

EMPOWERMENT EXPERIENCES OF KENYAN MOTHERS  
LIVING IN FINLAND

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## ABSTRACT

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The research was carried out in Helsinki area in Finland and it is based on Kenyan mothers' experiences. The aim of the study is to gain from opportunities Kenyan mothers attain in Finland, as empowerment tools to change Kenyans living standards in future. The study focuses on empowerment achieved dimensions in health, politics education and economy.

The research was carried out by using qualitative method. Interviews of Kenyan mothers living in Finland were conducted in Helsinki Finland. The material was recorded and analysed with tables and narrative methodology. Empowerment theory was used as a tool to focus on process for change.

The result showed that experiences on different professional skills in Finland are powerful tools to empower Kenyans' living standards. Empowerment supports the families through better education. The result showed that professional Kenyan mothers would empower Kenya with new skills to rebuild the government, families and support economy in the future.

In conclusion, 90% of the respondents indicated that empowerment in Finland is supported by gender equality. Hence, Kenyan mothers through community development programmes will change Kenyan living standards. This indicates that empowerment of mothers is required to change the quality of life in the society. The result shows that Kenyan mothers' living in Finland are potential in community development.

Key words: empowerment, motherhood, change, qualitative

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## INTRODUCTION

Gender equality has critically positioned women in different status. Gender as a Socials construction has been in global crisis, also in developing countries. Men hold majority of Kenyan political positions. Good employment posts and educated children belong to men in Kenya. Many mothers suffer from separation because men get out of the country looking for green pastures. Education remains the key to change, and the community development organisations focus on children and mothers' education. Empowering the mothers in Finland will increase possibilities of gender equality in Kenya.

The research focuses on the concept of empowerment based on experiences. The target group is Kenyan mothers living in Finland. Empowerment of mothers in Kenya has been the process to change the country's status. Since 1963, after Kenya's independence, the largest population has remained undeveloped. There are uneducated people and women because of cultural beliefs such as a baby boy are more important than a girl. These motivated the study for motherhood empowerment where all children can be treated equally. Gender and society have been a major phenomenon in the globe raising awareness

Motherhood experiences remain closed and not very often discussed in Kenya. The society discusses women without mothers' views. Kenyan mothers' experiences in politics and economy have created a change. The mothers experience and challenges, influences change and development in community life.

However, all mothers work hard for their children's development and the community. Empowering motherhood creates hope and achievements. Many Kenyan mothers have moved to Finland despite the cultural background. Kenyan mothers trust that tools offered in Finland would transform Kenyans' living standards. The major issues in empowering experiences create better standards of living. Major political positions have very low propositions of mothers in Kenya due education

background. The study was constrained on Kenyan mothers who are living in Finland and on achievements.

To point out the research area explicitly, the focus is on empowerment experiences in Finland. It concentrates on what Kenyan mothers face, experience and felt challenged about in Finland. The second focus is on those achievements implemented back in Kenya. Empowerment in Finland makes Kenyan mothers be professional, enjoy freedom of work and create better opportunities in life. Majority of Kenyan development organisations emphasize on education, health and economy. AMREF (African Medical and Research Foundation) creates value of the organisations and offers services to poor communities (Amref report, 2002).

The empowerment in Kenya requires better education and knowledge. Professional mothers have better chances for improving families' living standards. There are several important decisions Kenyan mothers make before moving to Finland. The research will answer the best favourable destination for mothers. Despite geographical and historical cultural changes, mothers achieve empowerment aspiration in Finland. Multicultural aspect is very common in Finland. Many mothers are living in Finland and being empowered. Finland is hosting Kenyan mothers effectively. However, the process of empowering the Kenyan mothers creates humanitarian support.

According to the mothers' experiences in Finland, would Kenyan standards change in all aspects? The education empowerment focuses on changing Kenya's education. Empowering education creates political, social, economical and health in better quality of life.

## 2 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

This chapter describes the geographical, physiological and sociological differences between Kenya and Finland. The study focuses on the mothers who have migrated from Kenya to Finland.

Kenya is geographically 580,367sq km. Kenya's neighbouring countries are Tanzania, Uganda and Sudan. Kenya belongs to East Africa location in the African continent. Kenya is a beautiful nation on the east coast of Africa, surrounded by mountains, rivers and beach at the basement of Indian Ocean. Kenya as a country composed of eight provinces with different cultural backgrounds and different languages quoted by Kenyan advisors articles.

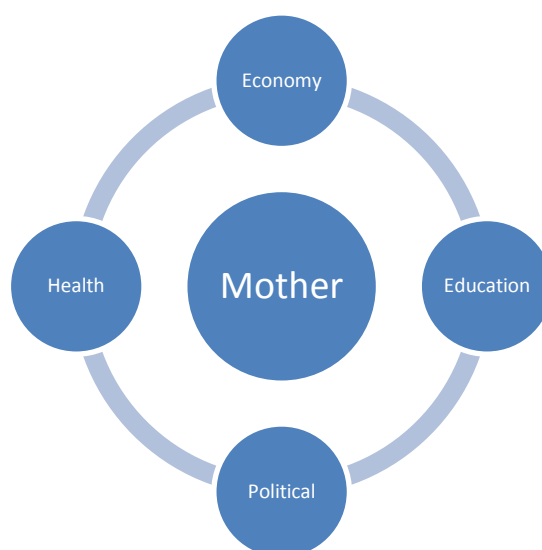
Background history of Finland states that the country attained independence December 6th, 1917. Finland is rich with national culture and experiences in managing its own affairs. During early twenty century, Finland was part of Sweden and Russia. The foundations in education and cultural policies, under the Ministry of Education were established after independence. The overview of education flow in Finland is a process. The education policy flows from pre-primary, secondary, higher education, vocational and university level as per Finland education system overview.

### 3 AIM OF THE STUDY AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

I have chosen to look closely on empowerment in Finland due to uncorrupted perspectives on motherhood. Motivation perspective of empowering mothers strengths the interest to encourage Kenyan families. The diagram below explains the areas of interest in the research. The mother in the centre shows the focus of empowerment while the out circles emphasise on areas of concern - economy, politics health and education.

The research was conducted in Finland. The target group was Kenyan mothers who migrated to Finland as mothers. Empowerment is linked with experiences the mothers shared in relation to economy, health, education and social life (Table 1).

TABLE: 1. Motherhood responsibilities



The empowerment implications focus on mothers' experiences on change. The development achievements attained by mothers in Finland work closely with values for change. Education empowers the poor countries to them. The main aim of the study is to gain from opportunities Kenyan mothers attain in Finland. The empowerment in education, health, social life and economy will facilitate change and living standards in Kenya.

Motherhood by itself has no impact on the society. However, the secret of motherhood is empowered by the experiences and activities. The study will address the phenomena of mothering and areas empowered to enhance the life. As a community developer, you may wonder what is so important in empowerment. The study suggests that enough support by mothers' achievements can rebuild a broken society.

Kenyan mothers migrate to many countries in the world for empowerment progress. Change without knowledge is immaterial. Aim of the study is to find out the process by which mothers' experiences in Finland can develop empowerment strategies to change Kenyans living standards and create better quality of life. Research questions are:

1. Is Finland a favourable destination for migrant mothers? 2. Do mothers achieve empowerment aspirations in Finland? 3. Can Kenyan mothers achieve social ,political ,economical, health and psychological satisfaction in finland?
4. What is the process of empowering Kenyan mothers in improving the living standards of kenyans? The major question remains: can motherhood achievements in Finland empower change in Kenyans living standards or offer better quality of life. The study attempts to explain the process towards empowerment of kenyan mothers experiences.



#### 4 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter reviews literature in relation to empowerment process and theoretical approach of the research. The section consists of literature in relation to the experiences on motherhood collected from books, lectures, the Internet and academic studies in Diak.

Change is a process to empower identity and diversity. Community development and collection of quality values are argued in this chapter concerning motherhood empowerment. Empowerment of mothers according to other researchers will highlight areas mostly affective in motherhood. Empowerment increases quality of life in health, and ensures mothers and their children better health services. Diverse education empowers mothers to get better jobs, promotes skills to their families, society and education to their generation.

Haralambos and Holborn (2008) state that empowerment theory is defined as a process for change. Empowerment can be achieved or maintained in many methods socially. The definition further elaborates individual efforts in changing disadvantaged sections through social perspectives. The elements of change process involve decision which every human being has a right to attain. Mothers have a decision making power regardless of state or colour. The definition encourages empowerment for developing skills of self sufficiency and effective implementation. Poverty creates hinderance to inclusion and positions people in exclusion categories (Haralambos and Holborn 2008, 522).

Dr. O'Reilly (2004) points out motherhood outlaws, theories and practice of an empowered mother that: Feminist scholars of motherhood are distinguished between mothering and motherhood, and argue that the latter is a patriarchal institution that is oppressive to women. Few scholars, however, have considered how mothering, as a

female defined and centred experience, may be a site of empowerment for women (Dr.O'Reilly 2004).

Dr.O'Reilly outlines how mothers imagine and implement theories and practices of mothering and empowering to women. Central to this inquiry is the recognition that mothers and children benefit when the mother lives her life and practices mothering from a position of agency, authority, authenticity and autonomy. Mothers experience painful situations in their product failures (DR O'Reilly 2004).

Bowlbys (1951) states that theory influenced by ethological studies on imprinting suggested infants were genetically programmed to form attachments to a single carer (the mother in most cases) within a critical time of the first years in life. Bowlbys argued that attachment between an infant and a caregiver has involved mothers due to adaptive behaviour that aids survival. In particular, attachment provides food, security, a safe base from which an exposure to important survival skills shown by the parent and an internal working model of relationships with others is observed (Bowlbys 1951).

Expectations in quality of life require empowerment in several aspects of life. The wide psychology torture in mothers is mothering virtues. Motherhood and mothering are not equal at any given chance. Therefore, motherhood aspect requires best style in dressing and presentable mothers. However, anybody can mother and achieve payment but real motherhood is free. (Dr.O'Reilly 2004.)

Being born in Kenya, and addressing mothers' challenges and witnessing gender equality, created interest in empowering opportunities. As Woodward identifies mothers' responsibilities are powerful tools for social development. To empower a mother gives her knowledge and then her children will show the products. (Woodward 2007, 12).

According to Henderson (2005) issues related to community development state that social inclusion and exclusion are determined by level of education. It is helpful to empower a tool in health, education and social impact. Why should an educated mother be whole time in the house while the city requires her knowledge?

Empowerment does not break family ties but strengthens the bond of change and quality, which widens community related concerns. Involving local people in development supports the user participation facilities (Henderson 2005, 62).

Empowerment in social interests shares some other researcher ideas within the globe. Motherhood campaign for development raises interesting approach in community development. According to the motherhood project organization in the USA, 2002motherhood report project reports that mothers in America had realized that motherhood values focus on social changed. Their interest in the project calls for motherhood movement in the connection to blood relationship between mothers and children. (USA Motherhood project organisation report)

Women care for children silently and wish to renew the sense of purpose, passion, and power in the work of mothering. We call mothers for a new commitment to build a movement aimed at honouring and supporting mothers and mothering. The motherhood movement is to ensure the dignity and well-being of children. Motherhood movements aim at a fundamental reordering of the priorities of the society. A society is driven by radical individualism and the values of commerce that it is losing touch within values of the mother world. The essential ethics of care and nurture are indispensable for both children and society. (USA motherhood project report).

A concept of quality of life generally outlines the value or excellence of life. It's an empowering life among individuals and within individuals from one stage of life to another. This implies comparison, a sense of change for better or worse. Hafford (2008) outlines the impact of better conditions on the well-being of individuals. (Hafford 2008.)

Among others Moberg and Brusek (1978) consider spiritual well-being of an individual as part of quality of life. Can quality of life in one dimension or multiple dimensions be in relationship with health or mental change and stability? Looking at quality of life from point of view considers indicators such as social economical status, housing conditions, environmental conditions etc. that has influence on one's

life. The emphasis here is on facilities such as education, health and recreation as well as the parts of social domain (Moberg and Brusek 1978, 303).

May (2002) points out that some writers propose some data on crime, safety, social participation, social disintegration and unemployment as part of criterion to measure quality of life. Women life stories pointed out as requirements for empowerment. (May 2002.)

Longman and Young (1983) evaluate places as level of importance on contribution of various factors to quality of life. Subjective indicates directly focus on life experiences in regard to satisfaction, feeling of happiness and accept the state of physical, mental, social and emotional health. Socially some mothers choose not to mother (Longman and young 1983.)

The concept of quality of life refers to a person's degree of satisfaction with certain aspects of his or her life. Every individual is in the best position to judge the amount of satisfaction she/he feels. According to quality of life of an individual is a summation of a set of 'wants', which is upon satisfaction that makes an individual happy.

Motherhood psychological health achievement supports every mother to be able to attain better maternity services, health insurances, gynaecological support, chronic illnesses like cancer attended. Motherhood would be a pride in all mothers. AMREF means African Medical Research Education Foundation focuses on health mainly in Kenya. Among other strategies on community awareness health raises various programmes. Health issues in mothers are global phenomena. The Amref reports state that Kenya's high population of about 35 million people needs health attention. (Amref Organisation Report).

Empowerment by Amref means working and educating mothers to teach their own families about major health challenges. Mothers' empowerment will not lose sense while some countries are facing health crises. The research highlights Kenyan mothers as the particularly disadvantaged group (Amref 2002).

The concept of health expands to mothers' painful situations during delivery. A young mother interviewed in Kenya stated that Kenya maternity poverty cases detained in hospital. Most young mothers are not able to raise delivery charges. The cases of taking mothers or children into custody after delivery are increasing. This young 32 years old experienced her pain as she joined other 42 poor women taken into custody. Motherhood health achieves quality when every mother is able to attain better maternity services, health insurances, gynaecological support. (Guardian UK 2002, 2003Report).

The provision of education to the whole population has been one of the major goals of the successive governments of Kenya. Since 1963, each successive year has seen budget towards education escalated, with the government spending half of its budget on education (Republic of Kenya 2002/2003). This is an indication that education in Kenya is important. However, the government cannot meet the ever-increasing demand for education in the country (Republic of Kenya Report 2002/2003).

An empowerment activity between Kenya and Finland education has great impact in Kenyan schools. However, to quote a few articles I will share the activities carried out by NGOS in Kenya. According to (Terve African / Health Africa article) partnership in health maintenance in Africa, mothers highly appreciate changing process. (Terve Africa Report).

The overall objective of the joint activities is to maintain, support and develop cooperation in the fields of social services. Health care and food between Kenya and Finland creates networking facilities. The project aims at raising the standards and improving the quality of social care, primary health care and nutrition utilizing the educational collaboration. The main purpose is to decrease poor living conditions in Kenya and to increase the awareness of the aims of the development policy. (Terve Africa Report).

According to Kenyan's Poverty Reduction Strategy Plan, the project considers its recent initiatives in the field of school health, nutrition education and in providing healthy meals during schooldays as effective tools in improving learning achievement. The project activities aim also to promote sanitation and hygienic practices among the members of the whole community, which ultimately has

favourable impact on higher life expectancy of children and well-being of the local population.

The goal is to increase knowledge concerning the UN Millennium Declaration, and with this information, the knowledge and awareness will be increased in different categories; challenges in primary education focusing in health aspects, poverty and hunger, gender equality and empowerment of women, reduction of child mortality, global partnership for development. (terve Africa.com.)

Haralambos and Holborn (2008) discuss the theoretical health and indicate that being ill can be unpleasant and possibly a life-threatening experience. The same material is reign forced by world health organisation (WHO). This further elaborates that the definition of health employed by the World Health Organization - part of the United Nations. These suggest that health is not merely an absence of disease, but a state of complete physical, mental, spiritual and social well-being. World health organisation (WHO, 1974).

According to the obligation of the sick, the role in Haralambos and Hebron (2008) indicates "The sick person must accept that the situation they are in is undesirable and that they should seek to get well as soon as possible. Health maturity is the backbone of humanity (Haralambos and Hebron 2008).

Kiluva 2000 women's agency and education policy, discusses mothers' sacrifices for their children's educational opportunities. The fact that the mother is educated gives green light to the children's better education in Kenya. As Kiluva shares her life experience, the most painful point indicates the dearest sacrifices mothers make is to leave their children behind to a new environment. (Kiluva 2001, xi).

Motherhood study is previously in different subjects as shared in this chapter. Brannen (1996) children and families as increasing the responsibilities of mothers due to marital breakdown have emphasized the idea of lone mothers on. Although Brannen and O'Brien (1991) discuss about European context this is not different in Kenya where the highest percentage of mothers suffer with their children. As he states "social impact on divorce-separated single, widowed in 1981-91 ended up in lone-mother families." (Brannen and O'Brien 1996, 77).

Hays (1996) in her edition *Cultural Contradictions of Motherhood* introduces the word mothering as proactive in people's eyes: that everyone knows about mothering, have been mothered, are mothers, or know mothers. This widespread familiar topic tends to elicit such powerful and often conflicted response. However, the research complimented the nature of a mother (Hays1996, ix).

As per Finnish lifestyle and Finnish families, tend to be small (3-4) persons. A British expatriate living in Finland examines Finnish people's culture, customs, history, life style, language, sauna and he or she considers Finland as most peaceful environment in the European continent .The Finnish people express Finland as a calm and peaceful place. Finland is full of lakes and forests. Finns are very honest and you trust the world of a stranger as stated in Finland's historical background. (Tietotori Report Finland).

The Finnish people think that foreigners say they are shy, reserved and hard to approach but all the same, they tend to smile and laugh only when drunk. However, the Finns say that the ideas may be true but when "ice is broken", you may experience the warm and nice hospitality of Finns. According to tietotori.fi, the Finnish birth age is 28 years due to young people studying many years, which prolong marriage. The Finnish people are relaxed and easy-going. Sauna is the best family attachment for a Finnish person hence majority has summer cottages near lakes with sauna (Tietotori Report Finland).

As per Kenyan lifestyle, they enjoy the reputation of being hard workers and at 7 o'clock the streets are crowded. According to K.A.C the phrase "Hakuna matata" meaning "No worries " or "No problem" but enjoy life encourages Kenyans to move on. Making appointments like European culture is useless in Kenya. Taking chances or ping in and knocking at the door is a daily routine. The fact that Kenyans like to laugh and quickly offer smiles to people may be due to colonial background of the British. However, if you enjoy quick decisions, visit Kenyan events when something unusual happens in the streets and a crowd will assemble within a minute around and everybody offers opinions on the event (Kenyan Advisors Report).

The same culture applies to Kenyans living abroad despite having appointments, an event will always succeed. Kenyans like using proverbs and sayings and commenting things is a common activity. The dressing and sexual behaviours of Kenyans remains the same in Kenya and abroad. Kenyans shake hands in normal circumstances, naturally touching each other and pointing a finger at someone is considered rude. Mothers share the same lifestyle too. The official dressing for a Kenyan mother should be a smart dress, hair and well-fitting shoes plus a handbag. If Kenyan mothers wear skirts height must be below the knees (Kenyan Advisors Report)

Responsibilities of the motherhood in Christian context: Mothers in the church hold the highest percentage in Kenya. Women who put on uniform of some kind hold non-profit organisations in the churches in Kenya. For those who have visited Kenya may have noticed the level of spirituality the mothers have in the churches and at home. Spiritual growth has made different homes succeed in improving the quality of life in Kenya. Best mothers teach their children on the way forward when difficult situations arise. However, other researchers have done same research on the responsibilities of mothers in the spiritual world (Kenya Advisors Report).

President David O. McKay said that motherhood is a woman's noblest calling. (Treasures of Life) Sacred calling and partnership with God, brings his spirit being into the world. Elder Boyd K. Packer praised women who were unable to have children of their own yet sought to care for others:

He argues on behalf of all mothers, not only of those women who have borne children, but also of those who have fostered children born to others, and of the many women who, without children of their own, have mothered the children a mother needs to spend time with her children and teach them the gospel. She should play and work with them so they can discover the world around them. (Boyd, Treasures of life, 54).



## 5 METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

In this chapter, I will explain the methods and the design I used - why I used and how I collected the material. I will also explain how I analysed the material collected from field.

Kenyan mothers immigrate to many countries in the world for empowerment progress. Change without knowledge is immaterial. The aim of the study is to empower Kenyan mothers for Kenyan improvement in quality of life. Is Finland a favourable destination for Kenyan mothers? Do Kenyan mothers achieve psychological satisfaction in Finland? The major research question is that: what is the process of empowering Kenyan mothers to improve the living standards of Kenyans?

The research was carried out by using qualitative method. The aim was to get information based on experiences from the mothers. Adapting qualitative approach was to assist in revealing the reality, and mothers' experiences on empowerment motivation. I used interview as a tool for the material required. Four questions were set as in appendix 1, and given to mothers. The recording (taping) method was used in order to maintain the flow of discussion. Time planning supported respondents' schedule and venue but all preferred their homes.

I approached the mothers first by using a telephone call, and interview questions (Appendix). The respondents called back and booked appointments of their choice. All the mothers chose their own home.

### 5.1 Qualitative research method.

During the topic-selecting session, I opted to use qualitative method with the intention of improvement in improving the quality of life and empowerment. Qualitative research method provides opportunities for exploring social aspects. Doing qualitative research, which explores the quality of life in social life, implies looking deeply into the quality of social life (Holliday 2007).

Qualitative research method was according to the knowledge shared in Holliday (2007) Doing qualitative research explores the quality of life in social life impact "Qualitative research looks deep into the quality of social life. Opportunities, explores all possible social variables and sets manageable boundaries (Holliday 2007).

However, other designs pop-in during the analyses such as a browed pyramid development hierarchy from Maslow's theory. To show the level the mothers have reached and level with language empowerment, qualitative research reinforces the real life experiences. Since the research is based on empowerment, qualitative method will assist to achieve what is important for community development or change (Holliday 2007, 9).

I opted to use interviews for establishing continuity of relationship discovery. Interviews encourage respondents into diversity. Observations reflect the flow space into unique personality by using face-to-face interviews; I managed to focus on the empowerment process. Observation assisted to attain powerful experiences and memories, in facial expressions and the environmental circumstances. (Kvale and Brinkmann 2009.)

Data collected in summer 2009 in Helsinki, Finland. The interview questions were typed and sent to respondents in advance. Confidentiality was assured to respondents. Different methods were important for analysing the data. First, the narrative method assisted in selecting the similarities. So different sub-headings were used, education, economy, politics, social impact and health. The tables analysed

achievement similarities between Kenya and Finland. This demonstrates the strong empowerment findings from the field.

After interviewing ten mothers, the experiences were corresponding. I listened to the tapes and typed the material. The material was put into five categories as per question. Narrative method was selected due to social interviews. For research participants, narrative method is always conscious and deliberate. Narratives make tools do things for social institutions for culture and society (Riessman 2008, 8).

Then the data was interpreted in narrative form, result was later interpreted into tables. This is to interpret comparison in empowerment forces between Kenya and Finland.

## 6 RESULTS OF THE STUDY

I have divided this chapter into two different parts to make the results clear. The first part is a report, explaining the observation of empowerment process. The second part is the table showing strong comparison in empowerment views. The aim of the study was to find out whether Kenyan mothers', empowerment experiences are tools to empower the standards of Kenyans, or offer better quality of life. In this chapter, I will describe the results according to respondents' views on, education, health, economy and social impact.

Education is the key to community development. In Finland, mothers achieve good education facilities. Kenyan mothers achieve professional skills from Ministry of Finnish education board. By appreciating Finland's offer, Kenyan living standards will automatically improve.

### 6.1 Health Empowerment

According to mothers' experiences on health, Kenyan and Finnish health policies are quite different. The rights of the sick in Kenyan hospitals depend on the capability and the well-being of a person, while in Finland the health facilities favours all stages of life. They discussed that health of Kenyan mothers have been left to NGOs such as WHO, among others who organize support to mothers in this depressing psychological aspect. Health stigmas in Kenya affect motherhood and their families.

Insurances are common in Kenya but due to the competition on the market they are not supportive while in Finland the insurance such as Kela among others plays a significant role in the country.

The Kenyan mothers felt that there is a change in relation to health management in comparison to Kenya being a developing country. The economic status of the country suggests the kind of health mothers achieve. The experiences recommended in health act in Finland increase the quality achievement for the mothers, from pregnancy to the entire well-being of the mother. However, mothers realized that with time Kenya might be in the category of health educators if the aspect of economy becomes first priority. Mothers willing to implement new skills in health will improve hospital standards.

## 6.2 Education Empowerment

According to Haralambos and Holborn, education is simply one aspect of socialization. It involves the acquisition of knowledge and the learning of skills. Internationally or locally, education supports beliefs and moral values. (Haralambos and Holborn 2008.)

Gender equality in Kenya has categorized women in the PRS (Poverty Reduction Strategy) which remains painful to the mothers and a challenge in comparison to free education in Finland. Some tribes still favour boys studies over girls. Most NGOs in Kenya are fighting for women's education and especially that of mothers. However, the following explanation from one mother's experiences showed that the provision of education to the whole population is one of the major goals of the successive governments of Kenya. Since 1963, each successive year has seen budget towards education escalated, with the government spending half of its budget on education (Republic of Kenya 2002/2003).

This is an indication that education in Kenya is important. However, the government cannot meet the ever-increasing demand for education in the country; hence, some developmental bodies and NGOs support the government. However, both countries have joined networking method of education as a priority, and it is respected in both countries. Finland has positively offered the tool for Kenyan standards through education.

### 6.3 Economic Empowerment

According to Kenyan mothers they have two different opportunities in regards to finances, not forgetting that motherhood fails when they are not being able to feed a family. To quote some discussion, one mother described the painful experiences mothers undergo not only in Kenya but also in Finland.

Mother's finances have much to do in relation to family affairs. The gender equality phenomena in Kenya state that men are the head figures. She continued that the employment aspect in the society determines all the inadequate consumption or inappropriate style of living in Kenya and Finland.

The economic status of Kenyan mothers depends on education levels, while in Finland professionals' skills integrates with the society and takes a higher percentage. However, they said the gap between Kenya and Finland is very wide due to Finland's family financial support. There remained continuous hope to assist Kenyans' living standards.

### 6.4 Social Approach and Culture

According to the Kenyan mothers, the differences in culture between Kenya and Finland have affected all the mothers. Promoting safety and achieving quality, signifies overall goals for the immigrant mothers. To mention the most common experiences all the mothers expressed was the culture shock. There are different culture shocks between Kenya and Finland. Most experiences involve language, climate, and environmental circumstances.

Socially, the mothers expressed fear for their children since no mother would be happy to be associated with all the irresponsible children. However, one mother told about a supportive life incident in Kenyan background. She stated:

"It's very painful to conceive, maintain pregnancy for nine months just to give birth to a thief or a murderer. Name it (her tears dropped helplessly) I bear witness to young thief who was killed in Kenya and everyone was shouting kill him, kill him but unbelievable the mother could not help the motherhood touch. However, she requested the police to give her the body for her son in tears. (M1)" The mothers expressed fear for their children in new environment.

## 6.5 Political view

Answering the question on Kenyan political issues on motherhood in relation to Finland was very challenging for the mothers. The painful events the mothers have undergone in Kenya with different political parties could not be comparative to Finland. They argued that as long as gender equality remains unsolved in Kenyan government, the Finnish government has much to do especially in fighting against corruption target.

The painful challenges of a mother and a child in the political crises in Kenya, being harassed by the police, burnt in churches looking for security, rapes, children's rights, mothers' rights among others were mentioned as having failed. However, the Kenyan mothers felt that the government has now established some women's organisations and accepted some mothers into the parliament and is therefore open the participation of mothers presidenthood.

In relation to quality of life in Finland, mothers expressed peace, freedom to move and physiological support from the government. The government in Finland recognises mothers willingness to support networking opportunities between Kenya and Finland.

## 6.6 Investment opportunities in Kenya

Kenya is a community-based society where the term we counts more than me. The mothers expressed the desire to respect Finland's opportunities and remember the call to make Kenya a self-reliant home. The areas that can change kenyans' living standards include open opportunities for mothers living in Finland when they get back to Kenya:

- Empower investment factors in enviromental growth. There are opportunities to change environmental circumstances. Areas as pertains hygiene and sanitation improves the quality of life.
- Empowering education to all children in Kenya. Empowering education to all children and mothers rebulds globe and Kenyan economy. Education offers opportunities to better families.
- Empowering young mothers' health to support a healthy nation. Assit in health care economy. What can be achievers or teachers. Mothers will be able to achieve better maternity services with better medical technologies.
- Implement professional skills attained by mothers' in Finland into NGOs to support community based activities. Many mothers are skilled in business education. There are excellent prospects for foreign goods in Kenya.
- Goverment changes to be non-corrupt and offer new opportunities to create better facilities to Kenya's resources. Tax payers will enjoy the fruits of their labour. Roads will be repaired. Hospitals will have all resources, equipment and medicine. Kenyans taxes will be utilized wisely by the civil services departments.



## 6.7 SECOND FINDINGS

The table shows the findings for achievement similarities in Kenya and Finland.

TABLE: 2 Comparative findings.

	Kenya	Finland	Empowerment offered in Finland.
Economy	No gender equality in financial opportunities	Gender equality in financial opportunities	Shared financial responsibility
Health	Health insurances attained	Health insurances accessible to all	Health insurances improve the quality of life
Education	Creates key for work opportunities	Empowers mothers to working life.	Professional skills utilized.
Politics	Few women in parliaments	Women involved in politics	Availability to country resources
Social impact	Many languages English, Swahili	Culture influential, Finnish only	Cultural shock Urgent, shows integration empowerment

The development in the above shows what requires to be addressed. Kenyans require empowerment in gender, human rights and health. Women or mothers embrace powerful supports to get the government.

## 7 FINAL FINDINGS

The narrative report and the comparative result showed that the highest percentage of the Kenyan mothers living in Finland have the desire to support their country.

TABLE: 3 Mothers supportive proportion.

Empowerment Responses	Mothers Frequency	Percentage (%)
Education	10	90
Health	10	80
Political	10	90
Social	10	85
Economy	10	90

The study indicates that the priority to implement the achievements back to Kenya ranges around 90%. Reports showed that majority of the mothers are not in Finland for self-motivation. The answer to whether achievements in Finland could change Kenyans' living standards was highly appreciated.

The experiences support willingness to change Kenya's educational achievements. Advising other mothers on health policies and technologies raises living standards. The motherhood values and virtues signify changes in Kenya. These mark a positive structural readiness to develop empowerment resources for Kenyans.

The research was able to take the excellent opportunities to invest in various sections in Kenya. Empowerment tools attract government policies from Finland as tools for developing Kenya. The research answered the question; can empowerment experiences attained in Finland change Kenyans' living standards? Mothers with one accord said, "Yes, we can."

## 8 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I have organised my own findings based on the research. I have also included the challenges mothers face and the limitations I noticed while conducting the research.

### 8.1 Challenges

Mothers expressed progress, but challenges' corner remains an open window and a dialogue to empower their daily activities. The challenges mothers face are on the improvement for achievement of their life and families. Increased knowledge and awareness of the following areas describes the painful challenges mothers undergo for the sake of their children. Challenges in primary education focusing on health aspects, poverty, hunger, gender equality and empowerment of women have affected the quality of life among Kenyan mothers. However, the global economy has hit the challenges motherhood deeply. During the interviews, I realized that most challenges are similar in both countries Kenya and Finland.

Health and social services (drug abuse) have affected most families on daily bases. However, the drug policies relate to public health services such as improving health and addressing the factors that affect investments. Lifestyle factors are over-use of alcohol, drugs, and illegal intravenous drugs such as cocaine which affects environmental health policies. The social style is one of the major problems for the drug users due to social exclusion and this is the reason why social workers are tirelessly dealing with programmes to focus on inclusion activities. There is no department that wants to get involved with the people who suffer from mental health problems in psychiatry conditions.

Drug addiction and security is not only experienced in Kenya but look at what is happening in Finland ,a student walks in with a gun and decides to kill class mates ,youth engaging themselves with drugs , what about our children ,as a mother I get scared when my children are out of the house. There is rape and racism everywhere be it Kenya or Finland, especially for girls although today boys are experience it harassment. How I wish someone can understand the physiological pains mothers undergo. According to this mother, the fact that she in Finland the challenges mothers face today are still vividly in her mind not forgetting the child belongs to the society too and she is answerer able if anything wrong happens.

Kenya as a country has its own ways of solving society problems though not all are well concentrated. Having worked in Kenya for some time, I support the need for social workers as defined by Haralambos (sixth edition) to develop interest in Kenyan mothers. He looks at social work as views of human behaviour, which involves culture theories development and human being rights. This has affected my country and the application of social workers is on high demand and with good skills to support the government.(Haralambos and Holborn 2008.)

Health facilities are dealt with by the Ministry, and have taken most social workers to the hospitals we highly need more to work in the field and more research is needed. Kenya is helping other countries as well as refugees from Sudan and Somalia which has also affected the economy.

## 8.2 Working mothers

Working mothers' everyday life is quite challenging. Mothers expressed that those who wish to work and mother feel like they miss both. Kenyan mothers expressed the strengthened capability on working rights for mothers in Finland supportive compared to Kenya.

Career mothers are expected to be good mothers as well as good workers in Kenya, despite being the sole caregivers to their children with or without a husband.

Comparatively Finland proves this argument quite differently, where responsibilities of children are shared equally due to development in gender equality. Mothers interviewed confirmed that parenting in Kenya has much to do with gender equality.

To compare maternity leave, in Kenya mothers are given 2 months while in Finland they are given 12 months which strengthens the bond between the mother and the child as the mothers get to spend more time with the child at the most crucial stage in the baby's life. Mothers expressed motherhood as a huge responsibility shouldered upon them.

All human beings have persons originated from a certain source and biologically for a purpose in life. Families according to Kenyan history are categorized in different cultural, religious or educational levels. The mentioned categories are based on the woman of the house who has to nurture the husband and the children and maintain the class level of the family. Mothers are expected to maintain beauty at all times and hence creates awareness and education for the new generation.

The cultural aspect of motherhood empowers mothers to remain in the kitchen, maintain children's hygiene feed them and the husband, too. Kenyan mothers are the grassroots of the house, with all answers to house services. However, mother's presence is highly respected by the local government. The experiences of motherhood power exist within context of relationship with their children. The decision to become a mother according to my point of view is a process, which has no limit. Looking at motherhood in Kenyan context the well-being of the woman pro-creation is continued but not appreciated.

There is no past tense in motherhood but a permanent stamp put on all women who undergo pregnancy period and deliver children. While observing motherhood in Kenya through my own mother, neighbour mothers and my friends' mothers sharing the contradictions of motherhood have left many women uneducated but promoting men into development. Many mothers have revealed the painful sacrifices they have made at the beginning of pregnancy as the cost of motherhood, when morning sickness reaction begins and she goes to work with no breakfast but gets back home

with one dozen of napkins. Mothers in their own style call this (joys of motherhood) in the maternity wards as they go home with their newborns.

Surprisingly, other researchers in this field were mothers already who after being empowered by education afford to create better understanding of motherhood. The gender issue in Kenya has made cultural groups undeveloped, due to fear of role of power by women. However, stereotyping stories have made majority of Kenyan men not allow their wives migrate from Kenya. Through researching about mothers' experience, I have understood the capability of empowering relationships. Cultural impact.

## 9 SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In this chapter, I have outlined the suggestions I got after the research and the recommendations raised during the study added with my own suggestions.

Respondents gave suggestive ideas to other mothers willing to move from Kenya to Finland. About 98% suggested Finnish to be taught in Kenya to give immigrant mothers chances to cope with cultural shock. The encouragement and willingness to learn Finnish language would not only help the Kenyan mothers but also the Finnish government to accommodate foreign mothers.

According to professional mothers, the idea of enlightenment towards the new environment is very essential tool to theoretical approach of motherhood. The community background was raised as an issue and area of concern to maintain the mother figures back in Kenya, which marketises motherhood for other children e.g. orphans for better quality of life. The research proposed other researchers to continue the good motivation in encouraging each other and educate others about community based motherhood.

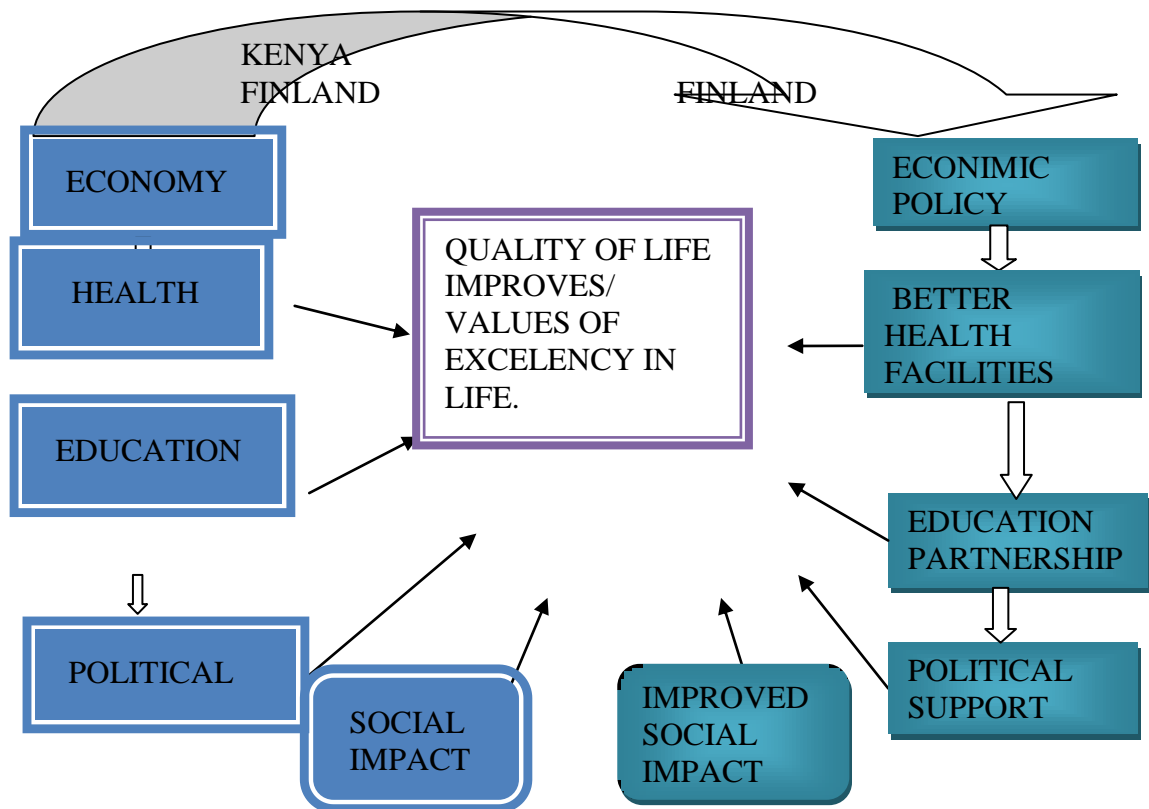
During the research, it was possible for the author to observe that mothers are happy to be in Finland and their quality of life somehow is in the process of development. These results motivated to get into deeper understanding of the research. Discussion on motherhood was listened from the fathers and children but due to the topic's research questionnaire, the material could not be useful but the topic of fatherhood may as well be interesting if desired by any other scientific author.



## 10 COMPERATIVE FINDINGS

The table below illustrates the findings of comparative areas of study between Kenya and Finland. According to the research findings, the table below elaborates the areas of comparison between Kenya and Finland in terms of motherhood. This corresponds with the objectives of the research, improving the quality of life empowerment. The table summarizes the real life approach into good quality of life for the Kenyan mothers living in Finland

TABLE: 5 Comparative views.

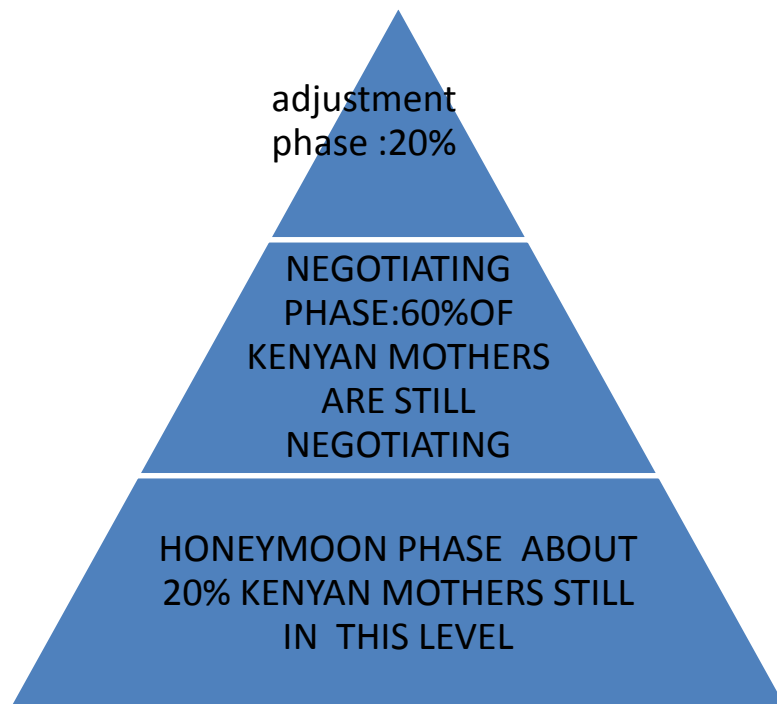


According to my own view, the research declared that mothers are biologically productive. Empowerment is shared by many sectors in community development to offer better quality of life.

### 10.1 Culture status.

The diagram below describes the level of culture shock adjustments. The Kenyan mothers have the courage to face the honeymoon level but they remain dormant in the negotiating level.

TABLE: 6 Culture shock adjustment.



The results declared that mothers who want to achieve have no option but to solve the cultural shock. According to my own observations, it takes a long time for Kenyan mothers to adapt to Finnish culture due to language barrier. The adjustment phase shows 60% of the mothers are still experiencing the shock.

## 11 OWN RECOMMENDATION

The study on motherhood has opened a new window in my study path. According to my own opinion, development approaches undergo considerable change. Empowerment may not be directly recognized since it is a process as I learned during the research.

I learnt it is important to have a dialogue with people to understand different phenomena. Despite Kenyans' willingness to develop the country the concept of empowerment requires to be shared. The concepts of challenges can be utilized as empowerment tools because powers exist in all generations.

Theoretical approaches from other researchers have encouraged my study. Community development has been my goal and dream for the future generation. The study limitations strengthened my focus on social services. Experiences are very personal but very strong tools for empowerment purposes.

I had high hopes to learn from the Kenyan mothers how the living standards could be changed in Kenya. By raising the living standards of mothers I realized that Finland's networking approach is empowering Kenya as a country.

The study initiated competency as a social worker and as a mother. I have a role to play locally and internationally. Analysing motherhood experiences personally created the logic of classifications in social inclusion and exclusion

As a researcher, I was able to pose questions and get answers. I realized that mothers also need in return care, support, kindness and love offered to them by their families. The study revealed that the solution for the mothers is training in the foreign culture and language what is appropriate and implement in Finland or Kenya. Hay's definition of motherhood that you are a mother, have been a mother or know a mother remains a global investment (Hays1996, 6).

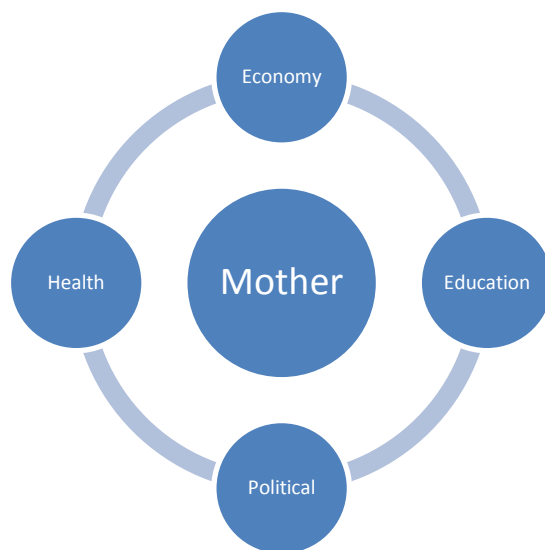
The study has been limited to Kenya and Finland although many families have moved elsewhere. The reason for this limitation was due to time factor and finance to move to Kenya and perform the research interviews. The study deals with motherhood and not parenthood hence limits the study search. Many researchers have researched on issues related to mothers and not motherhood roots, hence narrowed the literature review as I illustrated below in the diagram.

The experiences were too emotional for the mothers as they remember the so-called old good days, some expressed in tears. Not everybody loves to share experiences; some fear to share their private experiences especially the economic aspect.

The diagram below refers to the activities producing support for the mothers and the support given to their relations. However, the mother requires support to maintain her psychological aspects. The mothers expressed that not even their husband or children understand the physiological changes and hence most of them are ending into depression and unbearable circumstances. Physiological changes and hence most of them are ending into depression and unbearable circumstances.

The diagram reveals that same limitations require empowerment, Kenyan's hunger for justice and politics. The limitations of the study were based on the four aspects of empowerment. Mothers felt the painful moments Kenyans face in health facilities. Lack of school fees struck most mothers economy, very difficult to break through. Other researchers have focused on areas related to motherhood but not the most roots of mothers. This created barrier for more books in the field.

TABLE: 7 Motherhood responsibilities



The material I gathered will be useful to me as a social worker in the field. I have been working for mothers and with mothers but current achievements of experiences, strengthened the academic focus on community development. I have known how to organise groups and use their resources for community development.

Empowerment of mothers has strengthened my career to work for mothers under all circumstances. I realised that empowerment therapy supports all ministries and is very strong in creating new living standards. Goals for the global support include experiences and empowerment. I have learnt from own experiences.

The research created awareness of community development and team work. However, I acknowledge assistance from my loving daughters Olive and Moreen, my parents Mr. Joseph Ndungu and Mrs. Magdalene Ndungu, sisters, brothers, friends and tutors for your great support.

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## APPENDIX.1

DIACONIA UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES JÄRVENPÄÄ UNIT  
DEGREE PROGRAMME – BACHELOR OF SOCIAL SERVICES  
TITLE OF STUDY- EXPERIENCES OF KENYAN MOTHERS LIVING IN  
FINLAND.

Dear respondent

I am a student at Diaconia University of applied sciences studying degree programme of social services in Finland Järvenpää unit. I wish to carry out a comparative study on experiences of motherhood in the Republic of Kenya and same motherhood continued in Finland and check on how it can be useful to empower Kenyan living standards.

The study is for academic purposes, thus, I kindly request you to help me get information by filling in the questionnaire or share during the interview. The responses will be confidential and hence there is no need of writing your name on this questionnaire.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Ndungu Lucy NJambi

Draconic University of Applied sciences

Diak south, Järvenpää

Degree Programme social services

Bachelor of social services (UAS)



## APPENDIX 2

Please answer the following questions in the spaces or in the provided materials before the appointment.

NOTE; please give the reason for the movement from Kenya to Finland. And a bit of history about being a mother

1 How can you define motherhood differences in Kenya & Finland in relation social impact. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_?

2 What challenges do mothers face in comparison to Kenya Finland

\_\_\_\_\_

3- How is social/financial support structure in Kenya compared to Finland?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4-What dreams/fears do you have for your children future development?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. What suggestions do you have for young mothers or parents wishing to migrate with families from Kenya to Finland?

Thank you for your responses and time God Bless!