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RESEARCH TOPIC:

SOCIO-CULTURAL VALUES AND EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN: A CASE STUDY OF THE MAASAI COMMUNITY

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ABSTRACT

This study seeks to assess the impact social cultural values on the empowerment of women and consequently to the economy of Kenya. The study focusses on FGM and Early Marriages among others as examples of the socio-cultural values and the consequences of this traditional practices to the empowerment of women. Some socio-cultural values are of great significant to the society while others are a threat. Empowerment can be defined as a person’s capacity to make effective choices and transform choices into desired actions and outcomes. The extent to which a person is empowered is influenced by personal agency (the capacity to make a purposive choice) and opportunity structure (the institutional context in which choice is made).

This is according to women’s empowerment Compiled by Emily Esplen, Shirini Heerah and Chris Hunter. Gender equity and women empowermment can only be achieved through attitudinal change, which requires a holistic aproach both at private and public sectors. The position of women need to be improved at household level as well as at community and institutional level. The status accorded to women in Kenya, particularly in the maasai community even in light of international awareness of gender issues is still a disturbing reality that Kenya has not yet managed to eliminate the gender gap. The secondary data used in the study was obtained from a review of published materials on the subject and from reports. The qualitative data collected was analyzed using narrative analysis while quantitative data was analysed through descriptive statistics as well as correlation analysis and regression analysis.