

CHANGING FAMILY STRUCTURES AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS ON THE GENDER ROLES IN NAKURU MUNICIPALITY, NAKURU COUNTY, KENYA

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate changing family structures and their implications on gender roles in Nakuru Municipality, Nakuru County. This study was conducted in Nakuru Municipality within Nakuru County and was confined to household heads. Main focus was on the five divisions within the Municipality namely; Lanet, Afraha, Kaptembwa, Baharini and Barut. The objectives of the study included examining factors leading to changing family structures; exploring how changing family structures has influenced gender roles; and ascertaining the influence of changing gender roles on children's behavior. A descriptive cross-sectional survey was conducted in Nakuru Municipality. This study used a sample size of 202 respondents selected through purposive and random sampling. Questionnaires and interview guide were used to collect data. Once collected, the data was coded, entered and analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version (20) was used to analyze the data which was then presented in graphs, pie charts, percentages and tables for ease of comprehension.

The study established that forces such as globalization, rural urban migration and education level had greatly accelerated change in family structure in Nakuru town. Women have been forced to take up family responsibilities that earlier on were performed by men. As children grow up irrespective of gender they tend to identify more with their mothers; Women contribute more towards the upkeep of the family compared to men. It is also found that most children irrespective of the gender, tended to copy from the parent that was close to them. Now that the child was left with the maid, they copied mostly from the house helps. This study's findings may give a clear understanding of the impact of the changing family structures on gender roles. Information generated provides a database for informed decisions to policy makers and help the Government of Kenya to address discrimination along gender lines that arise in the decision-making process.

KEYWORDS: Changing Family Structures, Gender Roles, Children's Behavior