

**SOCIO-ECONOMIC FACTORS INFLUENCING SUSTAINABILITY  
OF WOMEN VILLAGE SAVING AND LOANING INSTITUTIONS IN  
KURIA SUBCOUNTY OF MIGORI COUNTY, KENYA**

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**A RESEARCH PROJECT REPORT SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT  
FOR THE REQUIREMENT OF THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF  
ARTS IN PROJECT PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT, FACULTY OF BUSINESS  
AND MANAGEMENT SCIENCES OF THE  
UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI**

**2020**

## DECLARATION

### Declaration by the Candidate

This research project report is my original work and has not been presented anywhere for academic or any other purposes.

Sign 

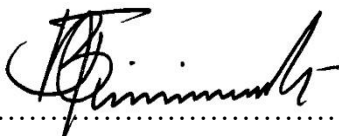
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## **DEDICATION**

This work is dedicated to my wife Jessica Odegi and children; Ivy Jane Achieng, Joe Biden Owino, Nicole Belly Awino, Steve Jobs Owino and Linsey Lindley Akinyi. They readily availed the encouragement, moral and material support throughout the research process.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

I take this opportunity to give thanks to the Almighty God for gifting me with life and health. I also thank my able supervisor Dr. JohnBosco Kisimbii for his thorough guidance and encouragement. He really gave me the opportunity to explore the world of research and learn more. I as well quest to pass my indebtedness to the University of Nairobi South Rift Region Director, Dr Moses Otieno who persistent effort bore this scientific inquiry. I in a very special way salute all the respondents for agreeing to take part in this research by providing the required information and lastly my family members for sustenance during the research period.

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

<b>BDS</b>	Business Development Services
<b>CARE</b>	Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere
<b>MFI</b>	Micro Finance Institution
<b>NGOs</b>	Non-Governmental Organizations
<b>SPSS</b>	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
<b>VSL</b>	Village Saving and Loaning
<b>VSLA</b>	Village Saving and Loaning Associations

## ABSTRACT

Women's village saving and loan institutions emerged in response to the pervasive poverty within rural communities. Their primary objective is to enhance the livelihoods of villagers and significantly reduce poverty levels. However, ensuring the long-term viability of these projects remains a challenge due to issues such as inadequate “governance within the groups, a lack of capacity-building initiatives, and insufficient stakeholder engagement, all of which result in limited benefits associated with these initiatives”. This study aimed to investigate “the socio-economic factors that influence the sustainability of women's village saving and loan institutions in Kuria East Sub-county, Migori County, Kenya”. The research was “guided by the following objectives: to examine the impact of governance on the sustainability of women's village saving and loan institutions, to assess how capacity-building for women affects their sustainability, to explore the influence of stakeholder engagement on sustainability, and to analyze how associated benefits contribute to the sustainability of these institutions in Kuria Sub-county, Migori County, Kenya”. The researcher “framed the study within the context of the theory of constraints and systems theory, both of which emphasize the effective management of scarce resources”. For example, these theories encourage groups to embrace a culture of saving to ensure the sustainability of women's saving and loan initiatives. The research employed “a descriptive survey design, with a sample size of 106 respondents, including 104 group members and 2 loan officers involved in village saving and loaning activities in Kuria East Sub-county, Migori County”. The sample was selected “using stratified and purposive random sampling methods, as the population under investigation was sufficient for conducting a scientifically sound inquiry”. Data collection was conducted “using questionnaires and interview schedules, and descriptive analysis was employed to examine variable distributions in terms of mean and standard deviation”. Additionally, “a Z-test was used to test the study's hypotheses at a 95% confidence level ( $P=0.05$ ). The study's findings revealed that governance (1.3874 with a p-value of  $0.0025 > 0.05$ ), capacity building (1.3874 with a p-value of  $0.0025 > 0.05$ ), stakeholder engagement (0.1264 with a p-value of  $0.004 > 0.05$ ), and associated benefits (1.5352 with a p-value of  $0.0035 > 0.05$ ) all exerted significant influence on the sustainability of women's village saving and loan institutions”.

**Key Terms:** Governance, capacity building, stakeholders’ engagement, associated benefits and “sustainability of women village saving and loaning institutions”.

# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the Study

Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLAs), sometimes referred to as Village Savings and Loan Schemes (VSLs), have indeed been effective tools in addressing poverty in many communities around the world. These initiatives are designed to empower individuals, especially in rural and low-income areas, by providing them with a means to save money, access small loans, and develop financial skills. VSLAs have been successful in many contexts, their effectiveness can vary depending on factors such as local economic conditions, the quality of training and support provided, and the commitment of group members. In the initial stages, external organizations like NGOs may provide some seed capital or training to help the group get started. The assistance included teaching members about financial literacy, basic accounting, and record-keeping. Additionally, sustainability and scalability are ongoing challenges for such community-based initiatives. Nevertheless, they continue to be a valuable tool in the fight against poverty, providing individuals and communities with the means to improve their financial well-being (Mutuku, 2015).

The primary goals of VSLA is to become self-sustainable after an initial period of external support. This self-sufficiency is typically achieved after around 18 months. The ability of VSLAs to function independently is a significant advantage, as it reduces their reliance on external organizations or funding. Proponents of the VSLA model often cite “a high success rate, with up to 95% of groups continuing to function after two years”. This demonstrates the resilience and effectiveness of VSLAs in various communities. VSLAs are known for their ability to reach deeper into rural areas and serve economically disadvantaged populations, including rural women. This inclusivity is crucial in addressing financial service gaps in areas where formal financial institutions may be absent or inaccessible. VSLAs provide tailored financial services that meet the specific needs of the poor. These services are designed to be affordable and accessible to people who may not have access to traditional banking services. Despite their many benefits, VSLAs face challenges related to financial literacy and training. Low levels of financial literacy can hinder the ability of group members to effectively manage their finances, make informed decisions, and avoid potential pitfalls. Quality training and

ongoing support are crucial to addressing these challenges and ensuring the sustainability of VSLAs (Dey, 2014).

The “Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLAs) play a valuable role in bridging the financial service gap and promoting financial inclusion, particularly in rural and economically disadvantaged areas”. Their ability to empower individuals and communities through financial education, savings, and access to credit is a testament to their effectiveness. However, sustaining and expanding the impact of VSLAs requires ongoing investment in training and capacity-building to improve financial literacy and management skills among participants. Efforts to enhance the quality of training and support for VSLAs can help address some of the challenges mentioned and further improve their ability to serve as a vital tool in poverty alleviation and community development initiatives. Additionally, ongoing research and evaluation can provide insights into best practices for implementing and scaling VSLA programs in different contexts (Sarumathi& Mohan, 2011).

Kasanta and Andre (2015) connotes that “women's empowerment involves enabling women to become self-dependent, granting them freedom, and expanding their access to opportunities”. This empowerment often includes economic, social, and political aspects, with the goal of enhancing women's agency and decision-making power in various spheres of life. According to Kabeer (2001) livelihood refers to the enhancement of individuals' abilities to make strategic choices that lead to improved living conditions and economic well-being. It often involves strategies for income generation, access to resources, and skill development. In addition, women progress through different life stages, their roles and status may evolve. For example, as women's children grow up and get married, they may become mother-in-law's, gaining authority and influence within their families and communities. Women's life experiences, including transitions and facing various situations, can contribute to their empowerment (Mason, 1986. These experiences may provide opportunities for them to assert their rights, offer guidance to others, and gain recognition within their social networks. The viewpoint presented suggests that, over time, less fortunate women can improve their livelihoods. This improvement may be driven by a combination of factors, including personal agency, changing social norms, and access to resources and opportunities.

Globally, Achola (2012) established that prior to “the global financial crisis of 2007-09, the global economy” witnessed a surge in the number of new consumers of financial services, estimated at 150 million annually. Despite the slowdown post-crisis, the growth remains significant, particularly in developing nations. A large portion of these new financial consumers hail from developing countries hence undergoing rapid economic development, leading to a burgeoning middle class that's increasingly participating in the global financial system (World Bank, 2010). As more individuals gain “access to financial services, the significance of consumer protection and financial literacy becomes paramount”. Developing countries often lack robust frameworks for consumer protection, which can lead to potential misuse and misunderstanding of financial products. Countries that have recently transitioned from centrally-planned economies to market-oriented systems have unique challenges. Empowering consumers becomes essential to foster transparent and efficient financial markets, and to instill trust in the formal financial system. With advancements in technology and a competitive financial sector, consumers now have access to a diverse range of financial products and services. While these innovations offer many advantages, they also come with their set of risks, consumers need to be well-informed to navigate this complex landscape. The global financial crisis of 2007-09 served as a stark reminder of the vulnerabilities within the financial system. The crisis emphasized the need for strong consumer protection and reinforced the importance of financial literacy. Recognizing the risks and the potential pitfalls, government authorities worldwide have been prompted to look for practical ways to strengthen consumer protection mechanisms and promote financial education (World Bank, 2010).

A substantial percentage of the global population, “particularly those living in poverty, lacks access to affordable financial services, as estimated by the World Bank, approximately 2.5 billion people do not have access to formal financial services”. Microfinance initiatives worldwide “have typically focused on providing credit to stimulate entrepreneurial activities”. In rural communities, individuals have traditionally saved money at home and lent it to neighbors, usually without charging interest. However, this method had limitations, as it required trust in the borrower, and the borrowed amounts were often inadequate for significant investment or comprehensive financial needs. For the poorest and most marginalized households in Africa, there is a scarcity of financial institutions designed to cater to their

needs. Even where such institutions exist, they often offer financial products and services that are not suitable for the unique circumstances of these populations (CARE, 2010).

In Africa, Allen & Staehle (2005) pointed out that, the notable increase in both productive and non-productive assets among households was predominantly linked to their involvement in Village Savings and Loan (VSL) programs operating in Zimbabwe. However, it's important to note that attributing these findings solely to the impact of “village savings interventions presents challenges”. This study “did not involve a comparison between different groups or control conditions”; instead, it relied on data collected over a four-year period. This approach may result in less precise information because individuals tend to forget their previous circumstances after such a significant time has passed. In a related study focusing on VSL programs in Malawi, as reported by Anyango (2005), it was observed that participation in VSL programs had “a positive effect on enhancing the livelihoods of members”, with a particular emphasis on the benefits for women, who constituted a significant portion of the membership in these programs. This improvement contributed to poverty alleviation.

In Tanzania, women encounter a range of significant obstacles. These challenges include macroeconomic policies that do not consider gender disparities, intricate tax regulations and “compliance processes, gender-based disparities in employment policies, complicated procedures for registering and licensing the smallest micro-enterprises (where most women are involved), lack of cultural acceptance regarding women's roles in entrepreneurship, restricted access to suitable business premises, limited availability of Business Development Services (BDS), difficulties in obtaining collateral due to property ownership practices, a lack of access to term loans and sufficient working capital to meet their requirements, and limited organizational and managerial capabilities within women's advocacy groups” (Gakure, 2001; Magwi, 2016).

In a study conducted by Apopa (2010) “in Kachien, Rachuonyo district, Kenya, the impact of women's involvement in village savings and loan (VS&L) schemes on their socio-economic wellbeing was explored within the context of the CARE program”. The research concluded that participating in these schemes enhanced women's access to pecuniary services. “However, the study did not delve into how capacity building might affect the sustainability of the VSL groups”.



Nyamongo (2016) pointed out that formal financial institutions, including Microfinance Institutions (MFIs) and banks, often overlook low-income individuals due to the prohibitive costs of their services. Such individuals, particularly women, struggle to meet the stringent banking criteria set by these institutions, encompassing aspects like bank charges, interest rates, and maintaining a minimum balance. Additionally, these low-income groups, predominantly women, frequently don't possess assets that can be used as collateral for loans, as highlighted by the United Nations Population Fund (UNPF, 2011). As a result, these marginalized groups resort to establishing their own local, self-managed, and often unregistered groups or associations to cater to their financial needs and elevate their quality of life. However, the genuine impact of these VSL schemes on enhancing the socio-economic conditions of the impoverished remains a topic warranting rigorous research, as noted by Odokonyero (2012).

The central focus of Village Savings and Loan (VSL) programs revolves around asset accumulation, providing credit, and facilitating savings tailored to individuals' repayment capacity. Effective VSL initiatives enable individuals to enhance their incomes, expand investment prospects, thus contributing to poverty reduction and diminishing income disparities between women and men (Claessens & Kranz, 2001; Armendariz & Morduch, 2005).

Village Savings and Loan (VSL) schemes, by providing small loans at affordable interest rates, play a significant role in empowering women, particularly when they lack alternative income sources (Karlan, 2007). These programs are often seen by experts as a beacon of hope for impoverished populations, offering a vital pathway “out of poverty and a means of empowerment, especially for low-income individuals, including women” (Sachs, 2005). Michaela Walsh, “the initiator of the New York-based organization Women's World Banking”, has highlighted the essential role of VSL schemes in promoting entrepreneurship, ultimately leading to the creation of employment opportunities in developing economies (Wright, 2000).

However, in Migori County, specifically in Suba East Sub County, poverty levels remain alarmingly high despite the introduction of VSL projects (MSG, 2018). The dire state of infrastructure, limited access to social amenities, recurrent droughts, and floods leave residents in a state of uncertainty and hardship. The presence of inadequate leadership and

governance, bribery, corruption, a lack of capacity-building for VSL groups, and insufficient involvement of stakeholders in VSL projects highlights. This study therefore sought to fill a substantial knowledge gap.

## **1.2 Statement of the problem**

The sustainability of “women's village savings and loan institutions” has been a persistent challenge since their inception in the 1980s, contributing to a significant ongoing issue of poverty (Manikonda, 2014). Additionally, factors such as weak governance, manipulative leadership, pervasive corruption, a lack of savings culture, and inadequate involvement of stakeholders in the VSL projects have continued to hinder their long-term viability.

Access to savings, loans, and other forms of credit is a fundamental element in fostering thriving and resilient communities. Community-managed groups often cease to operate due to defaults and fraudulent activities. It's commonly argued that these problems are linked to deficiencies in literacy and numeracy skills, which can lead to failures in financial record-keeping and adherence to policies. However, issues also emerge from unequal power dynamics within these groups, resulting in governance failures. For example, a few dominant leaders may wield significant influence over the allocation of group resources, leading to exploitation of those with less power, such as taking loans and not repaying them. Research on savings and credit groups has rarely investigated the actual lending patterns within these groups, and there is limited information on whether loans are accessible to most members or just a select few (Anyango, et al., 2006; Dey, 2014).

Studies conducted by Savita and Joyta (2012) and Manikonda (2014) have revealed that women's village lending programs have been a potent tool driving the socio-economic conditions in various countries, including India, Japan, Malawi, South Africa, Nigeria, Australia, Uganda, Tanzania, and Kenya. These studies have also shown that factors like political instability, “natural disasters (such as floods and droughts)”, corruption, and a lack of training specifically tailored to VSLs have significantly impacted their sustainability. However, these studies did not place their primary focus on aspects like governance, capacity building, and stakeholder engagement as potential socio-economic factors influencing the sustainability of VSLs. It is on this basis that the researcher has deemed it necessary to conduct a systematic “investigation to explore these socio-economic factors that affect the

sustainability of women's village saving and loan institutions in Kuria East Sub County, Migori County, Kenya”, with the aim of finding a lasting solution to these existing challenges.

### **1.3 Purpose of the study**

The “purpose of this study was to explore the socio-economic factors that influence the sustainability of women's village savings and loan institutions in Kuria East Sub-county, Migori County, Kenya”.

### **1.4 Objectives of the study**

This “study was steered by the subsequent objectives:”

- i. To “examine the extent to which governance influences sustainability of women village saving and loaning institutions in Kuria sub County, Migori County, Kenya”;
- ii. To “establish the extent to capacity building for women influences sustainability of women village saving and loaning institutions in Kuria sub County, Migori County, Kenya”;
- iii. To “assess the extent to how stakeholders’ engagement influences sustainability of women village saving and loaning institutions in Kuria sub County, Migori County, Kenya”;
- iv. To “examine how associated benefits influence sustainability of women village saving and loaning institutions in Kuria sub County, Migori County, Kenya”.

### **1.5 Research Questions**

The “study sought to find answers to the following questions:”

- i. How does “governance influence sustainability of women village saving and loaning institutions in Kuria sub County, Migori County, Kenya”?
- ii. To “what extent does capacity building for women influence sustainability of women village saving and loaning institutions in Kuria sub County, Migori County, Kenya”?
- iii. How does “stakeholders’ engagement influences sustainability of women village, saving and loaning institutions in Kuria sub County, Migori County, Kenya”?
- iv. How does “associated benefits influence sustainability of women village saving and loaning institutions in Kuria sub County, Migori County, Kenya”?

## 1.6 Hypothesis of the study

The study was “guided by the following hypotheses that were tested at 95% significance level:”

- i. **H<sub>01</sub>**: “There is no significant relationship between governance and sustainability of women village saving and loaning institutions in Kuria sub County, Migori County, Kenya”.  
**H<sub>11</sub>**: “There is a significant relationship between governance and sustainability of women village saving and loaning institutions in Kuria sub County, Migori County, Kenya”.
- ii. **H<sub>02</sub>**: “There is no significant relationship between capacity building and sustainability of women village saving institutions in Kuria sub County, Migori County, Kenya”.  
**H<sub>12</sub>**: “There is a significant relationship between capacity building and sustainability of women village saving institutions in Kuria sub County, Migori County, Kenya”.
- iii. **H<sub>03</sub>**: “There is no significant relationship between stakeholders’ engagement and sustainability of women village saving and loaning institutions in Kuria sub County, Migori County, Kenya”.  
**H<sub>13</sub>**: “There is a significant relationship between stakeholders’ engagement and sustainability of women village saving and loaning institutions in Kuria sub County, Migori County, Kenya”.
- iv. **H<sub>04</sub>**: “There is no significant relationship between associated benefits and sustainability of women village saving and loaning institutions in Kuria sub County, Migori County, Kenya”.  
**H<sub>14</sub>**: “There is a significant relationship between associated benefits and sustainability of women village saving and loaning institutions in Kuria sub County, Migori County, Kenya”.

## 1.7 Significance of the study

This enquiry is positioned to offer valuable insights that can assist both national and county-level planning organizations and professionals in enhancing the sustainability of Village

Savings and Loan (VSL) projects. By effectively managing the factors that contribute to the successful implementation of such projects, this research can provide guidance for improved outcomes. Furthermore, key stakeholders, including the Ministry of Trade and Cooperatives, loaning institution managers, loan officers, group members, and their respective households, stand to benefit from the study's findings by applying them in their work.

Additionally, the County Government of Migori (CGM) can leverage the study's results to enhance its planning activities for potential businesses, promote project management skills, and foster better governance practices. This can lead to increased stakeholder involvement and reduced bureaucratic hurdles within the county government system, ultimately facilitating greater collaboration of financial resources and the development of comprehensive plans to improve physical infrastructure. These efforts can contribute significantly to advancing socio-economic growth throughout the county.

The Kenyan government can utilize the insights from this research at a national scale to guide the creation and execution of policies related to VSLs. This ensures that such policies are anchored in well-researched information and adhere to industry best practices. Moreover, this study serves as a valuable foundation for scholars and future researchers, offering them a reference point for related investigations in the domain.

### **1.8 Basic assumptions of the study**

The enquiry operated under several assumptions. Firstly, it presumed that all the intended respondents would be accessible and available for participation throughout the study as needed. Secondly, it was assumed that the target population would have no difficulty comprehending the study instruments used in the study. Lastly, the study expected to validate the assumption that the socio-economic factors of governance, capacity building, stakeholder engagement, and associated benefits have an impact on the “sustainability of women's village savings and loan institutions in Kuria East Sub-county, Migori County, Kenya”.

### **1.9 Limitation of the study**

The enquiry come upon certain limitations that are common in research of this nature. One notable “limitation was the reluctance of some respondents” to provide completely honest and

candid information due to concerns about potential repercussions. To address this issue, assurances of confidentiality were provided to these individuals to help create a more open and honest environment for data collection.

Additionally, the study faced the challenge of finding a sufficient number of respondents who could directly address some of the specific questions posed in the research. To overcome this limitation, the researcher needed to exercise patience and make multiple field visits to ensure the collection of essential data for the study. This proactive approach was essential in mitigating the impact of this limitation on the study.

### **1.10 “Delimitation of the study”**

The enquiry was limited to “Kuria East Sub-county of Migori County in Kenya”. It confined itself to investigating how governance, capacity building, stakeholder engagement and associated benefits influence “sustainability of women village saving and loaning institutions in Kuria East Sub-county, Migori County, in Kenya”.

### **1.11 “Definition of significant terms as used in the study”**

**Loaning institution:** Is a public or private entity that gives financial advice to groups regarding embracing the culture of saving and investing.

**Socio-economic factors:** Are factors caused by human beings and are likely to affect their well-being either socially, politically, economically, technologically, spiritually and academically.

**Sustainability:** Is the extended continuity of a project by its own even after funding has stopped

**Women village saving:** Refers to a motivated culture in the remote areas whereby women give a given amount of money at the group to foster in-group and out-group borrowing.

### **1.12 Organization of the study**

The “study was structured into five chapters, with chapter one serving as the foundation”. In this initial chapter, the study introduced the research by providing essential elements such as the background context, research objectives, and the study's significance. It also outlined “the study's limitations and scope, and included definitions of key terms”. “Chapter Two

conducted a comprehensive review of relevant literature, exploring the historical context of women's involvement in sustaining VSL institutions, focusing on aspects like governance, capacity building, stakeholder engagement, and ensuring tangible benefits, drawing from previous research by other scholars in the field”. The theoretical framework was employed to guide the study by identifying specific indicators for analysis. Chapter Three addressed the research design, methodology, and ethical considerations, discussing aspects such “as the study population, sampling methods, sample size, data collection techniques, and analysis procedures”. Finally, Chapters Four and Five detailed the outcomes of field data, including the analytical methods used, presentation of findings, hypothesis testing, and, in Chapter Five, summarized the research, facilitated discussion, provided recommendations, and concluded the investigation.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1. Introduction**

In “this chapter, delved into a review of research conducted in related fields, focusing on the socio-economic factors that impact the sustainability of women's village saving and loaning institutions”, which were initiated in response to poverty levels in rural areas. This section examines empirical studies conducted on this topic, aiming to draw comparisons with the current study.

#### **2.2. Overview of Sustainability of Village Saving and Loaning Institution**

In 1991, CARE initiated “Village Savings and Loan Associations” (VSLAs) in Niger, providing a secure avenue for individuals to save money and access loans. This model draws upon the ancient practice of group savings, requiring minimal resources - just a lock box, three keys, and basic financial training. Since its introduction in Niger, CARE has impacted over 3.8 million people globally through the VSLA model (CARE, 2017). Within these groups, members engage in regular savings, facilitating income stability for rural communities. These groups were established to foster a culture of savings in the community and create a safe space for rural individuals to save and access small loans, often for income-generating activities. Trust, accountability, and transparency form the foundation of these groups, bringing together neighbors who have faith in each other. Studies have shown that these groups tend to endure over time, with a five-year study funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation finding that 98% of groups continued active meetings after 18 months, and 90% were still operational after five years.

In a global study commissioned by the World Bank in 2006, it was revealed that approximately 133 million individuals participated in VSL programs, benefiting from access to small loans. Notably, a significant portion, roughly “60%, of these beneficiaries were women living on less than one dollar per day whereby, women comprised approximately 83% of the documented clients of VSL initiatives” (World Bank, 2007). The research underscored “the significance of women's responsible utilization of funds, financial discipline, and prompt loan repayment in bolstering the efficacy of VSL schemes”. Consequently, investing in women emerged as a highly effective approach to augment household expenditure across



critical areas, including “healthcare, nutrition, food security, education, and safeguarding against unforeseen emergencies” (Robinson, 2004).

In Ghana, Village Savings and Loan Institutions have significantly proliferated, aiming to enhance the livelihoods of women. This increase has notably boosted the participation of women in VSLAs established by various projects. Women, in particular, are seizing the opportunities presented by VSLAs as a platform for economic advancement and savings, with 91% of women participating in savings groups. Moreover, the motivation for saving has undergone a significant shift, with eight times more families now saving for their businesses and twice as many saving for emergencies. This increase in household savings for businesses and emergencies, coupled with improved access to credit, has provided marginalized smallholder farming families with a safety net in cases of unexpected emergencies on their farms or within their households (CARE, 2016).

The “Village Savings and Loan (VSL) schemes continue to play a pivotal role in bridging the financial service gap, thereby mitigating the risk associated with the high costs of services provided by formal financial institutions”. “VSL schemes offer affordable”, customized financial services tailored to the needs of the poor, particularly rural women (Sarumathi & Mohan, 2011). Similarly, Ghadoliya (2000) highlighted the economic empowerment of women through VSL schemes, as they create conditions that enable women to enhance their households' livelihoods and make meaningful decisions at regional, national, and community levels. These services primarily target impoverished rural communities to uplift their living standards.

Furthermore, VSLs help address the issue of information asymmetry because the group collectively depends on each member's actions. Individuals who are untrustworthy and “pose risks are excluded from the group, and peer pressure within the group serves as an incentive” for timely loan repayment (Islam, 2007). Thus, the researcher anticipates examining whether “the following factors influence the sustainability of women's village savings and loan institutions: governance, capacity building, and stakeholder engagement”.

### **2.3. Governance and Sustainability of Village Saving and Loaning Institution**

Effective governance plays a pivotal role in ensuring that sound leadership, devoid of any corrupt practices, genuine representation, a commitment to transparency, and accountability, genuinely fosters the sustainability of any project. According to Momoh (2015), governance in Africa holds substantial importance in shaping “the relationship between leaders and their constituents, particularly in allocating state resources to enhance the socio-economic well-being of Africans”. Consequently, “governments rely on their citizens to fulfill constitutional obligations and establish a conducive platform for social engagement between leaders and citizens to address socio-economic issues such as poverty” (Nnoli, 2003). Nevertheless, poverty in Africa has often been attributed to institutional corruption, underscoring the need to target efforts at this level to combat corruption. A nation grappling “with corruption cannot fully develop its citizens to realize their utmost potential, as corruption, alongside transparency and good governance, impacts all aspects of a country's existence its economy, society, and politics, ultimately resulting in underdevelopment” (Momoh, 2013).

Quality leadership is of utmost importance, as group leaders play a critical role in managing the dynamics of VSLA groups, including “attendance, savings, and loans, among other group activities. The less frequent the village microfinance group needs to re-elect its leader, the more trustworthy the village microfinance institution becomes” (Mutuku, 2015). Mbaku (2000) contends that corruption in Africa stems directly from poorly designed institutional structures. Consequently, African state institutions, often characterized by weaknesses, “tend to focus inward rather than outward in the administration of social services”, rendering them ill-equipped to provide essential services to citizens (Zamperetti & Dalla-Costa, 2008). This has resulted in a lack of capacity among many African states to combat corruption, leaving them susceptible to manipulation and prompting citizens to disrespect state institutions.

Furthermore, the misperception of governance in Africa has led many political leaders to view it as a means to accumulate wealth. “The shift in the priorities of numerous African leaders from promoting economic development through the delivery of social services that would improve the lives of their citizens to embezzling state funds to the detriment of the populace is a significant issue and a contributing factor to the sluggish pace of development in Africa” (Manikonda, 2014). Identifying and nurturing effective community leaders aids in uniting communities and ensuring their voices are represented, allowing them to articulate their

wishes and desires. “Many microfinance programs incorporate leadership training components, with good leaders instilling discipline among borrowers, resulting in improved financial management”. Effective enterprise management “not only ensures that finances are invested wisely and profitably but also leads to long-term financial independence (Armandriz, Beatrice & Morduch, 2005)”. Therefore, the researcher deems governance a critical factor worthy of investigation to determine its influence on the sustainability of women's VSL institutions.

#### **2.4. Capacity Building and Sustainability of Village Saving and Loaning Institution**

Mutuku (2015) emphasizes that capacity building is a crucial element for the long-term viability of any project. She notes that the majority of VSLA training sessions were conducted based on identified needs, with a primary focus on income generation and report writing. Mutuku suggests that there is a pressing need for additional capacity building for group members, equipping them with comprehensive knowledge on how to ensure the sustainability of village savings and loaning programs for the enduring benefit of both members and the broader community. Furthermore, complementary capacity building programs can provide VSLA members with a competitive edge in optimizing their investments and savings, thereby increasing returns, enhancing their ability to repay loans, and ultimately building a robust income foundation.

CARE (2016) reports from Afghanistan highlight the positive impact of village savings and loaning programs due to effective training and capacity building initiatives for residents. In Afghanistan, VSLA has opened doors for improving the rural economy, offering technical support, capacity building, consistent monitoring, and access to financial services, all aligned with Islamic financial principles and appropriate management practices.

However, it's essential to recognize that building the capacity of communities and VSLA members can be challenging, as at times, their knowledge and skills are limited. Consequently, community mobilizers may temporarily assume some responsibilities typically held by the group's leadership, such as the chairperson, vice-chairman, or treasurer (Chu, 2013). While community facilitators may step in with the goal of getting the groups operational, it is crucial to maintain a long-term perspective and prioritize building the competencies of VSLA members from the outset. Community mobilizers should refrain from assuming management tasks of the group to ensure sustainability.

Once VSLAs are established and operational, they have notable effects on women and their households. Firstly, the training sessions positively impact their well-being by instilling a sense of empowerment and resilience when facing daily challenges (Zhao & Zhang, 2012). This research did not identify a strong preference for a specific type of training, as many women found various training topics highly valuable, including literacy, business development, children's rights, women's rights, livestock management, and specific VSLA management training (CARE, 2017). Consequently, this study aims to ascertain whether capacity building results in the acquisition of entrepreneurial skills, improved documentation abilities, and the adoption of a savings and investment culture, ultimately promoting sustainability.

## **2.5 Stakeholders' Engagement Sustainability of Village Saving and Loaning Institution**

Stakeholders play a pivotal role in ensuring the sustainability of village saving and loaning projects. The extent of stakeholder engagement in any project profoundly impacts its reach (Ondieki, 2016). Similarly, Osodo (2017), in his research, discovered that a significant portion “(26%) of the respondents reported having a very positive relationship with project stakeholders and another 18% of respondents indicated a good relationship, while 24% noted a relatively good one”. On the other hand, 20% of respondents expressed having a somewhat negative relationship with project stakeholders, and 12% specified a very poor relationship. These findings underscore the need for organizations to enhance their relationships with stakeholders, with the conclusion that stakeholder engagement is a vital aspect of project implementation efforts.

Chen (2005) underscores the importance of identifying stakeholders and their interests as one of the foremost considerations. Engaging stakeholders in a participatory process is essential because they should be involved in every phase of the work, enabling them to promote and take ownership. Their understanding of the community and its desires can be irreplaceable in avoiding errors in the project approach and the selection of involved parties. Stakeholders should participate in assessments, pre-planning activities, planning, and implementation. Early stakeholder involvement is crucial if a process is to be perceived as transparent. This is especially important when a project involves changes that affect people in various ways, as early involvement allows for the timely identification and resolution of concerns or barriers.

Despite the growing interest in stakeholder engagement in VSL, many of these studies lack robust empirical evidence, often due to research designs incapable of adequately identifying causal effects. Many studies rely on anecdotes or examine just one or a few cases (Donahue, 2004). Even when multiple cases are compared explicitly, which allows for more reliable inferences, they may still suffer from selection bias (Ansell and Gash, 2008). If stakeholder engagement has only been attempted in "easy" cases, the reported effects may be overstated; conversely, if it only occurs in areas with severe problems, its true effects may be underestimated.

Stakeholder engagement in VSL yields several benefits, including increased transparency, where decision-makers are "identified and must consider and respond to community priorities". Additionally, stakeholder engagement fosters greater empathy and trust, enabled on face-to-face communications during multi-stakeholder consultations (Ostrom, Walker, and Gardner, 1994). "Theories of conditional cooperation suggest that most people will cooperate if they trust that others will reciprocate (Frey and Meier, 2004)". The underlying "assumption is that treatment villages will establish more empathy and trust compared to control villages". Therefore, this study seeks to determine whether stakeholder engagement influences "the sustainability of village saving and loaning institutions".

## **2.6 Associated benefits of Sustainability of Village Saving and Loaning Institution**

An investigation conducted by Nyagwanga (2016) indicated that participation in village saving and loaning significantly enhances the living standards of group members. To summarize, Nyagwanga found that a majority of group members (45%) and leaders (27.5%) reported increased income after joining the self-help groups, leading to improved living standards. Regarding technical skills improvement, 27.5% of leaders and members acknowledged enhancement. Joining the group also boosted the confidence of women, with 14.2% of leaders and members gaining self-assuredness to express their "views within the group, family, and various organizations". Improved decision-making skills related to asset purchase and sale were observed in "only 13.3% of leaders and women members". These findings clearly demonstrate that the economic situation of most participants improved due to increased income.

Dey's (2014) research highlighted several benefits associated with the effective sustainability of village saving and loaning for residents. These benefits include, firstly, the ability to cope with drought, as households in both program and comparison communities affected by drought during the study period experienced improved food security and income, with VSLA program participants offsetting the negative effects of drought effectively. Secondly, the program had positive effects on microenterprise activities, resulting in a 6% increase in the number of businesses operated by households in program areas and a 9% increase in the duration of short-term seasonal business activities. Finally, women's empowerment significantly increased, as measured by their influence over household decisions, with a 4% improvement in the share of women reporting a high degree of control over household business decisions and food expenses, as well as 3% and 2% increases in influence over education and children's health-related expenses, respectively.

Overall, these results provide evidence that VSLAs can enhance household outcomes, even within a relatively short period of two years, without the injection of external capital. The impacts observed are likely to be larger among participating households, and the spillover effects into control villages suggest that the actual impact size may be underestimated. These findings align with previous research, such as Beaman et al. (2014), which also reported positive impacts of VSLA groups on savings and food security. Nyamongo (2012) recommends that VSL groups have a significant effect on rural women's livelihood outcomes, enabling members to access loans for various purposes, ultimately contributing to the sustainability of rural women's livelihoods.

## **2.7. Theoretical framework**

As per Thomas (2007), “a theory represents a form of thoughtful and logical abstract thinking”, or the outcomes derived from such thinking, that is contemplative and generalizing in nature. The primary purpose of theories is to provide guidance for individuals in the process of discovering facts rather than achieving specific goals, and they maintain a neutral stance when it comes to selecting among different value-based alternatives. In this study, it is “guided by the theories of Constraint and Systems Theory”.

### **2.7.1 The “Theory of Constraints”**

The “theory of constraints (TOC) offers a framework for effective organizational management, based on the principles of system thinking and constraint management (Kohli & Gupta, 2010)”. TOC-oriented “management philosophy revolves around three levels of change: the organization's mindset, the performance metrics guiding the organization, and the methods employed within the organization” (Gupta and Boyd, 2008).

According to Kasanta and Andre (2015), managing most VSL projects is challenging due to the presence of uncertainty and the conflicting commitments related to deadlines, budgets, and project content. The criteria of constraints (governance, capacity building, and stakeholder engagement) in project management are widely recognized as indicators of project success. Project managers consider these three constraints crucial for meeting project requirements and achieving success. Optimizing these aspects enhances project quality and ensures timely completion. While each of the three constraints—project scope (a measure of quality), cost, and time—individually influences project performance, they are interconnected, meaning changes in one can impact the other two, ultimately affecting project outcomes to a greater extent (Ondieki, 2016).

### **2.7.2 Systems Theory**

Examining systems theory, Juma (2015) pointed out that this theory highlights the connections among different components within an organization and how any alteration in one part can have repercussions on all the others. Maignan et al. (2012) concurred with Juma, emphasizing that all facets of an organization are interconnected, and changes in one variable are likely to affect other elements. Gaba (2013) added that organizations function as systems that interact with their surroundings, aiming to achieve a state of equilibrium by adapting to environmental changes.

In the context of this study, VSLAs can be seen as open systems in constant interaction with both internal and external environments. The successful execution of organizational projects can be influenced by systems theory, where the achievement of desired outcomes depends on the interplay of various factors (Kagendo, 2013; Lango, 2015). In VSLA projects, these factors may encompass governance, capacity building, stakeholder engagement, and the associated benefits.

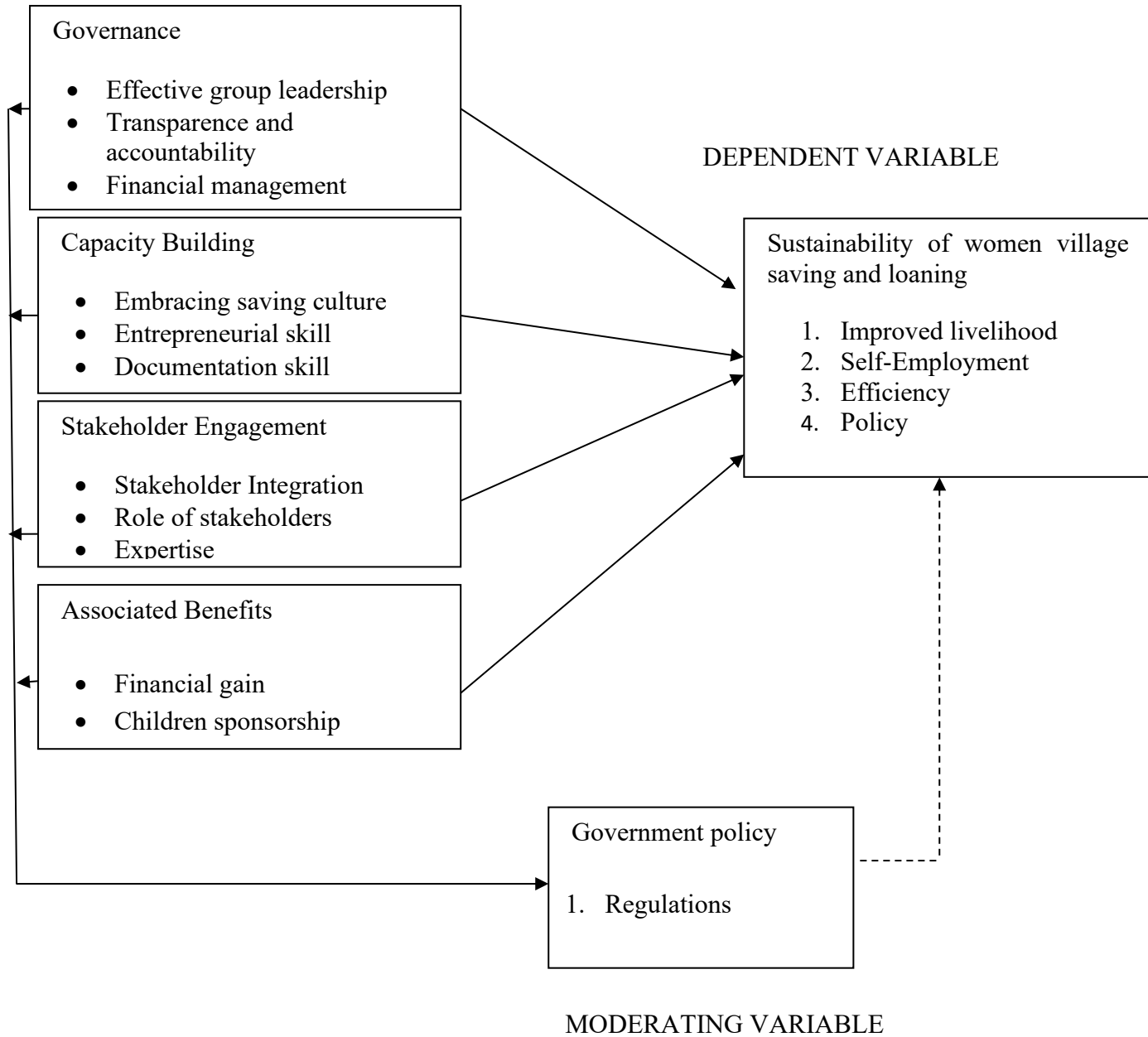
As stated by Ali (2012), project sustainability is shaped by the interaction of various factors within the organizational environment. For instance, when VSLAs practice sound financial management, members are encouraged to embrace a savings culture (Nudurupati, Garengo & Turner, 2007; Gaba, 2013). With relevant guidance from financial experts and other stakeholders, this endeavor is more likely to yield financial gains (Kirsi, 2010). Consequently, this improvement positively impacts the livelihoods of local women.



## 2.8. Conceptual framework

The “figure below illustrates the conceptual framework:”

### INDEPENDENT VARIABLES



**Figure 1: Conceptual framework showing the interrelationship between the variables**

## 2.9. Knowledge gap

Most of the literature reviewed comes from various authors hailing from different countries, each with their unique strategic approaches and perspectives that differ from those in Kenya. Moreover, the existing studies do not delve deeply into the specific issue of how “socio-economic factors impact the sustainability of women's village savings and loaning institutions initiated to address poverty in rural areas”. Furthermore, the research conducted in Kenya has not comprehensively examined the “sustainability of women's village savings and loaning institutions in the context of Migori County”. Therefore, I deemed it essential to conduct a rigorous investigation “to explore the socio-economic factors that influence the sustainability of women's village savings and loaning institutions in Kuria East sub County, Migori County, Kenya”. This research aims to provide a long-term solution to the challenges outlined below

**Table 2. 1: Knowledge gaps**

Variable	Author and Year	Findings	Knowledge Gap
Governance	Momoh (2015)	Lack of proper governance structures due to corruption greatly affects the implementation and “sustainability of projects”.	“The study was limited to Corruption mitigation institutional projects”
	Mutuku (2015)	The strength of project leadership enhances its implementation and sustainability	This study was biased to leadership as opposed to governance in VSL projects
Capacity building	Manikonda (2014)	Provision of relevant training empowers the Self-Help group members. Capacity building in is instrumental to gaining financial knowledge that leads to sustainability endeavors.	This study was biased to Self-Help Group programme projects
	Kasanta& Andre (2015)	Capacity building on women leads to their empowerment. Empowered women are therefore able to feed their families thus enhancing their sustainability.	The Literature was limited to VSLA community funded projects

Stakeholder involvement	Ayuka (2017)	Stakeholder involvement affects the project. Stakeholder integration led to successful implementation of projects	The “literature was limited to County government-funded projects”.
	Osodo (2012)	Stakeholder involvement is affecting any project intervention.	The literature was limited to Construction projects
Associated benefits	Nyamongo (2014)	Financial gain, continuous development, stakeholder integrations are some of the associated benefits	This study did not fully center into the associated benefits of VSL institutions.
	CARE (2017)	Coming together of VSLAs promotes loaning capacities. Loaning capacities serves as an associated benefit to the members.	This literature was limited to “role of Village Saving and Loan Association / Community Based Savings Groups in household's resilience” but little was done on associated benefits.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter provides an extensive account of the procedures employed to acquire, handle, analyze, and construe the data required to meet the research objectives. The components of the methodology covered. This chapter “encompass the research design utilized, the specific study area, the demographic group under investigation, the determination of the sample size and the method for selecting samples, the tools employed for data collection, the validity and reliability assessments of these instruments, the techniques for collecting data, the methods for processing and analyzing the data, and the ethical considerations adhered to during the research process”.

#### **3.2 Research Design**

The research design refers to the structured plan or framework utilized to generate solutions to research inquiries (Orodho, 2003). It can be seen “as an arrangement of conditions devised for the purpose of gathering and examining data in a manner that seeks to blend the relevance of information with the study's objectives”. Essentially, it serves as the blueprint for how data will be collected, measured, and analyzed. According to “Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), the primary goal of a research design is to understand the characteristics of the population, encompassing aspects such as the population frame, sample size, methods for sample selection, and techniques for estimating results”. In this study, a descriptive research design was employed because it is the most suitable for portraying the existing phenomena. This design is well-suited for capturing an overall 'snapshot' of the situation as it exists during the study period.

#### **3.3 Target population**

The word “population refers to a collective of individuals, entities, or items from which a sample is selected for the purpose of conducting measurements” (Kumar, 2005). In this study, the participants were selected from the pool of 259 groups operating in “Kuria East sub-county of Migori County, as detailed in the table provided below”. The selection of these participants was based on their ability to provide pertinent insights into the “socio-economic factors that affect women's village saving and loaning institutions”.

### 3.4 Sample size and sampling procedures

This “section outlines the methodological approach employed to determine the sample size”. It also delves “into the researcher's interpretation of the relevant theory and its significance in gathering the necessary data for the study”.

#### 3.4.1 Sample size

According to “Mugenda and Mugenda (1999), in descriptive studies, a sample size equivalent to 10 percent of the total accessible population is sufficient”. The researcher followed this approach and determined a sample size of “106 respondents who participated in this study, as detailed in the sampling procedure outlined below”.

#### 3.4.2 Sampling procedure

In Kuria East Sub-county, there are a total of 259 groups. Due to the large number of groups, the researcher opted to select a sample size equivalent to 10% of the entire population, resulting in 26 groups being chosen as the sample. Within each of these 26 groups, a stratified random sampling approach was utilized to select four individuals: the chairperson, treasurer, secretary, and an active member, thus totaling 26 chairpersons, 26 secretaries, 26 treasurers, and 26 members. This process yielded a total of 104 respondents. Additionally, the researcher purposively selected 2 loan officers, bringing the overall sample size to 106 respondents, “as illustrated in table 3.1 below”

**Table 3. 1: Sample size**

Categories of Respondents	Sample Size
Chairperson	26
Treasurer	26
Secretary	26
Member	26
Loan Officer	2
TOTAL	106

### **3.5 Instruments of Data Collection**

Selecting the appropriate tools for data collection is a critical aspect of research success. The researcher considered several factors, including the complexity of the subject, expected response rate, available time, and the characteristics of the target population. In this study, “the data collection methods employed included the use of questionnaires and interview schedules”.

#### **3.5.1 Questionnaires**

As per Kothari (2006), a questionnaire is a structured document containing a series of questions arranged in a specific order. Questionnaires come in three main types: closed-ended, open-ended, or a combination of both. Closed-ended questionnaires are typically used to gather quantitative data and generate statistics, while open-ended questionnaires are more common in qualitative research, although some researchers might later quantify the responses during the analysis phase. In this study, a combination of closed-ended and open-ended questionnaires was utilized for data collection. The questionnaires employed a Likert scale format, with a rating scale ranging from 1 to 5, where participants were asked to rate each statement related to a particular variable. The scale's interpretation was as follows: 5=Strongly Agree, 4=Agree, 3=Neutral, 2=Disagree, and 1=Strongly Disagree. Additionally, open-ended questions were included at the end of each Likert scale section to allow respondents to provide additional information. Mugenda & Mugenda (2003) suggest that questionnaires are advantageous due to their ease of analysis, administration, and cost-effectiveness in terms of time and resources, which influenced the researcher's choice of this method.

#### **3.5.2 Interview Schedule**

Kombo and Tromp (2009) describe an interview schedule as a set of oral questions designed to extract information that might not be obtainable through other data collection methods. The researcher conducted a structured group discussion using the interview guide with the loan officers. The questions in the schedule were well-suited to the researcher's needs as they facilitated the acquisition of specific and detailed information from the interviewees. The responses obtained during these interviews were recorded and organized for subsequent analysis.

### **3.5.3 Methods of Data Collection**

The investigator collected data using questionnaires that were personally distributed to the selected respondents. Questions were presented in the sequence they appeared on the questionnaire, with the researcher recording answers in the designated areas. Some respondents, however, requested more time to complete the questionnaire and later returned their responses via mail. To prevent any interviewer bias and ensure clarity when posing and explaining the questions, the researcher first introduced the respondents to the data collection tool, making certain everyone had a shared understanding of the questions.

The “questionnaire consisted of two sections: Part I covered demographic information, while Part II addressed specific research objectives”. For the structured portion of the questionnaire, a five-point Likert scale was utilized, with the following designations: “(1) Strongly agree, (2) Agree, (3) Neutral, (4) Disagree, and (5) Strongly disagree”.

### **3.5.4 Pilot-testing of the Research Instrument**

The research instrument underwent a pre-testing phase involving 11 participants, with one participant from each stratum. During this pretest, “participants were encouraged to provide feedback on the instrument's instructions, question clarity, question sensitivity, and overall questionnaire flow”. Subsequently, a pilot test was conducted with 11 respondents, “constituting 10% of the total sample size, which falls within the recommended range of 10% to 20% of the sample size, as suggested by Baker (1994)”.

After collecting the “pilot questionnaires along with respondents' suggestions and comments,” a thorough review of the questionnaire was conducted. This review aimed to assess the comprehensibility and appropriateness of the wording, question sequencing, and the time required for respondents to comprehensively fill each questionnaire. Analyzing “the completed pilot questionnaires also provided insights into the instrument's reliability in gathering information on the socio-economic factors influencing the sustainability of women's village saving and loaning institutions”.

### **3.5.5 Validity of the Research Instrument**

Validity in research “refers to the accuracy and meaningfulness of the conclusions drawn from research findings” (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2009). It is essentially about how well a test or instrument measures what it is intended to measure (Kothari, 2006). In this study, the validity of the research instruments was ensured through a rigorous process. During the construction of the instruments, careful attention was paid to the tools and “items to ensure their relevance and appropriateness”.

Additionally, “the researcher sought input from experts in Village Saving and Loaning (VSL) organizations”. These experts reviewed the instruments to evaluate whether the questions aligned with the study's objectives. Furthermore, a pilot study was conducted in a neighboring county, Kisii, involving 11 group members out of the total sample size of 106, which constitutes 10% of the sample. This “pilot study was carried out to assess the clarity and effectiveness of the questionnaire in gathering the required information”. It played a crucial role in enhancing the face validity of the instruments. To assess the validity of the research, the researcher carefully examined whether the information collected from the pilot data analysis was accurate and pertinent to the topic.

### **3.5.6 “Reliability of the Research Instrument”**

Reliability “refers to the extent to which a research instrument consistently produces the same results or data when used repeatedly” (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003). To assess “the reliability of the instrument employed in this study, the test-retest method was employed”. According to “Mugenda and Mugenda, a sample size of 10-30% is adequate for piloting purposes.”

In this study, the researcher planned to conduct a pilot test in Kisii County, involving 11 group members from the total sample size of 106, which is a 10% representative of the sample. The pilot testing was carried out on a population that closely resembled the target population within one of the county government entities in Kisii County. The primary aim of this pilot phase was to identify and rectify any ambiguous items in the instruments, evaluate the administration process, test the clarity of data collection instructions, assess the feasibility of the study, anticipate and address any potential logical or procedural challenges, and perform



preliminary (dummy) data analysis. Additionally, the pilot study served as a means to gauge the reliability of the research instrument.

### **3.6 Data Collection Procedures**

The researcher obtained the necessary research permit from NACOSTI and also secured permission from the County Government of Migori to access data from their records. Appointments were scheduled, and “the researcher personally delivered the questionnaires to the respondents”. The study “relied on primary data, collected using both questionnaires and interview schedules”. “The questionnaires contained a mix of both open and closed questions, including Likert-scale type questions”. An interview guide targeted respondents from the loan institutions. The main goal of the questionnaire was to gauge women's perspectives concerning the sustainability of VSLs. The “questionnaire was organized into two sections, aligned with the study objectives, capturing details such as respondent demographics, governance, capacity building, stakeholder engagement, and other factors influencing the sustainability of women's village saving and loan institutions”.

### **3.7 Data Analysis Techniques**

This “study gathered both qualitative and quantitative data, leading to the application of two analytical methods: descriptive and correlation analyses”. The “quantitative data was scrutinized using descriptive statistics, incorporating frequencies and percentages via the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), a recognized tool for such data analysis”. These statistics facilitated the computation of measures like central tendencies and variability to ascertain the effect of independent variables on the dependent variable. On the other hand, the correlation analysis was employed to discern the relationship between dependent and independent variables. Both statistical methods addressed the study's objectives.

Qualitative data underwent transcription and content analysis, focusing on discerning meanings and implications from participants' feedback. Content analysis involves scrutinizing qualitative feedback to identify recurring themes and characteristics irrespective of their frequency. Responses sharing common themes were collated into unified categories, establishing a thematic framework. Thematic analysis involved identifying and documenting recurrent patterns or themes pertinent to the research question within the dataset.

Quantitative data, gathered through the questionnaire's closed-ended questions, were allocated “ordinal values and analyzed using statistics such as frequency tables, percentages, and means”. This structured data contributed to the study's hypothesis testing. The Z-test model facilitated the hypothesis testing process. In conclusion, the summarized themes from the qualitative findings were aggregated to support the quantitative results.

### **3.8 Ethical Considerations**

Before commencing the research, the investigator secured “a research permit from NACOSTI under the Ministry of Education”, ensuring legal authorization for data collection. An introductory letter was dispatched to potential participants, “emphasizing that the study was solely for academic objectives and assuring them of the anonymity of their responses”. Participants' consent was sought before they contributed to the research, and they were reminded that their participation was voluntary. The study's goals were clarified to respondents, with assurances that all provided data would be managed with the highest level of discretion and only utilized for scholarly intents.

### **3.9 Operationalization of Variables**

Operational definition of independent, and dependent variables was as shown below.

**Table 3. 2: Operationalization of Variables**

<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Type of Variable</b>	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Measurement Scale</b>	<b>Methods of data collection</b>	<b>Data collection tools</b>	<b>Data analysis technique</b>
To investigate how governance influence sustainability of women village saving and loaning institution	Governance (independent variable)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effective group leadership</li> <li>• Transparency and accountability embraced</li> <li>• Effective financial management</li> </ul>	Ordinal	Administering questionnaire	Questionnaire	Descriptive and Z test
To find out how capacity building for women influence sustainability of women village saving and loaning institution	Capacity Building (independent variable)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Entrepreneurial skill</li> <li>• Enhanced saving and investing culture</li> <li>• Effectiveness in documentation</li> </ul>	Ordinal	Administering questionnaire	Questionnaire	Descriptive and Z test

To assess how stakeholders' engagement influence sustainability of women village saving and loaning institution	Stakeholder engagement  (Independent variable)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No. of stakeholders involved</li> <li>No. of stakeholder's experts involved</li> <li>Role of stakeholders</li> </ul>	Ordinal	Administering questionnaire	Questionnaire	Descriptive and Z test
To examine how associated benefits influence sustainability of women village saving and loaning institution	Associated Benefits  (Independent variable)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Financial gain</li> <li>Range of skills gained</li> <li>No. of children sponsored</li> </ul>	Ordinal	Administering questionnaire	Questionnaire	Descriptive and Z test
	Sustainability of women village saving and loaning  (Dependent variable)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No. of households empowered</li> <li>No. of stakeholders satisfied</li> <li>No. of women emerged victorious in</li> </ul>	Ordinal	Administering questionnaire  Focused group discussion  (FGD)	Questionnaire	Descriptive and Z test

		self-employment • No. of group members effective in their businesses			Interview schedule	
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## CHAPTER FOUR

### PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

#### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter encompasses the analysis, presentation, interpretation, and discussion of the collected data. The research aimed to explore the socio-economic determinants impacting the longevity of “women's village saving and loaning institutions in Kuria East sub-County, Migori County, Kenya”. Specifically, it delved into how governance, capacity building, stakeholders’ engagement, and related advantages shape the “sustainability of these women-led village saving and loaning institutions in Kuria East sub-County, Migori County, Kenya”.

#### 4.2 Questionnaire Return Rate

The prepared questionnaire was distributed to 106 respondents. The respondents themselves completed the questionnaire to ensure a high response rate, and it was collected after a few days. “Out of the 106 questionnaires distributed, 100 were successfully completed and returned. Only 6 questionnaires were not returned and therefore were excluded from the analysis”. The rate of questionnaire returns is presented below

**Table 4. 1: Questionnaire Return Rate**

Questionnaire	Frequency	Percent
Responded	100	94.34
Not responded	6	5.66
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100.00</b>

In the study, out of the 106 questionnaires that were distributed, 100 were returned in their entirety, resulting in a questionnaire response rate of 94.3%. The response rate is a measure of the percentage of subjects who respond to the research tool (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). Typically, a response rate of 50% is considered adequate for analysis and reporting, 60% is considered good, and 70% or higher is considered very good. Therefore, the response rate of 94.3% achieved in this study can be deemed as satisfactory.

### 4.3 Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

For “this study, background details such as the respondents' age, educational background, and their position in the context of sustainability of women's village saving and loaning institution in Kuria East sub County, Migori County, Kenya” were taken into account. These key characteristics of the respondents played a significant role in understanding and interpreting their responses.

#### 4.3.1 The Respondents Age Characteristics

Age variations within various communities influence the roles and extent of women's involvement in different activities, making these characteristics quite important. The responses of respondents with respect to their level of education are presented below

**Table 4. 2: Age of the Respondent**

	Frequency	Percent
Below 25 years	6	6.0
25-30 Years	14	14.0
30-35 Years	25	25.0
35-40 Years	17	17.0
40-45 Years	13	13.0
45-50 Years	12	12.0
50 Years and above	13	13.0
Total	100	100.0

The “study's findings reveal that 25% of the respondents were between the ages of 30-35, while only 6% were below 25 years old”. This suggests that the majority of participants in the study belonged to the mid-aged group. Consequently, the information collected is considered reliable as “the respondents were of an age and had the experience to provide valuable insights regarding women's village saving institutions”.

### 4.3.2 “Respondents Level of Education”

Educational qualification of participants was critical as it would indicate the interest of individuals in community participation in these water projects. Respondent’s level of education responses are indicated below.

**Table 4. 3: “Respondents Level of Education”**

	Frequency	Percent
Primary	57	57.0
Secondary	30	30.0
Diploma	8	8.0
Degree	2	2.0
Masters	2	2.0
PhD	1	1.0
Total	100	100.0

The “findings showed that 57 of the respondents had a primary level of education representing 57% of the respondent”. Very few had university and tertiary level of education. The findings leads to a probability that most of those with these qualifications indicated that the information they gave was reliable because they had an understanding of “socio-economic factors influencing sustainability of women village saving and loaning institutions in Kuria Subcounty of Migori County, Kenya”.

### 4.3.3 Respondents Position

Respondents position was critical as it would indicate their view on “socio-economic factors influencing sustainability of women village saving and loaning institutions”. The responses regarding the “positions of the respondents are presented below”.



**Table 4. 4: Respondents Position**

	Frequency	Percent
Chairperson	29	29.0
Secretary	22	22.0
Treasurer	16	16.0
Member	33	33.0
Total	100	100.0

The “findings revealed that 33% of the respondents identified themselves as members, while 29 respondents held the position of chairpersons”. This indicates that a significant portion of the respondents had direct experience and involvement with women village saving and loaning institutions, making their responses valuable for the study.

#### **4.4 Governance and Sustainability of Women Village Saving and Loaning Institution**

The respondents were asked to express their level of agreement or disagreement with various statements concerning governance and its impact on the “sustainability of women village saving and loaning institutions in Kuria East sub County, Migori County, Kenya”.

**Table 4. 5: Governance and Sustainability of Women Village Saving and Loaning Institution**

	Mean	Std. Deviation
Governance influences sustainability of women village saving and loaning.	4.31	0.775
Effective groups' leadership influences sustainability of women village saving and loaning.	4.35	0.687
Transparency and accountability of influences sustainability of women village saving and loaning.	4.48	0.67
Best financial management of the groups influences sustainability of women village saving and loaning	4.42	0.741

According to the “study findings, most of the respondents expressed strong agreement with the statement that transparency and accountability have a significant influence on the sustainability of women village saving and loaning, as indicated by a mean score of 4.48 and a standard deviation of 0.674”. Additionally, “respondents strongly concurred that governance” plays a crucial role in influencing the “sustainability of women village saving and loaning”, with a mean score of 4.31 and a standard deviation of 0.775. Furthermore, the respondents agreed that effective group leadership has a positive impact on the “sustainability of women village saving and loaning”, as evidenced by a mean score of 4.35 and a standard deviation of 0.687. Moreover, the respondents agreed that sound financial management within the groups influences the “sustainability of women village saving and loaning”, with a mean score of 4.42 and a standard deviation of 0.741.

**Table 4. 6: Rate the Influence of Governance on Sustainability of Women Saving and Loaning Institution**

	Frequency	Percent
Very low influence	1	1.0
Low influence	1	1.0
Moderately influential	9	9.0
Influential	43	43.0
Very Influential	46	46.0
Total	100	100.0

The “study findings reveal that 46% of the respondents considered governance to be highly influential in terms of the sustainability of women's saving and loaning institutions. Additionally, 43% of the respondents believed that governance had a significant influence on the sustainability of these institutions”. However, a minority of the respondents, comprising 9%, felt that governance's influence was moderately impactful, and only 1% of the respondents perceived it to have very little influence on the “sustainability of women's saving and loaning institutions”.

#### **4.5 Capacity Building and Sustainability of Women Village Saving and Loaning Institution**

The respondents were asked to express their level of agreement or disagreement with various statements regarding capacity building and its impact on the “sustainability of women's village saving and loaning institutions in Kuria East sub County, Migori County, Kenya”. The results are displayed below.

**Table 4. 7: “Capacity Building and Sustainability of Women Village Saving and Loaning Institution”**

	Mean	Std. Deviation
Capacity building promotes sustainability of women village saving and loaning	4.32	0.723
Training on entrepreneurial skills influences sustainability of women village saving and loaning	4.25	0.757
Induction of group members on embracing the culture of saving and investing influences sustainability of women village saving and loaning	4.00	0.739
Through induction on documentation skills, such as record keeping influences sustainability of women village saving and loaning	4.39	0.764

In accordance to the findings, “most of the respondents strongly concurred that capacity building initiatives” such as training in documentation skills (e.g., record-keeping) significantly influence the sustainability of women's village saving and loaning institutions, as evidenced by a mean score of 4.39 and a standard deviation of 0.764. Additionally, the respondents strongly agreed that “capacity building promotes the sustainability of women's village saving and loaning institutions, as indicated by a mean score of 4.32 and a standard deviation of 0.723”. Some respondents also expressed agreement that training in entrepreneurial skills contributes to the sustainability of these institutions, with a mean score of 4.25 and a standard deviation of 0.757. Furthermore, they agreed that the induction of group members in embracing the culture of saving and investing has an impact on the “sustainability of women's village saving and loaning institutions, with a mean score of 4.00 and a standard deviation of 0.739”.

**Table 4. 8: “Extent of Capacity Building and Sustainability of Women Saving and Loaning Institution”**

	Frequency	Percent
Low	2	2.0
Moderate	7	7.0
High	45	45.0
Very high	46	46.0
Total	100	100.0

Based on the study's findings, 46% of the respondents stated that “capacity building had a very high influence on the sustainability of women's saving and loaning institutions”. Additionally, “45% of the respondents held that capacity building had a high influence on the sustainability of these institutions”. However, a smaller percentage of respondents, 7% and 2%, respectively, indicated that “the influence of capacity building on the sustainability of women's saving and loaning institutions” was moderate and low.

#### **4.6 Stakeholder Engagement and Sustainability of Women Village Saving and Loaning Institution**

The respondents were asked to express their level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements concerning stakeholder engagement and its impact on the “sustainability of women's village saving and loaning institutions in Kuria East sub County, Migori County, Kenya”. The results are displayed in Table 4.9.

**Table 4. 9: Stakeholder Engagement and Sustainability of Women Village Saving and Loaning Institution**

	Mean	Std. Deviation
Stakeholder engagement influence sustainability of women village saving and loaning	4.21	0.856
The role of any stakeholder ought to be clearly assigned in order to realize sustainability	4.19	0.748
Stakeholders expertise promotes generalization of new ideas hence enhancing sustainability	4.15	0.657
Number of stakeholders involved affect sustainability of women village saving and loaning	3.99	0.916

The “findings indicated that the respondents were in agreement that stakeholder engagement has an influence on the sustainability of women's village saving and loaning institutions, with a mean score of 4.21 and a standard deviation of 0.856”. They also concurred that it is crucial to clearly assign roles to stakeholders in order to achieve sustainability, as evidenced by a mean score of 4.19 and a standard deviation of 0.748. Furthermore, they agreed that stakeholder expertise contributes to the generation of new ideas, thereby enhancing sustainability, with a mean score of 4.15 and a standard deviation of 0.657. Additionally, they acknowledged that the number of stakeholders involved affects the “sustainability of women's village saving and loaning institutions, as reflected in a mean score of 3.99 and a standard deviation of 0.916”.

**Table 4. 10: Stakeholder Engagement and Sustainability of Women Saving and Loaning Institution**

	Frequency	Percent
Very low	2	2.0
Low	2	2.0
Moderate	15	15.0
High	36	36.0
Very high	45	45.0
Total	100	100.0

The “study findings revealed that 45% of the respondents believed that stakeholder engagement had a significant and very high influence on the sustainability of women's saving and loaning institutions”. Additionally, “36% of the respondents expressed that stakeholder engagement had a substantial and high influence on sustainability”. However, a minority of the respondents, constituting 15%, perceived the influence of stakeholder engagement as moderate, while 2% regarded it as low, and another 2% as very low in terms of sustainability impact.

#### **4.7 Associated Benefits and Sustainability of Women Village Saving and Loaning Institution**

The respondents were “asked to express their agreement or disagreement with various statements regarding associated benefits and their influence on the sustainability of Women Village Saving and Loaning Institutions in Kuria East Sub County, Migori County, Kenya”. The outcomes of this assessment are outlined below

**Table 4. 11: Associated Benefits and Sustainability of Women Village Saving and Loaning Institution**

	Mean	Std. Deviation
Associated benefits influence sustainability of women village saving and loaning	4.48	0.797
Financial gain from savings enhances Sustainability of women village saving and loaning	4.44	0.715
The interest generated out of the loans and savings will assist in child sponsorship	4.29	0.844
Through merry-go-round the less fortunate members will be assisted	3.77	1.081

The study results suggest that “a significant number of respondents strongly believe that the benefits associated with village saving and loaning greatly influence their sustainability, as evidenced by a mean score of 4.48 and a standard deviation of 0.797”. Additionally, respondents felt that the financial rewards from savings play a pivotal role in enhancing the sustainability of women's village savings and loaning, demonstrated by “a mean score of 4.44 and a standard deviation of 0.715”. A considerable number also agreed that interests accrued from loans and savings could support child sponsorship, with a mean score of 4.29 and a standard deviation of 0.844. Finally, participants expressed that through systems like merry-go-round, less privileged members could receive aid, as shown by a mean score of 3.77 and a standard deviation of 1.081.

**Table 4. 12: Associated Benefits and Sustainability of Women Saving and Loaning Institution**

	Frequency	Percent
Very low extent	2	2.0
Moderate extent	7	7.0
High extent	28	28.0
Very high extent	63	63.0
Total	100	100.0



The study findings reveal that 63% of the respondents believe that associated benefits have a very high level of influence on the “sustainability of women's saving and loaning institutions”. Additionally, 28% of the respondents perceive that associated benefits have a high level of influence on the sustainability of these institutions. However, a minority of the respondents, around 2%, view the influence of associated benefits as being of moderate extent, while 7% consider it to be of very low extent regarding sustainability.

#### 4.8 Test of Significance on the four study variables

The study also aimed to examine the relationships between the variables being studied, including governance, capacity building, stakeholders' engagement, and associated benefits. To achieve this, the study utilized hypothesis testing and applied the “Z test at a 95% confidence interval. The results obtained through this analysis were subsequently used to determine whether the previously stated hypotheses should be accepted or rejected”.

##### 4.8.1 “Test of Significance between Governance and the Sustainability of Women Village Saving and Loaning Institution in Kuria East sub County, Migori County, Kenya”

H<sub>0</sub> - “There is no significant relationship between governance and the sustainability of women village saving and loaning institution in Kuria East sub County, Migori County, Kenya”.

H<sub>1</sub>- “There is a significant relationship between governance and the sustainability of women village saving and loaning institution in Kuria East sub County, Migori County, Kenya”.

Table 4.14: “Test of Significance between governance and the sustainability of women village saving and loaning institution in Kuria East sub County, Migori County, Kenya”

	Value	$Z = \sqrt{Chi - Square}$	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	$p\text{-value} = \frac{1}{2}(Asymp.Sig.):$
Pearson Chi-Square	1.925	1.3874	1	.005	0.0025

The results as indicated a Z of 1.3874 with a value 0.0025 which is less than 0.05. Thus, “there is a significant relationship between governance and the sustainability of women village saving and loaning institution in Kuria East sub County, Migori County, Kenya”. So, “the null hypothesis was rejected whereas the alternative hypothesis accepted”

**4.8.2 “Test of Significance between capacity building and the sustainability of women village saving and loaning institution in Kuria East sub County, Migori County, Kenya”.**

H<sub>0</sub> - “There is no significant relationship between capacity building and the sustainability of women village saving and loaning institution in Kuria East sub County, Migori County, Kenya”.

H<sub>1</sub>- “There is a significant relationship between capacity building and the sustainability of women village saving and loaning institution in Kuria East sub County, Migori County, Kenya”.

**Table 4.15: “Test of Significance between capacity building and the sustainability of women village saving and loaning institution in Kuria East sub County, Migori County, Kenya”**

	Value	$Z = \sqrt{\text{Chi-Square}}$	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	$p\text{-value} = \frac{1}{2}(\text{Asymp. Sig.})$
Pearson Chi-Square	1.925	1.3874	1	.005	0.0025

The results depict a Z of 1.3874 with a p value of 0.0025 which is less than 0.05. Thus, there is a significant relationship between capacity building and the “sustainability of women village saving and loaning institution in Kuria East sub County, Migori County, Kenya”. Consequently, “the null hypothesis rejected and the alternative hypothesis accepted”.

**4.8.3 Test of Significance between Stakeholders’ Engagement and the Sustainability of Women Village Saving and Loaning Institution in Kuria East sub County, Migori County, Kenya”.**

H<sub>0</sub> - “There is no significant relationship between stakeholders’ engagement and the sustainability of women village saving and loaning institution in Kuria East sub County, Migori County, Kenya”.

H<sub>1</sub>- “There is a significant relationship between stakeholders’ engagement and the sustainability of women village saving and loaning institution in Kuria East sub County, Migori County, Kenya”.

**Table 4.16: “Test of Significance between Stakeholders’ Engagement and the Sustainability of Women Village Saving and Loaning Institution in Kuria East sub County, Migori County, Kenya”.**

	Value	$Z = \sqrt{\text{Chi-Square}}$	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	$p\text{-value} = \frac{1}{2}(\text{Asymp. Sig.})$
Pearson Chi-Square	.016	0.1264	1	.008	0.004

The results depict a Z of 0.1264 with a p value of 0.004 which is less than 0.05. Thus, there is a significant relationship between capacity building and the “sustainability of women village saving and loaning institution in Kuria East sub County, Migori County, Kenya”. Hence, “the null hypothesis rejected and the alternative hypothesis accepted”.

**4.8.4 Test of Significance between Associated Benefits and the “Sustainability of Women Village Saving and Loaning Institution in Kuria East sub County, Migori County, Kenya”.**

H<sub>0</sub> - “There is no significant relationship between associated benefits and the sustainability of women village saving and loaning institution in Kuria East sub County, Migori County, Kenya”.

H<sub>1</sub>- There is a significant relationship between associated benefits and the “sustainability of women village saving and loaning institution in Kuria East sub County, Migori County, Kenya”.

Table 4.17: Test of Significance “between associated benefits and the sustainability of women village saving and loaning institution in Kuria East sub County, Migori County, Kenya”

	Value	$Z = \sqrt{Chi - Square}$	Asymp. Sig. Df (2-sided)	$p\text{-value} = \frac{1}{2}(Asymp.Sig.):$
Pearson Chi-Square	2.357	1.5352	1 .007	0.0035

The results show a “Z of 1.5352 with a p value of 0.0035 which is less than 0.05 depict a significant relationship between associated benefits and the sustainability of women village saving and loaning institution in Kuria East sub County, Migori County, Kenya”. Therefore, “rejected the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis”.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, DISCUSSIONS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.1. Introduction

In “this chapter, a concise summary of the key findings from this study is presented”. Additionally, it outlines the discussions that have arisen as a result of these findings, “the conclusions drawn from the study, and the recommendations that have been made”. Furthermore, this chapter emphasizes the need for research advancement in the related field.

#### 5.2 Summary of findings

The “study examined the influence of governance, capacity building, stakeholders’ engagement and associated benefits on sustainability of women village saving and loaning institution in Kuria sub County, Migori County, Kenya”.

##### 5.2.1 Governance and “Sustainability of Women Village Saving and Loaning Institution”

The research uncovered that transparency and accountability have a positive impact on the “sustainability of women's village saving and loaning institutions”. Similarly, the study revealed that effective governance plays a crucial part in ensuring the sustainability of these institutions. Additionally, the research found that strong leadership within the groups contributes to the “sustainability of women's village saving and loaning”. Furthermore, it was evident that sound financial management practices within the groups are linked to their sustainability. Importantly, the study identified a substantial relationship between governance and the “sustainability of women's village saving and loaning institutions in Kuria East sub County, Migori County, Kenya”.

##### 5.2.2 Capacity Building and Sustainability of Women Village Saving and Loaning Institution

The research accentuated the importance of capacity building in ensuring the “sustainability of women's village saving and loaning initiatives”. Specifically, it found that providing training on documentation skills, like record-keeping, greatly impacts sustainability. Additionally, the emphasis on entrepreneurial skills training was identified as a key factor for long-term success. The study also highlighted the significance of inducting group members

into a culture that values saving and investing. All these facets of capacity building play a pivotal role in the sustainability of such institutions. Furthermore, a noteworthy correlation was found between capacity building efforts and the lasting success of “women's village saving and loaning institutions in Kuria East sub County, Migori County, Kenya”.

### **5.2.3 Stakeholder Engagement and Sustainability of Women Village Saving and Loaning Institution**

The “research brought to light the considerable influence of stakeholder engagement on the sustainability of women's village saving and loaning initiatives”. It was observed that clearly defining the roles of stakeholders is essential for achieving sustainability. Furthermore, the study demonstrated that stakeholder expertise plays a crucial role in facilitating the adoption of new ideas, thereby enhancing sustainability. Additionally, the research highlighted the impact of the number of stakeholders involved in these initiatives on their long-term viability. Importantly, “the study found out a statistically significant relationship between stakeholder engagement and the sustainability of women's village saving and loaning institutions in Kuria East sub County, Migori County, Kenya”.

### **5.2.4 Associated Benefits and Sustainability of Women Village Saving and Loaning Institution**

The “research uncovered that associated benefits have a substantial influence on the sustainability of women's village saving and loaning institutions”. It was evident that financial gains derived from savings play a pivotal role in enhancing the sustainability of these initiatives. Furthermore, the study indicated that the interest generated from loans and savings could be used to support child sponsorship. Additionally, the research found that the practice of merry-go-round within these institutions aids less fortunate members. Importantly, the study recognized a statistically substantial association between associated benefits and the “sustainability of women's village saving and loaning institutions in Kuria East sub County, Migori County, Kenya”.

## **5.3 Discussions of Findings**

### **5.3.1 Governance and Sustainability of Women Village Saving and Loaning Institution**

The study's findings highlighted several key factors that influence the “sustainability of women's village saving and loaning institutions”. These factors include transparency and accountability, governance, effective group leadership, and sound financial management. These findings align with the research conducted by Mutuku (2015), who also emphasized the importance of quality leadership in managing group dynamics within VSLA groups. The study suggested that the frequency of leader re-election in village microfinance groups could be indicative of the level of trustworthiness associated with these institutions.

### **5.3.2 Capacity Building and Sustainability of Women Village Saving and Loaning Institution**

The findings emphasized the importance of capacity building through various means, including induction on documentation skills, training in entrepreneurial skills, and fostering a culture of saving and investing among group members. These factors were identified as influential in promoting the “sustainability of women's village saving and loaning institutions”. This aligns with the research conducted by Zhao and Zhang (2012), who also highlighted the positive effects of training on women's well-being, empowering them to better tackle daily challenges.

### **5.3.3 Stakeholder Engagement and Sustainability of Women Village Saving and Loaning Institution**

The study underscored the significance of stakeholder engagement in influencing the “sustainability of women's village saving and loaning institutions”. It emphasized the importance of clearly defining the roles of stakeholders to achieve sustainability, as well as recognizing the value of stakeholders' expertise in generating new ideas that enhance sustainability. Furthermore, the study found that “the number of stakeholders involved also plays a role in influencing the sustainability of these institutions”. The findings align with the work of CARE (2016), which highlighted the positive impact of effective training and capacity building of residents in village saving and loaning programs in Afghanistan.

### **5.3.4 Associated Benefits and Sustainability of Women Village Saving and Loaning**

#### **Institution**

The study determined that various associated benefits “play a role in the sustainability of women's village saving and loaning initiatives”. It highlighted how financial benefits from savings contribute to sustainability and pointed out the role of interest from loans and savings in supporting child sponsorship efforts. Furthermore, mechanisms such as merry-go-rounds were found to aid members in need. These findings resonate with Chen's (2005) observations regarding stakeholder engagement, emphasizing the critical importance of recognizing stakeholders and their interests early in the process. Chen suggests that involving stakeholders through a participatory process is essential, given the evident benefits.

#### **5.4 Conclusion**

The study arrived at several significant conclusions. Primarily, transparency and accountability are foundational for the “sustainability of women's village saving and loaning endeavors”. In essence, governance plays a pivotal role in driving the sustainability of these institutions.

It became evident through the research that capacity-building measures, especially induction in areas like documentation and record-keeping, are vital for ensuring the longevity of women's village saving and loaning systems.

Stakeholder engagement emerged as another crucial determinant. Clear assignment of stakeholder roles and leveraging their expertise to introduce and generalize innovative ideas bolsters sustainability. Moreover, the sheer number of actively involved stakeholders directly impacts the robustness of the saving and loaning system.

Lastly, the tangible benefits associated with these institutions contribute significantly to their sustainability. This includes not just direct financial gains but also the added benefits like using loan and savings interest for child sponsorship. The establishment of systems like merry-go-rounds further extends support to the more vulnerable members, demonstrating the holistic approach these institutions take towards community support.



## **5.4 Recommendations**

The study puts forward several key recommendations to enhance women's representation and empowerment:

1. Both the County and national governments should prioritize women's representation, suggesting a minimum of five representatives to champion women-centric motions effectively.
2. Legal education for women is paramount. Lobby groups at the county and national levels should be strengthened and empowered to educate women extensively about their rights.
3. The study underscores the importance of education, especially for girls. It proposes the introduction of mandatory laws to guarantee every child's right to education up to the highest possible level. This recommendation suggests expanding the free primary education policy to include secondary and tertiary education, especially focusing on children with disabilities.
4. Women with disabilities require specialized attention. Tailored training programs focusing on business skills, financial management, and other relevant areas should be introduced to enable them to manage their ventures competently. The study cites an example where a women's group missed a funding opportunity due to their inability to draft a business plan, highlighting the pressing need for such programs.

## **5.6 Suggestions for further Research**

Drawing from the results, conclusions, and summaries of this study, there's scope for additional research on the following areas: legislative measures related to women's rights, strategies for women's empowerment, challenges faced by women in accessing education, and ways to promote their “involvement in village savings and loan institutions in Kuria sub County, Migori County, Kenya”.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix I: Questionnaire for the Group Members

This “questionnaire is set to gather research information on Socio-economic factors that influence sustainability of Women Village Saving and Loaning Institution in Kuria East Subcounty of Migori County, Kenya”. The questionnaire has four Section, you are required to “respond to all items using a tick for only one response per question”.

#### PART I

##### SECTION A

Select your age bracket in years

Below 25years (     )

25-30years (     )

30-35years (     )

35-40years (     )

40-45Years (     )

45-50years (     )

50 and above (     )

Select the highest level of your education

Primary (     )

Secondary (     )

Diploma (     )

Degree (     )

Masters ( )

PhD ( )

Other(s): Specify.....

Which of the following best describes your position?

(a) Chairperson ( )

(b) Secretary ( )

(c) Treasurer ( )

(d) Member ( )

## PART II

### SECTION B: GOVERNANCE

This “section is set to investigate how governance influence sustainability of women village saving and loaning institution”. To “achieve this, you are required to give your opinion on the level of agreement or disagreement using Likert scale of 1- 5 where: 5= strongly agree, 4= agree, 3= neutral 2= disagree and 1= strongly disagree”

	Statement	5	4	3	2	1
1	Governance influences sustainability of women village saving and loaning.					
2	Effective groups’ leadership influences sustainability of women village saving and loaning.					
3	Transparency and accountability of influences sustainability of women village saving and loaning.					

4	Best financial management of the groups influences sustainability of women village saving and loaning					
---	---	--	--	--	--	--

How will you rate “the influence of governance on sustainability of women saving and loaning institution in your area”?

Very influential { }

Influential { }

Moderately influential { }

Low influence { }

Very low influence { }

SECTION C: CAPACITY BUILDING

This “section is set to find out how capacity building influence sustainability of women village saving and loaning institution”. “To achieve this, you are required to give your opinion on the level of agreement or disagreement using Likert scale of 1- 5 where: 5= strongly agree, 4= agree, 3= neutral 2= disagree and 1= strongly disagree”

	Statement	5	4	3	2	1
1	Capacity building promotes sustainability of women village saving and loaning					
2	Training on entrepreneurial skills influences sustainability of women village saving and loaning					
3	Induction of group members on embracing the culture of saving and investing influences sustainability of women village saving and loaning					



4	Through induction on documentation skills, such as record keeping influences sustainability of women village saving and loaning					
---	---	--	--	--	--	--

“To what extent does capacity building influence sustainability of women saving and loaning institution in your area”?

Very High            {        }

High                    {        }

Moderate            {        }

Low                     {        }

Very low              {        }

#### SECTION D: STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

This section is set to assess how stakeholder engagement influence sustainability of women village saving and loaning institution. To achieve this, you are required to give your opinion on the level of agreement or disagreement using “Likert scale of 1- 5 where: 5= strongly agree, 4= agree, 3= neutral 2= disagree and 1= strongly disagree”

	Factor	5	4	3	2	1
1	Stakeholder engagement influence sustainability of women village saving and loaning					
2	The role of any stakeholder ought to be clearly assigned in order to realize sustainability					
3	Stakeholders expertise promotes generalization of new ideas hence enhancing sustainability					

4	Number of stakeholders involved affect sustainability of women village saving and loaning					
---	---	--	--	--	--	--

What extent does stakeholder engagement influence sustainability of women saving and loaning institution in “your area”?

Very High { }

High { }

Moderate { }

Low { }

Very low { }

#### SECTION E: ASSOCIATED BENEFITS

This section is set to assess how associated benefits influence sustainability of women village saving and loaning institution. To achieve this, you are required to give your opinion on the level of agreement or disagreement using “Likert scale of 1- 5 where: 5= strongly agree, 4= agree, 3= neutral 2= disagree and 1= strongly disagree”

	Factor	5	4	3	2	1
1	Associated benefits influence sustainability of women village saving and loaning					
2	Financial gain from savings enhances Sustainability of women village saving and loaning					
3	The interest generated out of the loans and savings will assist in child sponsorship					
4	Through merry-go-round the less fortunate members will be assisted					

Which extent does associated benefits influence sustainability of women saving and loaning institution “in your area”?

Very High Extent            {        }

High Extent                 {        }

Moderate Extent            {        }

Low Extent                 {        }

Very low Extent            {        }

**Regards**

**Appendix II: Interview guide (loan officers)**

1. What is your designation .....
2. For how long have you worked in your current position?
3. How does governance influence “sustainability of women village saving and loaning institution”?
4. How does capacity building influence “sustainability of women village saving and loaning institution”?
5. How does stakeholder engagement influence “sustainability of women village saving and loaning institution”?
6. What are the benefits associated with “sustainability of women village saving and loaning institution”?
7. What are some of the “socio-economic factors that influence sustainability of women village saving and loaning institution”?

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**This is to Certify that Mr. Owino Odhiambo Bernard of University of Nairobi, has been licensed to conduct research in Migori on the topic: SOCIO-ECONOMIC FACTORS INFLUENCING SUSTAINABILITY OF WOMEN VILLAGE SAVING AND LOANING INSTITUTIONS IN KURIA SUBCOUNTY OF MIGORI COUNTY, KENYA for the period ending : 20/July/2021.**

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## Appendix IV: Turnitin Plagiarism Report

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