriers women face in realizing their political, civil, economic, and social rights. It also ensures that women are involved in decision-making at all levels of government. In this study, data was collected from three mixed primary schools in Voi sub-county given codes A, B, and C. School A had a total of 470 pupils; 225 were boys and 245 were girls and the school had 21 leadership positions. The findings showed that the majority 14 (66.7%) of the leadership positions were occupied by boys while the few 7 (33.3%) were occupied by girls. In school B, there were a total of 1,056 pupils; 498 were boys and 558 were girls. There were 13 leadership positions. The majority of the positions 7 (53.8 %) were occupied by boys and minority 6 (46.2%) were occupied by girls. In school C, there were a total of 1,450 pupils and 680 were boys and 770 girls. There were 13 leadership positions. The majority 7 (53.8%) of the positions were occupied by boys while 6 (46.2%) were occupied by girls. In all the schools, there were more girls than boys but boys occupied more leadership positions than girls. Boys also took senior positions and girls were their deputies and were not as active as boys in areas such as class discussions and debate. It was recommended that conscious effort should be made to develop leadership skills in girls during their formative years.

Keywords: Leadership, Decision making, Constitution, Underrepresented, Gender roles

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