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Community Based Projects in Wajir County, Kenya**



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Socio-Economic Factors and Youth Participation in Community Based Projects in Wajir County, Kenya

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Abstract

Purpose: This study focused on socio-economic factors influencing youth participation in community based projects in Wajir County. Specifically the study was anchored on the following specific objectives; Level of Education, Governed policy and Cultural practice

Methodology: The researcher adopted a descriptive survey design. The study focused the on 900 registered youth groups operating across Wajir County. Simple random sampling Technique was employed to select the study sample. A sample of 171 respondents participated in the study. Data was collected by use of questionnaires distributed via drop and pick method. Quantitative data was scrutinized by use of descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics included mean, standard deviation, frequency, and percentages. The data was presented in form of tables, graphs, and pie charts. Correlation analysis was used to expose the strength of the relationship between the dependent and independent variables. Regression analysis was employed to expose the relations relationship between the level of Education, Governed policy and Cultural practices and youth participation in community development projects in Wajir County, Kenya

Results: Results highlighted a significant positive relationship between the dependent variables and the independent variable. Specifically, the study revealed that; Education is the biggest and the most sustainable catalyst towards youth participation and inclusion in community projects; Age for obtaining ID; Patriarchal social systems and lack of political good are the major setbacks of youth involvement in community development projects; Cultural practices such as FGM, 'Negotiated democracy' are anti-youth progress thus, responsible for the low youth participation in community development projects; On the contrary the study found that the youth in Wajir county affirmed themselves as a change force unlike their elders view

Unique Contribution to Theory, Policy and Practice: the study recommended that; both the national and county governments work together towards the global goal of universal education; that the Government relooks on the Age of obtaining ID's with a view to lowering the number of years required. This is to give the youth identity thus securing an earliest opportunity to participate in both economic and democratic processes such as elections promoting youth inclusion. The government should up its game on advocacy in regard to youth inclusion and in development.

Keywords: *Level of Education, Governed policy, Cultural practices*

1.1 Introduction

Youth involvement in community development denotes their active participation in the community centered initiatives both in international, national and local development agenda. In my opinion, this includes youth involvement, inclusion or meaningful participation of the youth in development and execution of the social, economic and political agenda. This calls for deliberate effort by communities, Nations and the globe. According to Abdullahi (2014), this dream is pegged on local community leadership, governmental and Non-governmental institutions, coupled with the global development organizations deliberate effort towards youth empowerment and inclusion in the designing and execution of the global sustainable, social, economic and political agenda.

The youth refers to a person(s) aged between the ages of 18-35 years, (Constitution of Kenya, 2010). According to the Kenya Youth Development Policy (KYDP, 2019) the youth makeup to 35% of Kenyan populace and 55% of the labor force. Statistics show that Africa has the highest number of youth population with an average age of 19.7 in the year 2020, compared to the rest of the world, (Mo Ibrahim foundation Report, 2021). Africa is followed by 31.0 Latin America and the Caribbean, 32.0 in Asia, 33.4 in Oceania, 38.6 in Northern America and 42.5 in Europe, the oldest continent. The Global community through the United Nations (UN) Youth 2030 agenda launched in 2018, is a manifest that the world has acknowledged that the majority youth populace (1.8 billion) play a substantial part in building a locally and global sustainable development agenda. This program is focused on an ambitious global strategy guiding the United Nations and its partners on how to meaningfully work with and for young folks around the globe, (UN Youth Agenda 2030, January, 2022 Progress Report). At the continental level Africa through the famous (AU) Youth Charter has established an all-inclusive and rational youth Policy across African continent in spearheading continental youth Agenda. Courtesy of advanced technology the modern global youth population is connected, educated, exposed and ready to innovatively drive global technological, social, economic and political transformation. For instance the American youth policy forum (AYFP) and Kenyan Youth Development policy (KYDP, 2019) both underline the youth populace as strength, agents of Economic growth and key drivers of transformative innovation. As such, it's clear from developed world, to developing one, that youth empowerment and participation in development is central to the modern global development agenda.

In Kenya, the youth population remains a priority to the Government. The Kenya vision 2030, the big four Agenda and the recent Kenya youth development policy (KYDP, 2019) highlight the Government assurance towards youth empowerment, inclusion and participation in the social-economic and political affairs of the nation. This is to ensure the youth voice is heard, and that programs and policies reflect their needs and aspirations. However, despite the above statistics, local and global interventions; the majority youth populace in Africa are still marginalized at the decision making table. Global statistics show that a fifth (22.4 per cent) youthful populace between 15–24 years neither are they employed nor trained, (ILO modelled estimates, November 2019). This state of affairs has been accredited to numerous factors comprising of; level of education, cultural practices, advocacy, government policy and economic factors, (Ogot, 2010). A study done in Ogun state in Nigeria by Oyetoro (2017) revealed a statistically substantial connection concerning the youth level of Education, Advocacy, Government policies and the level of their participation in Community development.

These statistics call for more and consistent efforts towards meaningful youth participation in all level of decision making in our society. Societies must embrace collaborative approach with the youth in the entire development process. Inclusion and participatory concept improves equity, accountability and transparency in utilization of resources, (Mahanga, 2017). Collaborative approach also results to development of effective programs and policies with greater impact to the society. To validate the above statistics this study focused on socio economic factors influencing youth participation in community based projects in Wajir County. Explicitly, Level of Education, Governed policy and Cultural practices influence on the subject was of interest to the researcher.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

‘A country’s investment in its youth, is an investment for its future,’ this statement informs the contemporary, deliberate and systematic interventions by both nations and development organizations towards inclusive development. Locally, the Kenyan Government through the Development Youth Policy, (KYDP, 2019) acknowledges the youth as wealth and a key driver of Innovations in Kenya. Article 260 of the Kenyan 2010 Constitution describes a Youth as an individual between eighteen (18 and 34) years of age. This is the most productive population any serious nation must tap in. According to Mo Ibrahim 2019 Forum report, approximated 60% of Africa’s Populace is under the Age of 25, this means the youth is the real African catalyst for sustainable development.

However, despite the deliberate and systematic local, continental and international interventions made through; vision 2030, AU Agenda (2063) and the UN Strategy for the Youth (2014) towards inclusive development; significant youth participation has not been realized. Global statistics show that a fifth (22.4 per cent) youthful populace between 15–24 years neither are they employed nor trained, (ILO modelled estimates, November 2019). This state of affairs has been accredited to

numerous factors comprising of; level of education, cultural practices, advocacy, government policy and economic factors, (Ogot, 2010).

For instance, in Wajir County a predominant Somali and Muslim community, statistics show a significant gap between youth participation and elderly dominance in the highest decision making table. KNBS, population census (2019) shows that Wajir County has a populace of 781,263 inhabitants. A total of 391,853 residents enjoy some level of employment with the youth representation only 21% of the population, (Wajir County Integrated Development Plan (2018-2022)). Clearly, this statistics show that majority youth populace is under represented thus, do not enjoy a fair share of the cake in Wajir County.

According to Ali (2018) the region is famous for ‘Negotiated Democracy Concept’, a classic case of a retrogressive, gender and youth insensitive conspiracy employed by Elders to muscle out youth and women out of leadership thus, taking away their right and their chance to contribute in building their dream society. Many youths in Wajir County have been rendered idle, hence, becoming low lying fruits to Terror Recruitment rackets with the majority seen chewing Miraa (Khat) around the market Centers. In addition to, early marriages, low levels of education and rural urban migration among the youth characterize the region. Again, the elders have total control of the community activities; the youth are recommended by the elders at the clan level to be or participate in the local community projects. This means patriarchy is still dominant in the region further discouraging youth participation in the rural community development agenda. According to Mohamed, (2011) nomadic way of life of the rural community in Wajir County, had a significant contribution on the low level of education among the youth.

A few scholars have examined socio-economic factors influencing youth participation in community based initiatives; Wanja, (2014) Abdullahi A. (2014) Mwei (2016) and Mahanga, (2017). The studies were conducted in Nyeri, Baringo, Bomet and Marsabit counties respectfully, further, the studies used different variables and none was done in Wajir County. This means the available literature on the subject is limited, hence existence of a research Gap. To fill the existing gap, the study examined the socio economic factors affecting youth participation in community based projects in Wajir, County.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

- I. To find out whether Education influence youth participation in community based projects in Wajir County
- II. To examine the effect of Government Policy on youth participation in community based projects in Wajir County
- III. To find out whether Cultural Practices influence youth participation in community based projects in Wajir County

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1.1 Education and the Youth Participation in Community based Projects

Wajir County is among the historically marginalized counties in Kenya, characterized by poverty, insecurity and unemployment. This has been catalyzed by the Al-Shabaab's insurgency in Somalia. Since, 2018 insecurity has crippled government efforts towards universal education in the region. Statistics showed that; since the Al-shaabab adopted soft target strategy on its insurgency targeting police stations, communication masks and schools, scores of non-local teachers have been killed, with the majority opting to fleeing the region. According to International Crisis Group briefings, (2020) the situation was compounded further by the Government decision to recall all non-local teachers from the region. Many schools have since been closed with the few operating overwhelmed by the number of student and pupil. This means the literacy levels in Wajir County and in Norther Kenya in general is at stake. Therefore the study focused on the question whether Education has influence on youth participation in community based projects in Wajir County.

2.1.2 Government policy and the Youth Participation in Community based Projects

Government policy refers to resolutions by governments and other political actors made to effect, change, or edge a problem or issue and universally accepted by the subject to whom its applied. Globally, youth issues are part and parcel of sustainability agenda. The United Nations through the world program of action for the youth entranced relevant youth policy programs to promote recognition and involvement of youth in development of courses of action, formulation and execution (World Youth Program Report, 2018). This is to promote its success as research has proven that youth involvement in policy formulation promotes its uptake, (USAID 2018). In Africa, through the African Union youth Charter, member nations are committed to establishing an all-inclusive and rational Youth Policy. Kenya heeded to the call a decade ago; via the Constitution of Kenya (2010) Article 55 on affirmative action programs, which opened the window for youth inclusion and participation in both the national and local agenda. This policy focused on youth access to education, participation in propagating access to Government employment and procurement opportunities.

2.1.3 Cultural practices and the Youth Participation in Community based Projects

Cultural practices refer to forces that emanate from the way of life of a community, these forces shape community values, norms and beliefs. This means that the cultural values and belief system of community greatly influence the thoughts, feelings, attitudes and judgement of the youth towards their living environment. For instance in the patriarchal somali culture the male elders enjoy express latitude to decide for the community, Abdi (2013). The Somali culture, beliefs and cultural insouciance remains an impediment to women and youth inclusion in community initiatives, (Sadie, 2015). The Somali rural community, is characterized by, early marriages, FGM's are key setbacks facing government efforts towards inclusive development globally.

Youth preferences and perceptions dictate what community based projects youth take part in. For instance, a descriptive study by Kisingu' (2015) on factors behind youth involvement in community based initiatives in agriculture validated the above assertion; Youth in Machakos county perceived agriculture as labour intensive, and non-profitable compared to the white collar jobs. Research also show that this perception promotes rural urban migration by the majority youthful population depriving the rural community of youthful social capital that can give greater value to community projects.

Though, the youth are invited in the decision table no meaningful engagement is enjoyed as their participation is prescribed by the elders. This excludes women and the youth from community socio-economic and political development agenda further discouraging inclusivity in the decision making table. Modern, collaborative community development approach reaps the most from its youth though recent empirical studies point to a huge disparity between the youth and the adult's representation on both local and the National policy making table, Mohamud .et. al. (2018). Thus, for any community to enjoy the full potential of its constituent's the spirit of common good must be given a chance to sprout. As such this researcher wanted to demystify the underlying cultural influences impelling the youth involvement in community based initiatives in Wajir County.

2.2 Theoretical review

The section discusses three theories underpinning this study. The study was moored by Arnstein's theory, the Social systems theory and the Cultural theory.

Arnstein's model of citizen participation dates back to the 1969. The model analyses how inclusion and participatory decision making approach influence public perception on the legitimacy of authority and governments. The theory highlights three diverse levels of citizen participation namely; Manipulation, Consultation and real participation. According to Samathar, (2018) Arnstein's mapped out leadership, power, attitudes and technological capacity as key factors influencing the level of citizen participation. This means youth technical capacity, the level of education/knowledge determines the position they occupy in the Society especially where decisions are made. An educated youth is skilled and exposed youth, capable of scaling the ladder

of leadership and advance their idea and their aspiration of today and the future. Lack of education on the other hand incapacitates the youth jeopardizing their chances of significant engagement with the local patriarchal society. The researcher adopted this theory in analyzing the impact of education on youth participation on community based projects in Wajir County.

The Social systems theory use of way back in the 19th century. Introduced by philosopher Herbert Spencer and French social scientist Émile Durkheim and influenced by the British naturalist Charles Darwin's theory of evolution. According to this theory the society is a complex system made of different systems. This means the society systems are heterogeneous thus, the systems must be adoptive and accommodative to its environment. According to Gibsons (2020) this theory is built on the belief that; 'one is better than some of its parts.' Communities exist for common good and this explains why social norms, ethos, beliefs, religions, government policies, programs, guidelines continue to shape the way we interact with each other, the authority and the environment. It is clear these variables influence our tastes, wishes and also serve to either discourage or motivate the youth towards community development. In my own opinion, the cultural practices and the Government policies and programs provide for different systems through which we respond to the ever-changing society. The researcher will therefore anchor the government policy variable on this theory.

Cultural theory theory dates back to 1896. Williams and Thompson are the major proponents. According to this theory culture is a 'whole way of life' it is communities address their social fiber for coexistence. It is a vigorous and concerted way of establishing new ways of the life of a society. On the contrary, Cultural theory proclaims existence of biases a cross societies with a substantial effect on the process of societal transformation, (Douglas, 1983). Dissimilar morals, thoughts, and manners (Nations, metropolises, clans, and races) can be condensed only to form a few traditional predispositions and inclinations. As such, different communities have countless socially prompted "racial biases" which influences people's ideologies and relationships, (Zwarteveen, 2008).

A study by Poku, (2006) revealed that; times cultural practices formulate the culture where inequities are legalized and conceded a generation to the other. A patriarchal society, Razavi and Miller (2007), reinforces the socialization process, thus subjugating women. The case is similar in Wajir where only the elders are culturally given the right to decide for the community on all matters be it economic, social or political. This is an impediment on efforts towards an inclusive society and sustainable development. This theory therefore fortifies the cultural influences on youth involvement in community development projects in Wajir County, Kenya.

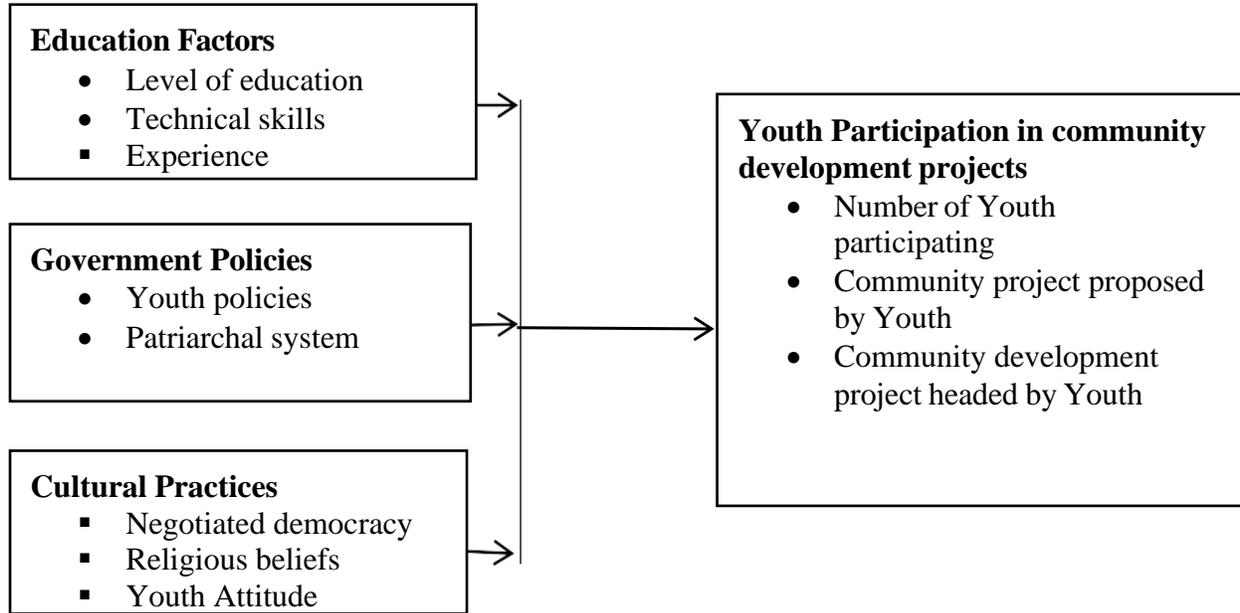
2.3 Conceptual framework

The illustration exposes the connection concerning the independent variables; (Education, Cultural Practices and Government Policy) and the Dependent variable (Youth involvement in community based development projects).

Independent Variables

Dependent Variable

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework



Source: Researcher (2023).

2.4 Research Gap

According to Mo Ibrahim 2019 Forum report, approximated 60% of Africa’s Populace is under the Age of 25, this means the youth is the real African catalyst for sustainable development. However, despite the deliberate and systematic local, continental and international interventions made through; vision 2030, African Union Agenda (2063) and the United Nations Strategy for the Youth (2014) towards inclusive development; significant youth participation has not been realized.

For instance, in Wajir County a predominant Somali and Muslim community, statistics show a significant gap between youth participation and elderly dominance in the highest decision making table. The region is also famous for ‘Negotiated Democracy Concept’. A classic case of a retrogressive, gender and youth, taking away their right to contribute towards building of their dream society. Many youths in Wajir County have been rendered idle thus, becoming low lying fruit to Terror Recruitment rackets with the majority seen chewing Miraa (Khat) around the market Centres. Early marriages, low levels of Education as well as rural urban migration among the youth typify the region.

A few scholars have examined factors influencing youth participation in community based initiatives including; Wanja, (2014) Abdullahi A. (2014) Mwei (2016) and Mahanga, (2017). The studies were conducted in Nyeri, Baringo, Bomet and Marsabit counties, the studies used different

variables and none was done in Wajir County. This means the available literature on the subject is limited, hence existence of a research Gap.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

The researcher adopted a descriptive survey design. The study focused the on 900 registered youth groups operating across Wajir County. Simple random sampling Technique was employed to select the study sample. A sample of 171 respondents participated in the study. Data was collected by use of questionnaires distributed via drop and pick method. Quantitative data was scrutinized by use of descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics included mean, standard deviation, frequency, and percentages. The data was presented in form of tables, graphs, and pie charts. Correlation analysis was used to expose the strength of the relationship between the dependent and independent variables. Regression analysis was employed to expose the relations relationship between the level of Education, Governed policy and Cultural practices and youth participation in community development projects in Wajir County, Kenya

The below regression model was used;

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \epsilon \quad \text{Where by:}$$

Y= Youth participation in community development projects

X1= Education Factors

X2 = Government policies

X3= Cultural Practices

ϵ = Error term

β = the beta coefficients of independent variables

4. 0 RESULTS FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

The resercher examined Education, Government policy, Cultural practices influences on youth involvement in communal development projects in Wajir County, Kenya.

4.2 Response Rate

The researcher employed questionnaires as the principal data collection tool. Target respondents received and responded on questions as framed on the questionnaires. The researcher together with the research aids dropped the questionnaires to study participants and colleted them at a later date, emails were used to expediate the process of data collection. A sum of 171 questionnaires were sent out to the field and a total of 146 questionnaireswere received back. Table 1 shows response rate of (85%); According to Dun, 2015, a response rate of $\geq 50\%$ is sufficient in descriptive study.

Table 1: Response rate

| Response | Frequency | Percentage |
|-----------------|-----------|------------|
| Actual Response | 146 | 85% |
| Non-Response | 25 | 15% |
| Total | 171 | 100% |

Source Author, 2023**4.3 Pilot Study**

Consistency of research data collection tool was assessed via the Cronbach's alpha method and in line with Objectives of the study. As highlighted in (table 2); The three study variables/ objectives were reliable. According to Isaac, (2016) this method is the most efficient when used to assess coefficient of internal consistency and stability. According to the rule of thumb for Cronbach's alpha is that the closer the alpha is to 1 the higher the reliability. A value of at least ≥ 0.7 is recommended.

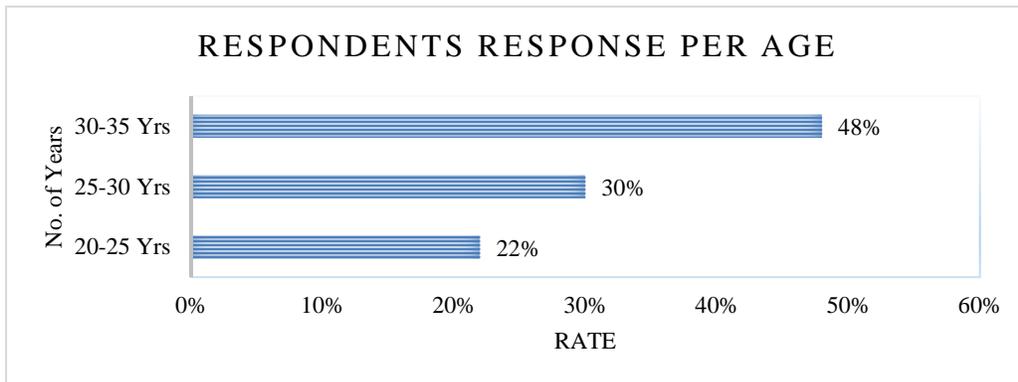
Table 2 Reliability Results

| Variable | No. of Items | Respondents | α =Alpha | Comment |
|---------------------|--------------|-------------|-----------------|----------|
| Education | 10 | 7 | 0.893 | Reliable |
| Government Policies | 10 | 7 | 0.923 | Reliable |
| Cultural Practises | 10 | 7 | 0.874 | Reliable |

Source Author, 2023**4.4 Demographic Information****4.4.1 Distribution of Respondents by Age group**

Figure 2 shows results of distribution regarding the age of the study participants. Most of the respondents were between the ages of 30-35 years (48%) then 25-30 years (30%) 20-25 years (22%) respectively.

Figure 2: Distribution of Respondents by Age group



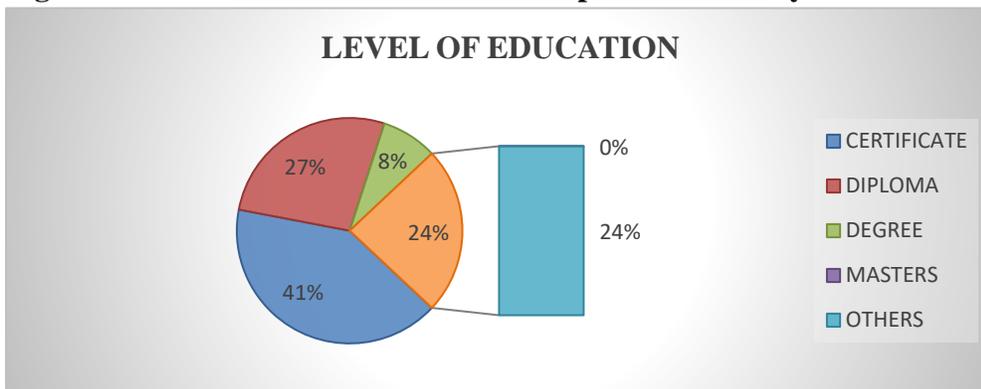
Source Author, 2023

4.4.2 Distribution of Respondents by Level of Education

Results on respondent’s academic profile is as show by figure 3. Majority of the respondents were found to be Certificates holders at (41%), followed by Diploma graduates at (27%) then Graduates at (8%), and others at (24%). None of the respondents held a post graduate qualification with Masters Level at (0%).

Results showed that majority respondents had the basic knowledge to understand the study questions. This infers that the study respondents had the ability to grasp issues concerning youth participation in community projects.

Figure 3: Distribution of Respondents by level of Education

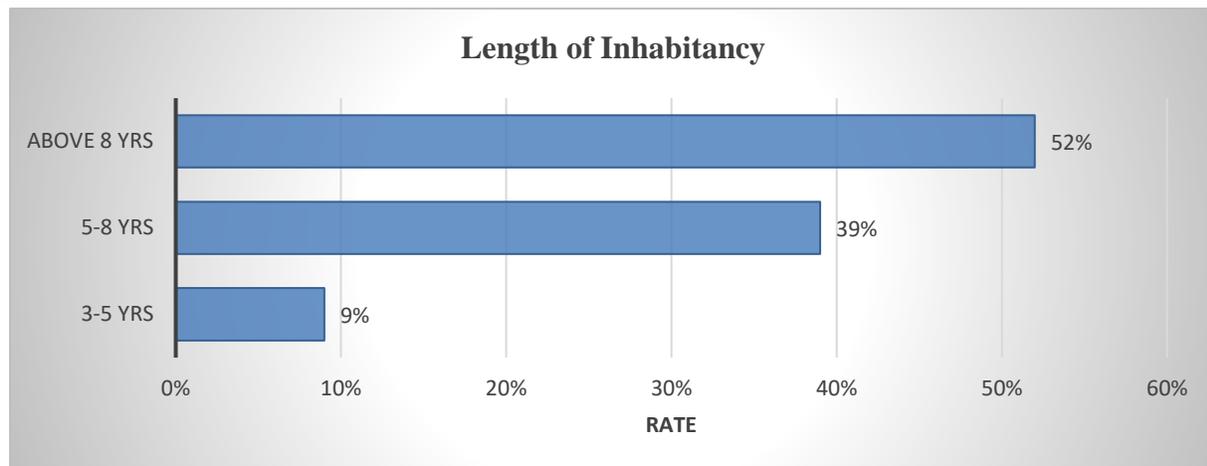


Source Author, 2023

4.4.4 Distribution of Respondents by Length of Inhabitancy

In this section the researcher wanted to understand the period the study participants had been in Wajir County. Results showed that majority respondents had stayed in Wajir County for more than 8 years (52%), 5-8 years (39%) and 3-5 years (9%) correspondingly. This results suggested that most of the respondents were living in Wajir County for significant period of time.

Figure 4: Distribution of Respondents by Length of inhabitancy



Source Author, 2023

4.5 Descriptive Statistics

This study focused on Socio-economic factors influencing youth involvement in communal projects in Wajir County, Kenya. Explicitly, the researcher sought to examine the effect of Education, Government policies and Cultural practices on youth involvement in communal projects in Wajir County. The study participants responded to various statements concerning the effect Education, Government policies and Cultural practices have on youth participation in community based development initiatives in Wajir County.

A five (5) point Likert scale ranging from; 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree was used to rank their responses. The scores of 'strongly disagree' and 'disagree' represented a statement not agreed upon, equivalent to the mean score of 0 to 2.5. The score of 'neutral' has been taken to represent a statement agreed upon, equivalent to a mean score of 2.6 to 3.4. The score of 'agree' and 'strongly agree' has been taken to represent a statement highly agreed-upon equivalent to a mean score of 3.5 to 5.

4.5.1 Education

The study aimed at examining the effect education has on the rate of youth participation in communal initiatives in Wajir county, Kenya. On a scale of five linkert scale the respondents indicated the extent to which they agreed on various statements regarding the effect of education achievements on youth involvement in community development projects in Wajir County, Kenya.

Influence of Education on youth's participation in community based development initiatives in Wajir, County

Statistics from the study highlighted a majority consensus on the statement that educated youth are more likely to be entrusted with roles and leadership positions in development oriented initiatives at the community level. This is affirmed by a mean of (3.58) and a standard deviation of 1.0.

This validated findings by Amondi (2017); Ndambiri (2018) that education not only propelled youth participation in local projects but also increased their value proposition in the society. A significant percentage of Elders today perceive educated youth as assets to the society.

Flagged by a mean of (3.63) and (3.6) majority respondents agreed that youth make up the least educated lot in the community thus, explaining their low contribution to the local community to which they belong.; this is attributed to Low levels of education, technical skills, and experience discourage their inclusion in the local community development agenda. The statements were varied by standard deviation of 0.9 and 0.7 respectively.

By a mean of (3.45) majority respondents agreed that High levels of education is a catalyst to youth advocacy call for inclusion in running of their communities they live in. The results were skewed by sd.1.2. Again, flagged by a mean of (3.5) and variance of 1.0 respondents agreed with the statement that Education has remarkably given the youth the requisite technical skills and knowledge thus, increasing their role in community based development projects. This is seconded by Mwei (2016) who stated that Education is the modern enabler of meaningful youth involvement in community development initiatives.

Lastly the majority respondent flagged by a mean of (3.61), and a variance of 0.6 agreed with the statement that educated youth had the capacity to maneuver regressive customs and secure a lead space and also participate in community based development Projects. These results concur with Abu (2004) who postulated that education promotes equality and inclusivity in the society regarding community socio, economic and political leadership and participation.

This results confirm those of Abu & Klassen (2004) who postulated that; that education promotes equality thus, a catalyst of inclusivity in the community development agenda. This means that Education is not just an enabler but a strategic tool that communities should embrace in their aspiration for an inclusive and sustainable society.

Table 3: Education

| Statements | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|---|------|----------------|
| Educated youth are more likely to take up roles and leadership positions in development projects at the community level | 3.58 | 1.0 |
| The majority youth women and girls make up the least educated lot in the community hence their low contribution to community development projects | 3.63 | 0.9 |

| | | |
|---|------|------|
| Low levels of education, technical skills, and experience disqualify youth from participating in community based development projects | 3.6 | 0.7 |
| High levels of education have reinforced youth advocacy call for inclusivity in participation in community development projects | 3.45 | 1.2 |
| Education has gifted youth with technical skills and knowledge leading to their increased role in community development projects | 3.5 | 1.0 |
| Educated youth maneuver retrogressive customs to lead and participate in community development | 3.61 | 0.6 |
| Average | 3.56 | 0.89 |

Source: Author, 2023

4.5.2 Government Policy

Secondly, the researcher focused on the connection between government policies and the youth inclusion communal initiatives in wajir county. Study participants were asked the extent to which they agreed on various declarations regarding; government policies effect on youth inclusion in community projects in Wajir County, Kenya.

Effect of goverment policy on youth's participation in community development projects in Wajir County, Kenya

On a scale of (1-5) please specify your level of agreement on the following statements regarding the effect of Government policy on youth's participation in community development projects in Wajir County. Key; 1-Strongly Disagree, 2-Disagree, 3-Moderate, 4-Agree, 5- Strongly Agree

Results show that majority of the respondent by a mean of (3.8) concurred that Enactment of Government policies i.e. Quota system led to increased youth participation in the local community projects, thus increasing youth voice in their immediate society. The statements were varied by a standard deviation of 0.9.

Flagged by a mean of (4.9) sd. 0.9 respondents affirmed that Age for obtaining ID card affect youth inclusion and involvement in communal projects, thus, the government should rethink the Age at which one should be allowed to obtain their identity cards. The study participants also agreed that; the Age capping for contesting in numerous political posts affected involvement of youth in

community projects. This was highlighted by a mean (3.4) and a standard deviation of 1.3. The study participants further affirmed Patriarchal might in social class, quashed youth's voice in community development by handpicking the community leadership. The results were signalled by a mean of (3.6) and a variance of 1.2.

In average lack of political benevolence regarding youth contribution in the community development agenda, is to blame for lack of youth interest in pushing for their deserved position in the community leadership and in communal development agenda. This was flagged by a mean of (4.1) and sd. of 0.8. This implies that there is an existing disconnect between the government and the rural youth. Similarly, these findings validates findings of Prout, (2012) that youth programs and policies are promulgated by the few exposed modern and urban based youth with little or no knowledge of the local challenges facing the majority rural youth, amounting to exclusion of the youth on the table where they are part of the Agenda.

In average statements on the influence of Government policy on involvement of youth in community development projects in Wajir County were flagged by a mean of (3.96) and varied by a standard deviation of 1.0. This implies that government policy has a substantial effect on the rate of youth involvement and inclusion on community development.

The results confirm a study by Ali (2014) which revealed that government policy majorly benefited the few urban youth and; with political connections, further marginalizing the majority rural youth.

Table 4 : Government Policy

| Statements | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|---|------|----------------|
| Enactment of Government policies i.e. Quota system has led to increased youth involvement in community development agenda | 3.8 | 0.9 |
| Age for obtaining ID card affect youth participation in community projects | 4.9 | 0.9 |
| Age requirement for contesting for various political posts affects participation of youth in community projects | 3.4 | 1.3 |
| | 3.6 | 1.2 |

Leadership in community based organizations is handpicked by the Patriarchal mighty in social echelons, thus quashing youth’s voice in community development.

Due to lack of political goodwill in support of youth ideas and perspectives included in the community development agenda, youth shy away from pursuing their space in community development projects

| | | |
|---------|------|-----|
| | 4.1 | 0.8 |
| Average | 3.96 | 1.0 |

Source: Author, 2023

4.5.3 Cultural Practices

Lastly, the researcher examined the cultural practices effect on youth involvement in communal development projects in Wajir County, Kenya. Participants specified the degree to which they agreed on various issues regarding cultural practices and its effect on youth's involvement in community development projects in Wajir, County.

Influence of cultural practices on youth participation in community development projects in Wajir County.

With a mean of (4.10) participants confirmed that Cultural practices such as FGM, ‘*Negotiated democracy*’ is anti-youth thus, responsible for the low youth contribution in community development projects. The results were varied by a standard deviation of 0.94.

These findings highlight the Elders disinterest in championing the youth agenda in the community this was flagged by a mean of (4.27) and varies by a sd. of 0.967. Again, it is clear that majority youth participants decried that Somali Elders come up with community based programs and projects and only involved them in the implementation process, thus disparaging further the youth voice in community based development initiatives. This was highlighted by a mean of (4.55) and varied by standard deviation of 0.5.

The result revealed that majority of the respondents by a mean of (4.22) agreed with the statement that the elders perceived the youth as inexperienced and as irresponsible in the society limiting their contribution space in community based initiatives. The results were varied by a standard deviation of 0.955.

By a mean of (2.46) majority participants strongly disagreed that the young/youth do not view themselves as a group that could trigger change in the community. The results were varied by a sd. of 0.787. These findings implied that the youth have affirmed their position in the society, they

now value their contribution in the society than never before; thus, today they believe they can add value to the society they live in. These results are supported by Sadie, (2015) who revealed that the youth is catalyst to sustainable development not only to the local community but the future of global society.

By the overall mean of (3.92) varied by a sd. of 0.83 clearly indicated that majority participants agreed that cultural practices predisposed the level of youth participation in community based projects in Wajir County, Kenya. This implies that despite the strides made through legislation, education cultural practises remain an impendent towards youth inclusion and participation in local community initiatives. Again these findings point to a substantial connection between cultural practices and youth involvement in communal development initiatives.

Table 5: Cultural Practices

| Statements | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|--|------|----------------|
| Cultural practices such as FGM, ‘ <i>Negotiated democracy</i> ’ is anti-youth thus, responsible for the low youth participation in community development projects. | 4.10 | 0.94 |
| Elders do not promote youth active participation in community projects | 4.27 | 0.967 |
| Elders come up with community based programs and only involve the youth in the implementation process | 4.55 | 0.5 |
| The youth are perceived inexperienced and as irresponsible in the society limiting their contribution space in community development projects | 4.22 | 0.955 |
| Young people do not view themselves as a group that can create change in community projects | 2.46 | 0.787 |
| Average | 3.92 | 0.83 |

Source: Author, 2023

4.6 Correlation Analysis

This was done expose the implication and connection between the variables and to forecast the level of variation in the dependent variable caused by the independent variables. Table 4.6. Shows

that at 95% results point to significant confidence thus, a substantial association between both dependent and independent variables. Correlation analysis to determine the relationship between Level of Education, Government Policy and Cultural Practises on Youth participation in community development projects was done, the Pearson correlation coefficient was computed and tested at 5% significance level.

The results point to a positive relationship indicated by ($r=.509$), ($r=.398$) and ($r=.678$) between Education, Government Policy and Cultural practises, and their respective effect on youth participation in community development projects in Wajir County. Further, the researcher found the relationship to be statistically significant at 5% level ($p=0.000$, <0.05), 5% level ($p=0.000$, <0.05) and at 5% level ($p=0.000$, <0.05) respectively.

These results imply that the three independent variables (Education, Government Policy and Cultural practise) have influence on youth participation in community development projects across Wajir County, Kenya.

Table 6: Summary of Pearson's Correlations

| Correlations | | Education factor | Government Policy | Cultural practises | Youth participation in community development projects |
|--------------------|---------------------|------------------|-------------------|--------------------|---|
| Education factor | Pearson Correlation | 1 | | | |
| | Sig. (2-Tailed) | | | | |
| Government Policy | Pearson Correlation | .263** | 1 | | |
| | Sig. (2-Tailed) | 0.007 | | | |
| Cultural Practices | Pearson Correlation | .350** | .346** | 1 | |
| | Sig. (2-Tailed) | 0 | 0 | | |

| | | | | | |
|---|---------------------|--------|--------|--------|---|
| Youth participation in community development projects | Pearson Correlation | .509** | .398** | .678** | 1 |
| | Sig. (2-Tailed) | 0 | 0 | 0 | |

** Correlation is significant at the 0.05 Level (2-Tailed).

Source: Author, 2023

4.7 Regression Analysis

The researcher used Multivariate regression analysis to define the importance of the connection between the dependent variable and all the independent. Regression analysis was also done to expose percentage in the dependent variable (Youth participation in Community based projects) which can be explained by the independent variables (Education, Government Policy and Cultural Practises).

Table 7 gives the breakdown of regression coefficient of independent variables results alongside the dependent variable. The results pointed to a substantial positive association amongst the dependent variable and the independent variable. The independent variables reported R-value of .805 point to a perfect association between a dependent variable and independent variables. R square value of 0.647 means that 64.7% of the corresponding variation in number of youth participation in community development projects across Wajir County can be illuminated by (Education, Government Policy and Cultural Practises). These results point to a significant positive relationship between the dependent variable and independent variable at ($\beta = 0.647$), $p=0.000 < 0.05$).

Table 7: Model Summary

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. An error of the Estimate |
|-------|-------------------|----------|-------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1 | .805 ^a | .647 | .633 | .166295 |

Predictors: (Constant): Education, Government Policy and Cultural Practises

Dependent Variable: Youth participation in community development projects in Wajir County

ANOVA

| Model | | Sum of Squares | Df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|-------|------------|----------------|----|-------------|--------|-------------------|
| 1 | Regression | 5.027 | 4 | 1.257 | 27.933 | .000 ^b |
| | Residual | 2.738 | 61 | 0.045 | | |
| | Total | 7.765 | 65 | | | |

Predictors: (Constant), (Education, Government Policy and Cultural Practises)

Dependent Variable: Youth participation in community development projects in Wajir County

The significance value is 0.000 which is less than 0.05 thus the model is statistical significance in predicting how education, government policy and cultural practises influence, youth participation in community development projects in Wajir County. The F critical at 5% level of significance was 16.8. Since F calculated which can be noted from the ANOVA table above is 27.933 which is greater than the F critical (value=16.8), this shows that the overall model was significant.

Finally researcher established that; education, government policy and cultural practises had effect on youth involvement in community based development projects in Wajir County.

Table 8: Coefficients of Determination

| Model | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. |
|--------------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|--------|-------|
| | B | Std. Error | Beta | | |
| 1 (Constant) | 2.353 | 0.202 | | 11.619 | 0.000 |
| Education | 0.183 | 0.037 | 0.392 | 4.948 | 0.000 |
| Government Policy | 0.158 | 0.045 | 0.232 | 3.546 | 0.001 |
| Cultural Practises | 0.121 | 0.023 | 0.383 | 5.272 | 0.000 |

Predictors: (Constant), Education, Government Policy and Cultural Practises

Dependent Variable: Youth involvement in community development projects in Wajir County.

A multiple regression model was adopted in this study;

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \epsilon$$

The study regression equation was; $Y = 2.353 + 0.183X_1 + 0.158X_2 + 0.121X_3 + \epsilon$

The above equation denotes that; taking all factors into account (Education, government policy and cultural practises) constant; Youth participation in community development projects in Wajir County will be at an index of 2.353. This results indicate that taking all other independent variables constant, a unit increase in Level of Education, a unit increase in Government Policy and a unit increase in Cultural Practises will lead to a 0.183 increase, 0.158 increase, and 0.121 decrease in Youth participation in community development projects in Wajir County, correspondingly.

5. 0 Summary CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary of Findings

The researcher focused on the connection between level of Education, Government policy, Cultural practices and youth participation in community development projects in Wajir County, Kenya. Implicitly, the researcher explored the effect of Education, Government Policy Cultural Practises on youth participation in community development projects in Wajir County. The researcher focused on 900 youth group leaders representing all the 900 youth groups across the six constituencies in Wajir County. A sum total of 171 questionnaires were sent out to the respondents and a total of 146 questionnaires were received back. This marked a response rate of (85%). See table 4.2 below; According to Dun, 2015, a response rate of $\geq 50\%$ is sufficient in descriptive study.

The researcher sought to examine the Age distribution of respondents. Majority of the respondents were between the ages of 30-35 years (48%) then 25-30 years (30%) 20-25 years (22%) correspondingly. These results shows that majority respondents (30-35 years) representing (48%) of the study respondent were fairly young and with the right energy and experience to serve their communities. Popular study participants were found to be Certificates holders at (41%), followed by Diploma graduates at (27%) then Graduates at (8%), while others at (24%). None of the respondents held a post graduate qualification with Masters Level at (0%). This implies that commendable percentage youth involved in this study had the basic education and knowledge to understand and to reflect on issues promoting as well as alienating the youth from the community development agenda.

5.2 Findings

5.2.1 Education Factor

The researcher sought to investigate the effect education had on the rate of youth participation in community based initiatives in Wajir county, Kenya. Statistical results flagged by a mean of 3.56 and variance 0.89 showed that Education greatly influenced the level of youth participation in community in Wajir county.

Explicitly, the respondents agreed on the statement that educated youth are stand a better chance in taking up in the community based development initiatives in their respective communities.. This validated findings by Amondi (2017); Ndambiri, (2018) that education not only propelled youth participation in local projects but also increased their value proposition in the society. This implies that; significant percentage of Elders today perceive educated youth as assets to the society. Flagged by a mean of (3.63) and (3.6) majority respondents agreed that Low levels of education, technical skills, and experience barring youth from partaking in communal projects. The statements were varied by standard deviation of 0.9 and 0.7 respectively.

By a mean of 3.45 and variance of 1.2 majority respondents affirmed that education is a catalyst to youth advocacy call for inclusion in running of their communities they live in. Results showed that; Education has remarkably given the youth the requisite technical skills and knowledge thus, increasing their role in communal development projects. Educated youth have the capacity to maneuver regressive customs and secure a lead space and also participate in community based development Projects. Results confirm Abu (2004) findings which postulated that education promotes equality and inclusivity in the society regarding community socio, economic and political leadership and participation.

Correlation results highlighted a positive relationship between Level of Education and youth participation in community development projects in Wajir County indicated by ($r=.509$); Further, the researcher found the relationship to be statistically significant at 5% level ($p=0.000, <0.05$).

This results confirm those of Abu & Klassen (2004) who argued that education brings equality and promotes inclusivity in the society. Thus, Education is not just an enabler but; a strategic tool that communities should embrace in their aspiration for an inclusive and sustainable society. This is seconded by Mwei (2016) who stated that Education is the modern enabler of meaningful youth involvement in community development initiatives.

5.2.2 Government Policy

Secondly, the researcher focused effect of government policies on the youth participation in community projects in Wajir county. Statistics showed that Enactment of Government policies i.e. Quota system led to increased youth contribution in community development agenda, thus increasing youth voice in their respective societies. This statement was flagged a mean of (3.8) a standard deviation of 0.9.

Results also found out that the Age for obtaining ID card greatly affected the rate of youth inclusion in the local community agenda. Again the Patriarchal mighty in social echelons handpicked leaders to spearhead community projects, further, quashing youth's voice in the community development agenda, socially, economically and politically. The results were signalled by a mean of (3.6) and a variance of 1.2. The study also found out that; the political class was not in support of youth inclusion in the community agenda further denting the youth Involvement in community development projects. This was flagged by a mean of (4.1) and varied by a standard deviation of 0.8. This highlights an existing disconnect between the government and the rural youth and validates findings of Prout, (2012) that youth programs and policies are promulgated by the few hand-picked, exposed, modern and urban based youth with little or no knowledge of the local challenges facing the majority rural youth, amounting to exclusion of the youth on the table where they are part of the Agenda. The is seconded by Ali (2014) who postulated that government policy majorly benefited the few urban youth and; with political connections, further marginalizing the majority rural youth.

Clearly these results imply that; Government policy has influence on the rate of youth participation in community development projects in Wajir County. Flagged by an overall mean of (3.96) and varied by a standard deviation of 1.0. This infers that government policy has a significant influence on the rate of youth involvement and inclusion on community development. Correlation results also showed a positive relationship indicated by ($r=.398$) between Government Policy and youth participation in community development projects in Wajir County. Further, the relationship was found to be to be statistically significant at 5% level ($p=0.000, <0.05$). These results imply that, Government Policy(s) has significant influence on youth participation in community development projects. This infers that the Government should further legislate and enforce laws and policies promoting youth inclusivity in all spheres of life.

5.2.3 Cultural Practices

Lastly, the research examined the impact of cultural practices on youth participation in community development projects in Wajir County, Kenya. The results showed that Cultural practices such as FGM, ' *Negotiated democracy*' is anti-youth thus, responsible for the low youth participation in community development projects; Majority participants also agreed that Elders do not sufficiently advocate for youth inclusion and partaking in communal projects. Statistics further revealed that majority youth participants decried local Elders come up with community based programs and projects and only involved them in the implementation process, thus disparaging further the youth voice in community based development initiatives. These findings also exposed that elders perceived the youth as inexperienced and as irresponsible in the society limiting their contribution space in community based initiatives. This affirms Bishar (2021) who concluded that in many community to date youth and women identity is that dependents.

On the contrary the study found out that the youth acknowledged that as generation they bring the deserved change in their respective community development agenda unlike the elders view on them. . This is clear that the youth have affirmed their position in the society, they now value their contribution in the society than never before; believe they can add value to the society they live in. This validates findings by Sadie, (2015) that the youth is the modern agent of sustainable development.

Descriptive statistic results show that by the overall mean of (3.92) varied by a sd. of 0.83 majority participants affirmed that cultural practices predisposed the level of youth participation in community based projects in Wajir County, Kenya. Lastly, correlation results denoted by a ($r=.678$) pointed to a direct relationship between Socio cultural practises and youth participation in community initiatives. The relationship is statistically significant at 5% level ($p=0.000, <0.05$).

5.3 Conclusion of the Study

The above analysis, correlation and regression results point to a substantial relation between the depended and independent variable. The study revealed that; Education, Government policy and Cultural practices had a role to play towards youth inclusion and contribution in community based projects in Wajir County.

Regression results indicated that taking all other independent variables at zero, a unit increase in Level of Education, a unit increase in Government Policy and a unit increase in Cultural Practises will lead to a 0.183 increase, 0.158 increase, and 0.121 decrease in Youth participation in community development projects in Wajir County, correspondingly

Specifically, according to this study; Education is the biggest and the most sustainable catalyst towards youth participation and inclusion in community projects. According the study concluded that; educated youth had not only the capacity to participate but manoeuvre retrogressive community customs, patriarchal systems and secure themselves a space at the decision making table in their communities. This means an educated has a higher probability of ascending to community leadership compared to an educated one. This findings are supported by similar studies by Ali, (2014); Mwei 2016 and Bishar, (2021) who agreed that educated youth have desirable qualities and are strongly interested with matters development compared to their uneducated ones'. Thus, knowledge and education is key to effective youth participation in modern communities.

On Government policy the study affirmed that; Age for obtaining ID; Patriarchal social systems and lack of political good will were the major setbacks of youth involvement in community development projects in Wajir County. This highlights an existing disconnect between the government and the rural youth and validates findings of Prout, (2012). That youth programs and policies are promulgated by the few exposed modern and urban based youth with little or no knowledge of the local challenges facing the majority rural youth. Therefore, the government should involve the youth in policy preparation, formulation and implementation (World Youth

Program Report, 2018). This is seconded by USAID (2018) Africa report which revealed that youth involvement in policy formulation promoted its uptake and success.

Lastly, the study concluded that; Cultural practices such as FGM, ‘*Negotiated democracy*’ is anti-youth progress thus, responsible for the low youth participation in community development projects; that Elders were not actively promoting youth active participation in community projects though they appreciated educated youth as valuable assets to the society. Statistics further revealed that majority youth participants decried local Elders came up with community based programs and projects and only involved them in the implementation process, further disparaging the youth voice in community based development initiatives. The elders also viewed the youth as inexperienced thus limiting their contribution space in community based initiatives. This affirms Bishar (2021) who concluded that in many community to date youth and women identity is that of dependents.

On the contrary the study found that the youth viewed themselves as potential force that could create change in community’s development agenda unlike their elders view. This validates findings by Sadie, (2015) that the youth the reliable modern agents of sustainable development.

5.4 Recommendation

The two level of government in Kenya (The National and county Government) should work together towards the global goal of universal education. This is to ensure all the youth have equitable access to quality and affordable education from every corner in this country as a way to transform the communities and the nation. This will further deal a blow to the local retrogressive cultural norms that continue to predispose youth inclusion in sustainable development.

The Government should relook on the Age of obtaining ID’s with a view to lowering the number of years required. This will give the youth identity thus securing an opportunity to participate in both economic and democratic processes such as elections thus promoting youth inclusion.

Both the government and all non-governmental organization (NGO’s) should up their game on advocacy in regard to youth inclusion and in development of sustainable development agenda.

5.5 Suggestions for further study

The study commends; further studies be done on the contemporary issues affecting youth involvement and inclusion in running of community based projects. Secondly, similar studies be done but in different communities across the African and Asian continents. Researchers should also explore determinants of youth participation in community leadership.

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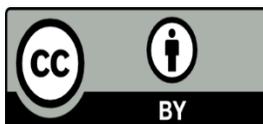
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