

**FACTORS INFLUENCING PERFORMANCE OF WOMEN SELF-HELP GROUPS'
PROJECTS: A CASE OF GROUPS FINANCED BY WOMEN ENTERPRISE FUND IN
NORTH IMENTI CONSTITUENCY, MERU COUNTY**

SELLA KITHINJI

**A RESEARCH PROJECT REPORT SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT
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DECLARATION

This research project report is my original work and has not been presented to any other university for award of a degree.

Signature:

Date:

Sella Kithinji

L50/85373/2016

This research project report has been submitted for examination with my approval as
University Supervisor

Signature:

Date:

Prof. Mboroki Guantai

ODeL Campus

University of Nairobi

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my loving son, Myles, as a constant reminder that all dreams are valid.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

IFAD: International Fund for Agricultural Development

NABARD: The National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development

SHG: Self-Help Group

SPSS: Statistical Package for Social Sciences

WEF: Women Enterprise Fund

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate factors that influence the performance of self-help groups financed by Women Enterprise Fund in North Imenti Constituency, Meru County. The objectives of the study were to assess the influence of group management on performance of women self-help groups' projects; to investigate the effect of capacity building training on performance of women self-help groups' projects; to determine the role of empowerment on performance of women self-help groups' projects, and to establish the influence of group cohesion on performance of women self-help groups financed by Women Enterprise Funds in North Imenti Constituency. The study utilized a descriptive survey design, which aimed at describing a phenomenon exactly as it is. The target population of the study was 377 women self-help groups that had benefitted from Women Enterprise Fund loans in North Imenti Constituency from the inception of the fund in 2007 to June 30th 2016. The sample comprised 180 women in 180 women groups, with the sample being derived using Krejcie and Morgan's Table for Determining Sample Size for a Given Population. Stratified random sampling was used to categorize groups across the five wards of the constituency, while purposive and simple random sampling methods were used to identify specific groups and individual group members, respectively, from whom data was collected. Data was collected using a questionnaire during corresponding meeting days of particular groups. Data was analysed and presented using descriptive statistics with the help of SPSS. The study established that group management skills had a moderate positive influence on performance of women SHGs' projects; capacity building training had a strong positive influence on performance of women SHGs' projects; economic empowerment had a very strong positive influence on performance of women SHGs' projects, and group cohesion had a strong positive influence on performance of women SHGs' projects. The study recommends regular and incisive training for women SHGs in group management skills, increasing frequency of training, increasing the amount of money loaned to groups and technical assistance to groups to enhance group cohesion.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the study

According to Worldbank.org (2017), women comprised 49.549% of the global population by 2015. Unwomen.org. (2017) asserts that there is faster growth when women are given equal opportunities to those afforded to men. Economist.com (2012) opines that about a billion women will join the labour market by 2022, and this is likely to significantly boost the GDPs of nations that will integrate women's labour into their economies. Unfortunately, women are disadvantaged in terms of education, access to credit, and job opportunities all over the globe, though the problem is chronic in developing nations. This marginalization is a disfavour to world economies, if women empowerment through SHGs is anything to go by.

The earliest version of SHGs was Alcoholic Anonymous and Parenting support groups. People with common problems sought mutual company to overcome their challenges, and small groups came in handy. According to Biscaye *et al.* (2014), while SHGs have an activism and mental health and addiction orientation in Western nations, in most of the developing world, SHGs are investment hubs for low-income earners, majority of whom cannot be funded by conventional financial institutions.

The latter form of SHGs was popularized by Mohamed Yunus, in Bangladesh, through his Grameen Bank (Zastrow, 2009). Ifad.org. (2010) documents the advent of women micro-credit SHGs in India, a place where the movement became popular within a short span. The government of India realized that SHGs were crucial in empowering rural women, most of who were marginalized, despite the country's constitution guaranteeing equality for all genders. The National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) was charged with the responsibility of promoting SHG activities between 1986 and 1987. International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) worked together with the government to encourage women to form groups of 10 to 20 members who came together regularly to save and borrow loans from among themselves (Ifad.org., 2010).

Biscaye *et al.* (2014), posit that SHGs have been pivotal in helping alleviate abject poverty in South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa in the last few decades. SHGs create

affordable credible pools for members. Group members borrow loans affordably to invest in their businesses. SHGs also help entrench democratic practices because members have to conduct elections on a regular basis and participatory development is the *modus operandi*. According to Unwomen.org. (2017), empowering women is empowering families and growing the economy. Consequently, by focussing on empowerment of women in abject poverty, SHGs complement state economic development strategies. This explains the institutionalization of SHGs in India.

In Africa, SHG activities are concentrated in mostly East and Southern Africa countries, though West Africa is also catching up (Biscaye *et al.*, 2014). Anyiro *et al.* (2014) asserts that SHGs have improved the status of women in Nigeria. Gombe *et al.* (2016) corroborates these findings. Blay (2011) documented how women were empowered socially and economically by participating in SHG activities in Ghana. Biscaye *et al.* (2014) assert that the SHG phenomenon is growing in South Africa, Zambia, Malawi, Uganda and Tanzania, where more women are contributing to economic growth through small businesses financed through SHG loans.

Republic of Kenya (2005), asserts that women comprise about 52% of Kenya's population yet most of them have no access to affordable financial services. SHGs are called 'Chamas' (meaning associations) and have become key sources of investment credit for many women (Okello, 2014). Various studies have established the contributions of SHGs to domestic and national economies, women empowerment and the entrenchment of democracy (For example, Waithaka, 2014; Gathuni, 2015; Kisera & Muturi, 2015, & Mbithi, 2016). However, the same studies identified numerous challenges that hindered performance of SHGs as well as success factors for this groups.

The Women Enterprise Fund is a government initiative to fund women-owned and run enterprises, all of which are SHGs. It was established in 2007 and has representation in all the 290 constituencies of the Republic of Kenya. As at June 30, 2016, WEF had disbursed Ksh 45, 850,000 in North Imenti Constituency to fund 377 groups. Cumulatively, groups had repaid Ksh 37,182,689. The constituency had a repayment rate of 101% and was ranked sixth in the republic.

1.2 Statement of the problem

According to Unwomen.org. (2017), economic growth can be accelerated by giving women equal education and employment opportunities to those of men. Women, especially those in rural areas and urban slums, cannot compete with men for jobs and business opportunities because the former lack adequate education and do not own capital. Access to credit for women is hindered by lack of collateral (Mutai, 2015). Numerous research studies have established that SHGs can complement state efforts to improve the lot of women, especially the marginalized and extremely poor ones Rajendran (2012). By offering members affordable credit and empowerment (through participation, capacity building training, leadership and decision-making opportunities) SHGs help women to become economically independent and producers, not just consumers. Despite this, SHGs face systemic, innate issues that hamper or accelerate performance. It is important, therefore, to dissect these issues with a view of filling gaps and improving the capacities of SHGs to execute their roles effectively (Mader, 2015). This study sought to investigate factors influencing performance of SHGs, especially those funded by the Women Enterprise Fund in North Imenti Constituency, Meru County. A number of related studies have been done in Kenya. Gathuni (2015) investigated the impact of women self-help groups on their social empowerment in Murera Sub-Location, Kiambu County. Mbithi (2016) studied effectiveness of microfinance training programmes on women's financial skills in self-help groups in Limuru Constituency, Kiambu County. Lambisa, Ngahu and Wagoki (2016) investigated effect of table banking on economic empowerment of self-help groups in Rongai Sub-County. Closely related to the current study is the study by Waithaka (2014), which examined factors influencing performance of self-help groups in Kianjokoma, Embu County, and the one by Kisera and Muturi (2015), which examined factors affecting performance of women investment groups in Gucha Sub County, Kisii County. However, no similar research had been done in North Imenti Constituency, hence the current study.

1.3 Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study was to investigate factors that influence the performance of self-help groups financed by Women Enterprise Fund in North Imenti Constituency, Meru County.

1.4 Objectives of the study

This study was guided by the following objectives:

- i. To assess how management skills influence performance of women self-help groups financed by Women Enterprise Funds in North Imenti Constituency.
- ii. To investigate the extent to which capacity building training on performance of women self-help groups financed by Women Enterprise Funds in North Imenti Constituency.
- iii. To determine how economic empowerment influences performance of women self-help groups financed by Women Enterprise Funds in North Imenti Constituency.
- iv. To establish the extent to which group cohesion influence performance of women self-help groups financed by Women Enterprise Funds in North Imenti Constituency.

1.5 Research questions

The study sought to answer the following questions:

- i. How do group management skills influence performance of women self-help groups financed by Women Enterprise Funds in North Imenti Constituency?
- ii. To what extent does capacity building training influence performance of women self-help groups financed by Women Enterprise Funds in North Imenti Constituency?
- iii. How does economic empowerment influence performance of women self-help groups financed by Women Enterprise Funds in North Imenti Constituency?
- iv. To what extent does group cohesion influence performance of women self-help groups financed by Women Enterprise Funds in North Imenti Constituency?

1.6 Significance of the study

The findings of this study are of great importance to government policy makers, especially when formulating legislation to govern self-help groups, and when devising strategies to boost women empowerment, especially economically. In addition, lenders (government, banks, NGOs and microfinance organizations) will find this study important in helping them understand how to boost lending and loan repayment among women SHGs. In addition, this study will help SHGs to critically understand challenges

facing them and how to overcome these barriers. Finally, the study is an addition to the corpus of literature on SHGs.

1.7 Assumptions of the study

The researcher presumed that respondents would volunteer honest and accurate answers during data collection.

1.8 Delimitations of the study

The study was carried out among women self-help groups that had been funded by Women Enterprise Fund (WEF) in North Imeni Constituency from the year 2007 to June 30, 2016.

1.9 Limitation of the study

The researcher encountered logistical and financial challenges, particularly because the target population was scattered and group met on different days, including weekends. To mitigate these challenges, the researcher engaged and trained research assistants to help in data collection. Data was collected from groups that met within urban centres. The researcher obtained meeting schedules for groups from the WEF officer and called the groups before visiting them.

1.10 Definition of key terms used in the study

Factors:	Issues or circumstances that have an effect on others, in this case, issues that affect the performance of SHGs
Influence:	A situation where a factor has an effect on another, whether positive or negative.
Economic empowerment:	Significant improvement in the livelihoods and household status of women following participation in SHG activities.
Performance:	The ability of self-help groups to operate effectively and efficiently e.g. receiving savings from members, lending and recovering loans and achieving investment targets.
Self-Help Groups:	Micro-credit / investment groups of, ideally 10 to 20 members, who meet regularly to save money, borrow and

return loaned money, while also attending to other issues of mutual concern.

1.11 Organization of the study

Chapter One introduces the topic of the study by providing background information. This section contains background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research objectives and questions, significance, assumptions, delimitations, limitations and definitions of key terms. In Chapter Two, relevant literature is reviewed thematically. This section deals with literature on the dependent variable and four independent variables, namely: performance of SHGs, WEF, management skills in SHGs, capacity building training for SHGs, economic empowerment in SHGs and group cohesion in SHGs. The theoretical framework that guided the study is also discussed, with the section culminating in the conceptual framework and research gaps. The third chapter entails research methodology and included research design, target population, sampling procedure, research instruments, validity and reliability of instruments, data collection procedure, data analysis technique, ethical issues and operational definition of variables. Chapter Four entails data analysis, presentation and interpretation, while Chapter Five encompasses summary of the findings of the study, discussions, conclusions and recommendations.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter delves into various aspects of the study as encapsulated by the objectives. It will examine primary and secondary literature on the concept of Self-Help groups, especially those run by women, the Women Enterprise Fund (WEF), management and leadership of SHGs, capacity building training, economic motivation of SHG members and cohesion in these groups. The chapter culminates with the conceptual framework which summarizes the relationship between the independent variables and the dependent one.

2.1 Performance of Women Self Help Groups

Rajendran (2012) asserts that SHGs are a relatively new phenomenon, to the extent that scholarly literature on these groups is fairly new. According to Zastrow (2009), SHGs result from persons who share common problematic conditions or experiences coming together for mutual assistance to deal with the phenomena they share. These groups are self-governing and self-regulating and create fecund ground for emergence of communication networks. One of the earliest forms of SHGs is Alcoholics Anonymous (A.A.). These groups are pivotal in helping alcoholics to talk about their addiction in a non-judgemental environment and to learn from fellow addicts, former addicts and professionals, the best way to cope with their compulsive disorders. Hutchison (2008) posits that SHGs are not led by professionals and leadership is rotated among members. Membership is voluntary, with members joining and others leaving at any time. Members benefit from these groups through mutual assistance from others dealing with similar problems. This give-and-take situation results in psychological rewards. SHGs do not require a lot of resources to run because members share what they have.

The concept of SHGs has over the years been extended to economic empowerment, especially for women who earn low incomes. According to Kattakkara (2013), rural poor women either own little pieces of land or none at all. Credit is used for obligatory and subsistence purposes. Loan money is expended on farm inputs, food, illnesses, funerals and weddings among other issues. With no stable source of income, chronic debts become common among the poor. In the past, existing credit system failed to meet credit demands of this sector of the population. Similarly, formal credit system did not have

mechanisms to offer loan money to poor people, especially women in rural areas. This is the gap that women empowerment SHGs arose to fill. SHGs mobilized members' savings and created pools for members to borrow from, at affordable interest rates. Success factors for micro-credit SHGs include social and economic homogeneity of members, exclusive women membership, sustained savings from each member, effective leadership and adherence to internal rule, fundamental accounting systems, and low loan processing and transaction costs. Biswas (2007) asserts that due to their rapid progress and adoption among women, SHGs are now considered an important cog in women empowerment efforts. Women micro-credit SMEs empower women economically and socially, helping them to become breadwinners for their families and boosting their self-esteem in the process (Nirmala & Geetha, 2009).

According to Rajendran (2012), investment SHGs are informal groups that are formed voluntarily by members. They comprise of between 10 and 20 members. Members save regularly. Once members deem savings to be adequate for borrowing, those who meet set criteria are allowed to borrow. Decisions are made collectively in these largely democratic groups. Members are usually neighbours and people who share common interests and who know one another well. Homogeneity engenders group cohesiveness, a key characteristics of micro-finance SHGs. In addition, members are expected to attend group meetings regularly, during which they should repay previous loans, save some money and borrow more money. Another important feature of SHGs is training, which entails building the capacities of the group to operate effectively and helping members to spend loans wisely. Training may also entail gaining entrepreneurial skills and learning new ways of generating income, which are financed through money borrowed from the group.

2.2 Women Enterprise Fund and Microfinance

According to Mader (2015), microfinance involves offering financial services to people who have low incomes, especially self-employed ones. In addition, microfinance includes savings, credit, insurance and payment of loans. Microfinance organizations also deal with social mediation such as group formation, literacy training, financial management and inculcating self-confidence. In essence, microfinance is a development tool; not just a banking function. This explains the proliferation of organizations offering credit facilities to SHGs, with representation from both the public and private sectors.

SHGs are targeted primarily because they serve low-income people, most of who are eligible for funding by conventional financial institutions.

Global Envision (2006) asserts that the concept of microfinance is not new considering events in the past. Human beings have for years organized themselves in groups to take care of social welfare and to save. Some of the names used for microfinance units were 'cheetu' (Sri Lanka), 'pasanaku' (Bolivia), 'chit funds (India), 'arisan' (Indonesia), 'tontines' (West Africa) and 'susus' (Ghana). Microfinance organizations that arose from these rudimentary groups included the Irish Loan Fund, which was established in the 1700s by Jonathan Swift. These organizations became popular because they targeted poor people who could not be funded by commercial banks (Richter, 2014).

According to Black and Robertson (2009), the term 'microcredit' precedes 'microfinance' and was popularized by Friedrich Wilhelm Raiffeisen in the 1800s. From Germany, where this idea gained traction first, it spread to the rest of Europe and North America, before being adopted in the developing world. Among the first such initiatives in Asia was the Indonesia People's Credit Bank in 1895. The 1900s witnessed the advent of microcredit activities in Latin America, with the target being the agricultural sector, which needed to be modernized, and the numerous enterprises run by poor people which needed capital injection. Unfortunately, efforts by states to entrench microfinance were curtailed by corruption and high default among beneficiary farmers in the 1950s and 1970s. According to Global Envision (2006), 1970s were characterized by piloting of group lending and guarantees from group members in Bangladesh and Brazil, and this brought about the revival of micro-finance. It is from this new development that microfinance organizations began to emerge and flourish in many parts of the world. Some of the most notable ones include Caja los Andes and Prodem in Bolivia, Grameen Bank in Indonesia, ACCION in Latin America, CCACN in Nicaragua and SEWA Bank in India.

According to Geleta (2015), microfinance was a timely idea in Sub-Saharan Africa, considering the presence of many low-income earners who could not access credit for their businesses from established financial institutions. Access to credit is linked to wealth creation, financial stability and better livelihoods. More than 30 African countries have passed legislation to regulate and boost the microfinance sector. Economic stimulus and poverty eradication programmes are now linked to microfinance. This sector has

both private players and state organizations, an indicator of its increasing significance in economic growth.

Republic of Kenya (2005), asserts that women comprise about 52% of Kenya's population yet most of them have no access to affordable financial services. The Kenya Sessional Paper 2005 was developed to deal with issues of micro and small enterprise development as a way of creating wealth and employment towards poverty alleviation. However, for poor rural women, such government initiatives often take too long to materialize, since most poor women live in areas with little or no presence of financial institutions. Generally, women have negative dispositions towards banks. Other challenges female entrepreneurs face include inadequate or no collateral to secure loans, stringent business entry challenges and cultural biases against women venturing into business.

According to Wef.go.ke. (n.d.), the Women Enterprise Fund (WEF) was established by the Government of Kenya in 2007 as a microfinance venture targeting financing of women businesses. The agency operates semi-autonomously under the Ministry of Public Service, Youth and Gender Affairs. It is a vital cog in Vision 2030, the economic blueprint expected to transform Kenya into a middle-income country by the year 2030. WEF is operates within the social pillar of the vision and is geared towards alleviating poverty by advancing affordable credit to women in business or those who want to venture into entrepreneurship. WEF operates at constituency level, where it has an officer who issues application forms, does initial vetting and recommendation of loans, trains the groups, issues loans and oversees repayment and subsequent loan phases. Women must be in SHGs to benefit from WEF, which uses group loaning and guaranteeing approach to minimize default. However, it is the responsibility of group leaders and members to ensure that each individual returns the loans they borrow from the group with an interest as part of the table banking approach.

2.3 Management Skills and Performance of Self Help Groups

Zakir and Baruah (2011) assert that SHGs practice unique management styles considering respective formation dynamics. To understand management practices in these groups, one has to comprehend the underlying principles of formation, which

include social support, self-determination, self-determination, synergy, social homogeneity and recognition of the groups as the focal point of assistance. SHGs are based on the concept of each member accepting responsibility and volunteering to help others. Meetings are held regularly, in most cases weekly or monthly. Key activities during meetings including saving, lending and repayment of loans, maintaining books of accounts and other records, training and capacity building, exchanging information on pertinent issues, and creating networks and linkages.

Zakir and Baruah (2011) further observe that the unique characteristics of SHGs make leadership of these groups a little unconventional. SHGs are essentially democratic organizations. Each member has an equal vote in the group. Membership is rotational with each member having an equal chance of being elected. Elections are conducted regularly (in most cases, annually). According to Gathuni (2015), leaders of SHG do not enjoy any privileges or financial benefits as the role is fully voluntary. They play their roles as members, contributing material and economic requirements and borrowing loans like the rest of the group members. In essence, SHGs practice participatory democracy and participatory development, with members being ultimate decision-makers, including determining how their groups will be managed and by who.

Waithaka (2014) studied Muungano SHG in Embu, Kenya, to establish factors that determined performance of SHGs. The researcher established that financial management was a key determinant of group performance. Good performance was realized when members were involved in budgeting, expenditure and accounting of collective funds. It was also observed that when funds were managed effectively, members were willing to participate in group activities, attendance was consistent, and not many members left the group. Financial accountability was best realized when members participated at all levels of decision-making and verification.

According to Njeru (2017), who studied SHGs in Kiambu, Kenya, these groups often lack effective decision-making abilities in areas such as investment. Performance for SHGs in the study area was hampered by lack of budgeting skills especially on the side of leaders. Since groups had not undergone any training on corporate governance, leadership and management, they operated on autopilot, lacking clear plan or direction. The researcher concluded that transformational leadership was lacking in these groups. Moreover, the key contributors to effective performance by SHGs were established to be

transformational leadership, empowerment, training and corporate governance respectively.

Padma and Rathakrishnans (2012) studied factors that influenced leaders to participate in SHG activities and to play their roles effectively. This study was carried out in India. It established that leaders ensured members participated in meetings, did so regularly and contributing savings to the groups' kitties. Leaders also created awareness on a raft of issues and encouraged collective thinking and decision-making, which promoted group cohesion. Despite this, there were scenarios where leaders of SHGs had low social participation problems, thus affecting the performance of their groups. This happened especially because of the caste system practised in India. While acknowledging the acclaimed role of SHGs in women empowerment and, consequently, economic development, the researcher recommended constant training for leaders of SHG to improve their ability to guide their groups towards effective performance.

2.4 Capacity Building Training and Performance of Self Help Groups

Gathuni (2015) carried out a study in Kiambu County, Kenya, to establish how women SHGs impacted the social empowerment of their members. Besides finding out that women were better empowered after participating in SHG activities, the author concluded that business training was part of the empowerment process. Trainings focussed on business management, savings and investment, hence helping women entrepreneurs to run their individual businesses effectively. However, the researcher established that women also asked to be trained in non-business aspects such as nutrition, family planning, environmental management and team building, to enhance social empowerment. These findings were corroborated by Njeru (2017), who established that training was key factor in determining performance of SHGs.

Fazalbhoy (2014), following a study in Tamil Nadu, India emphasized that women empowerment, especially through SHGs was crucial for development. In particular, the researcher underlined the need for capacity building training to help women not only manage their SHGs, but also acquire competences to run their respective business ventures. This study underlined the link between national economic development,

women empowerment, SHGs and capacity building training, the former playing a pivotal role in achieving the other three.

Sundaram (2012) conducted another study in India to establish how SHGs impacted socio-economic development of the country and concluded that training was at the core of empowerment through these groups. The researcher emphasized on the need to train women in SHGs on specific sectoral issues depending on the business venture one was engaged in. Significantly, the researcher linked social empowerment in SHGs at group and individual level to capacity building training of SHG members.

Mbithi (2016) studied the effectiveness of microfinance capacity building training on the financial skills of women in SHGs in Limuru, Kenya, and concluded that training impacted women finance skills positively. Moreover, women who underwent training had better investment, budgeting, record keeping and pricing and costing skills than before. The study also concluded that regular evaluation of the training content and process was essential for enhancement of women's finance skills. Further, the researcher identified the need to make training content relevant to the needs of women entrepreneurs and to inculcate active participation during training.

Kisera and Muturi (2015) studied determinants of performance of women SHGs in Gucha, Kenya, and identified training as a key component. The study established that members who attended meetings regularly were beneficiaries of capacity building training, which in turn promoted the individual's capacity to conduct business effectively. Members with no previous business management experience gained technical and entrepreneurial skills, thus attaining confidence to borrow from their SHGs to invest in business. Training also boosted managerial skills of members and leaders particularly in aspects of decision-making, planning, communication and self-confidence. In essence, training was critical in determining performance of SHGs and individual members' enterprises.

2.5 Economic Empowerment and Performance of Self Help Groups

Fernando and Azhagaiah (2015) assert that empowerment involves a series of activities through which people acquire increased control of resources, participate in changing

their own situations, and gain necessary skills to assert their position in society. According to Nirmala and Geetha (2009), women join SHGs because of the perceived and actual positive economic impacts. Members experience improvements in their households and businesses owing to the affordable credit they access from these groups. By acquiring knowledge, power and experience, women can make informed choices that positively transform their livelihoods and those of their loved ones. These authors further opine that the World Bank recognizes empowerment as a vital cog in poverty alleviation. No country can develop socio-economically without investing in women empowerment. In India, the government, having recognized the potential of SHGs in women empowerment declared the year 2001 “Women Empowerment Year” with special focus on SHGs.

Swain and Wallentin (2008), following a study carried out among women SHGs in India, concluded that SHGs empowered women significantly over time. The degree of empowerment for individual women was not the same during their participation in SHG activities. However, general consensus indicated that every group member felt empowered in a way. In a study carried out in Puducherry, India, Nirmala and Geetha (2009), found out a number of reasons why women joined SHGs, namely: to get loans, meet family expenses, earn money to save, get recognition in society, start a business, and avail subsidy, beginning with the most important. The study also established that women empowerment had improved between the time women joined SHGs and after. Women reported significant improvements in monthly incomes, monthly expenses, savings, possession of durable goods, and possession of ornaments, though there was a slight decline in possession of livestock. These researchers concluded that women were more significantly empowered after joining SHGs mainly because they had attained some form of economic independence that freed them from reliance on their families for almost everything.

Raghavan (2009) conducted a study in Kerala, India, and corroborated the findings of Nirmala and Geetha (2009) on women empowerment. The former established that women members of SHGs participated in numerous income generating and developmental activities and in the process acquired greater confidence and morale in their personal lives. The study concluded that poor women’s capacities had improved considerably following their participation in SHG activities. Moreover, the general living

conditions and social standing of women had ameliorated in both the family and community contexts.

Anyiro *et al.* (2014), in a study titled “Determinants of Women’s Participation in Self Help Group Led Micro-Financing of Farms in Isuikwuato Local Government Area of Abia State, Nigeria”, established that women were motivated by perceived economic benefits’ motives to join SHGs. Incidentally, the women in the groups under study reported having gained economically through the loans they borrowed and the investments they put the loans into.

2.6 Group Cohesion and Performance of Self Help Groups

Anyiro *et al.* (2014) further established that the glue holding SHGs together was democratic practices, especially the principles of open participation and regular rotation of leadership. Members were expected to bring their contributions to meetings and to play roles in group activities. Some of the levies included those for membership, burial, wedding and development among others. There were also material contributions since these were farming groups based in a rural area. SHG members were also expected to help recruit new members, join executive committees and accept leadership positions when elected. Participation was positively linked to effective information dissemination to these farmer-members. This study found out that while women actively sought to recruit new members, the larger a group became, the more reluctant members were to participate in group activities and to hold leadership positions.

Lambisa, Ngahu and Wagoki (2016) conducted a study in Rongai, Kenya, to determine how table banking (a form of saving and lending) affected economic empowerment of SHGs. The study established a positive influence of group cohesion on economic empowerment of members. Further, groups that had strong bonds provided greater mutual assistance to members than otherwise. There was a positive correlation between group cohesion and economic empowerment of members with the vice versa being true. Cohesiveness in the sampled groups was evinced by sharing of common goals and activities, performing tasks together and communicating constantly. The epitome of cohesiveness was group meetings. Blay (2011), in a study conducted in Ghana to establish how women are empowered through SHGs, found out that groups experiencing

poor attendance of meetings also reported low empowerment of members. Absenteeism was attributed to various chores that women performed at home, but it was an indicator of lack of group cohesion.

2.7 Theoretical Framework

This study was guided by the group formation theory advanced by Tuckman. According to King and Lawley (2016), Dr Bruce Tuckman developed his initial four-stage model of group formation in 1965. It included forming, storming, norming and performing stages. In the 1970s, he added another stage – adjourning. The forming stage is characterized by reliance on leaders for direction and guidance. It is not clear what each member is expected to do. Members seek for clarifications from leaders on why the group was formed and leaders are strained as they deal with questions and the naivety of members. At this stage, only the people who came up with the idea of forming the SHG (leaders) understand what it stands for and have to sell the idea to members.

In the second stage (storming), it becomes difficult to reach mutual agreements. Some members openly aspire for positions of leadership, and even challenge existing leaders. While members begin to understand their roles, a lot needs to be explained still. Power struggles emerge, but the group remains intact as long as it avoids emotive issues. Leaders at this stage must exercise caution and diplomacy for group unity to survive (O'Connell & Cuthbertson, 2009). This phases also witnesses the withdrawal of membership from some individuals, who cannot withstand the conflict, and see no future in the group.

According to Egolf and Chester (2013), the storm subsides as the group enters the norming stage, where members begin to accommodate one another's opinions and allow leaders to mediate group processes. At this point, members fully understand what they are expected to do in the group. Smaller teams are formed to help in making some decisions, but major deliberations are left to the group. Members display a high sense of commitment, responsibility and care for one another and the group. Leadership is respected. In essence, this stage epitomizes participatory development as envisioned in SHGs. This phase also represents either the writing of the group by-laws and constitution or their revision, to reflect emerging trends.

The fourth stage (performing) witnesses a group that is thinking and acting strategically. With a shared vision and commitment to the ideals of the group, members do not need the constant presence of a leader to act responsibly. The leader states the direction the group should take and members even want to overachieve. Teams are highly autonomous and there is little argument when teams present their findings. Ensuing disagreements are discussed amicably and resolved in a brotherly spirit. Team members are free to share their individual issues with leaders (King & Lawley, 2016). This stage encapsulates a point at which almost every member brings in their savings to SHGs, borrows money and returns it on time. Attendance is mandatory and high, and those who don't attend are penalized. Members feel empowered by the group at individual and business levels. The group begins to explore other investment ideas.

The final stage of the model is adjourning. This is the point at which a group breaks up, presumably because it was formed to complete a project and the goal and objectives have been achieved. Feelings of insecurity prevail, considering group members have bonded for long (O'Connell & Cuthbertson, 2009). For many SHGs, it is difficult to envision this point because most of these groups are composed of neighbours and generations of children join the ranks along the way. In essence, members may leave but the group remains. However, there are many cases of groups breaking up, especially because leaders having embezzled groups financial resources.

2.8 Conceptual Framework

This study adopted the conceptual framework in Figure 2.1. The role of a conceptual framework is to summarize the relationships between different variables of a study, diagrammatically.

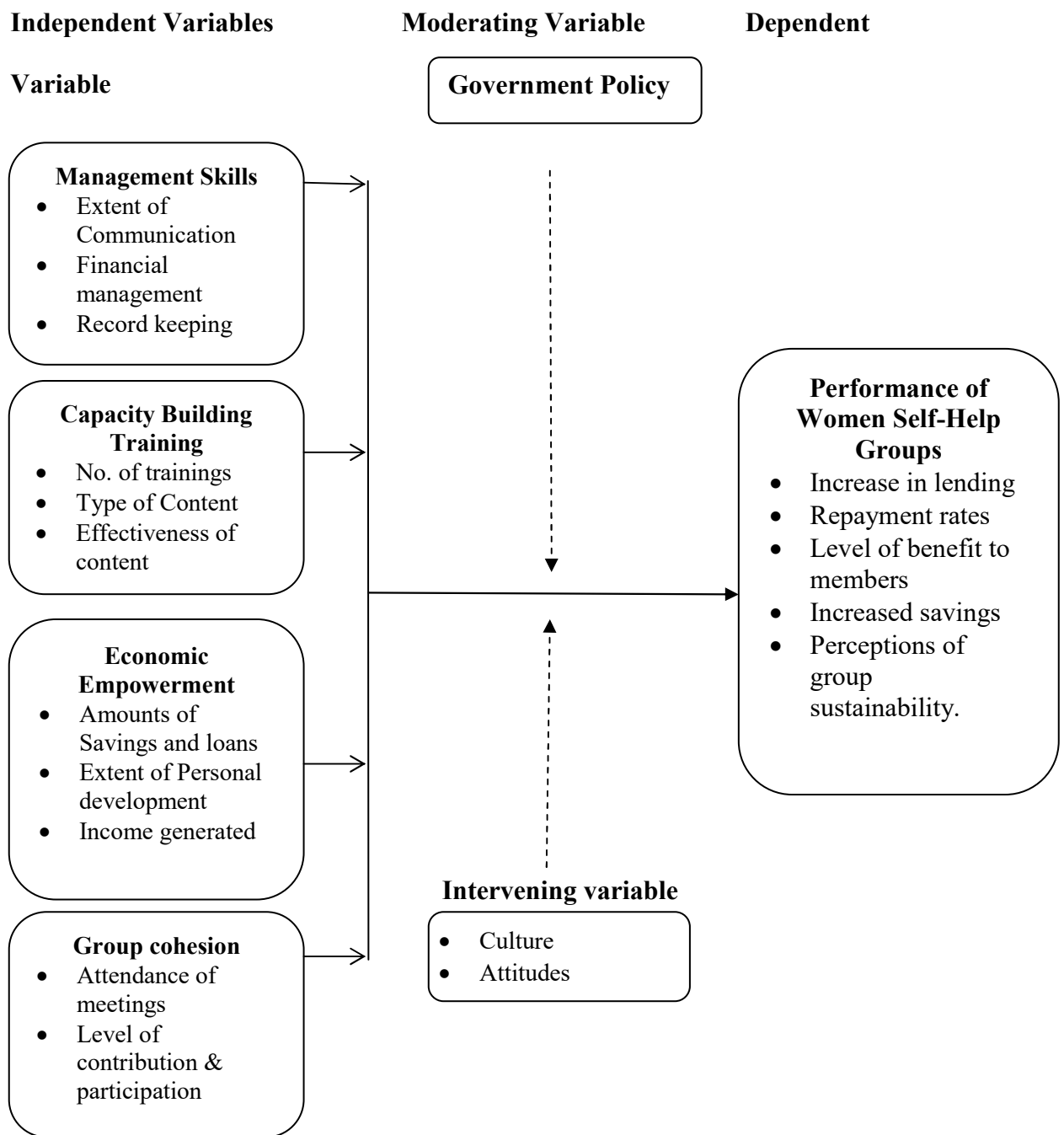


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

2.8.1 Interactions of Variables

In this study, the dependent variable is performance of women self-help group projects, specifically those funded by the Women Enterprise Fund in North Imenti Constituency. Management skills, capacity building training, economic empowerment, and group cohesion are the independent variables. Management skills of SHGs affects performance of SHGs projects in terms of communication, management of finances and record keeping. For SHGs to perform effectively, it is important to have capacity building

training at regular intervals or as need arises. Moreover, when members of groups borrow money, they invest in personal businesses and households, hence economic and individual empowerment. Finally, for a group to perform well, it requires cohesion among members, and this is strengthened through attendance of meetings and participatory practices. Government policy is the moderating variable because both WEF and SHGs are regulated by the government and this may have some level of influence on performance of these groups. Culture and attitudes of the women may also have some impact on performance though the two factors are not significant in this study.

2.9 Research Gaps

This literature review reveals gaps in the area of Self Help Groups' projects performance that this study will fill. Waithaka (2014) studied the performance of one SHG in Embu, which means his study lacked comparative analysis. Padma and Rathakrishnans (2012) studied factors that influenced leaders to participate in SHG activities and to play their roles effectively. This study concentrated on SHG leaders and not members. Moreover, the study was conducted in India, raising the question whether a similar study in Kenya would yield the same results. Anyiro *et al.* (2014), studied that determinants of women participation in SHGs involved in farming in Ghana. The study is dissimilar to the current one in that groups funded by WEF do not discriminate on the type of business individual women engage in. Moreover, the study only delved into participation, which is an aspect of performance, leaving out other crucial factors addressed in the current study. Gathuni (2015) conducted a study on how women SHGs empowered their members socially. While this study has similarities to the current one, it only delves into one aspect of empowerment (social) and was based on SHGs in one sub-location. Mbithi (2016) investigated how effective microfinance training programmes were in boosting the financial skills of women in Limuru Constituency. In the current study, training is one of four factors, implying that the current study encompasses more aspects of women empowerment through SHGs. Kisera and Muturi (2016) studied factors affecting performance of women SHGs in Gucha, Kisii County. This study is similar to the current one, except for the fact that in the current study the focus is on groups funded by Women Enterprise Fund in a different part of the country. From the ensuing analysis, it is evident that studying factors influencing performance of self-help groups' projects, particularly those funded by WEF in North Imenti Constituency, Meru County, is not a duplication

of similar studies, and it will add value to literature on women empowerment, self-help groups and project planning and management.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

This chapter discusses the research design and methodology of the study. It consists of design, target population, sampling procedure, research instruments and how the reliability and validity of the instrument will be established. Further, this section contains data collection procedure, data analysis techniques, operational definition of variable and ethical issues.

3.2. Research Design

The researcher utilized a descriptive survey design in this study. The work of a research design, according to (Creswell, 2014), is to bond together the various components of a study. In descriptive studies, the researcher's aim is to describe a phenomenon exactly as it is (Mitchell & Jolley, 2013). This study investigated factors that influence performance of SHGs funded by WEF in North Imenti Constituency, Meru County. Women in respective SHGs were the key informants and the study reported the findings without any attempt to manipulate them.

3.3. Target Population

This study targeted members of 377 groups that had been funded by Women Enterprise Fund in North Imenti Constituency by June 30th 2016 (Wef.co.ke., 2016). The distribution of these groups according to the five wards of the constituency is summarized in Table 3:1.

Table 3:1. Target Population

Ward	No. of WEF-Funded Groups
Municipality	176
Ntima West	65
Ntima East	77
Nyaki West	34
Nyaki East	25
Total	377

Source (Women Enterprise Fund Office, North Imenti)

3.4. Sample Size

Krejcie and Morgan (1970) “Table for Determining Sample Size for a Given Population”, will be used to determine the sample from the population of 377 groups. According to Lunenburg and Irby (2008), this table is based on the following formula, which helps to derive a sample from a precise population.

$$S = \frac{X^2 NP (1-P)}{d^2 (N-1) + X^2 P (1-P)}$$

S = sample size to be derived from population

X^2 = the table value of chi-square for one degree of freedom at the desired confidence level.

N = size of the population.

P = the population (presumed to be 50 as this would provide the maximum sample size)

d = the degree of accuracy expressed as a proportion (.05)

From the table, a population of 380 requires a sample of 181. Consequently, a population of 377 will require a population of:

$$377 \times 181 \div 380 = 179.57 \text{ or approximately } \mathbf{180 \text{ groups.}}$$

3.5. Sampling Procedure

According to Trochim, Donnelly, & Arora (2015), sampling involves deriving a manageable sample from the larger population, while ensuring that the sample retains all the characteristics of the population. The study collected data from 180 women in 180 women groups (one woman per group). To arrive at the exact sample, the used proportionate stratified random sampling method. Each of the five wards of the constituency formed a stratum as indicated in Table 3:2.

Table 3:2. Sampling Frame

Ward	Population	Sample (x/180) 377
Municipality	176	84
Ntima West	65	31
Ntima East	77	37
Nyaki West	34	16
Nyaki East	25	12
Total	377	180

The study collected data on meeting days, times and venues of respective groups from the WEF Constituency Officer. Purposive sampling was used to select 180 groups that met within urban centres for ease of data collection. Simple random sampling was used to select one person to represent each group in the study.

3.5. Data Collection Instruments

The study used a questionnaire to collect data from the sample. According to Denscombe (2007), this instrument is advantageous because it can be designed to collect both qualitative and quantitative data. Questionnaires also yield reliable data because each of the respondents answers the same questions. The questionnaire for this study had six sections with respective types of questions. The first section captured bio data, four sections dealt with each of the four independent variables, while the last section collected data on the dependent variable.

3.6. Validity and Reliability of Instruments

Before a data collection instrument is used on respondents, it is important to ascertain that the instrument will measure what it was designed to and that it will do so consistently. To ascertain these two aspects, a researcher must carry out validity and reliability tests on the data collection tool.

3.6.1. Validity of instruments

A data collection instrument that has validity is one that does the work it was designed to do – measuring specific variables (Connaway & Powell, 2010). To measure the validity of the questionnaire for this study, the study used test-retest method. The study selected

18 WEF funded SHGs (which is 10% of the sample), which were not part of the sample, and administered the questionnaire to one individual in each group, hence a total of 18 individuals. Their responses were checked for consistency. After making corrections, the researcher administered the same questionnaire to the same respondents to assess consistency of responses. The researcher also discussed the results with the supervisor who helped to identify gaps. The rectified questionnaire was used in actual collection of data for the study.

3.6.2 Reliability of Instruments

Reliability in a data collection instrument means that the tool can measure variables in a precise and dependable manner. The test-retest questionnaires used to assess validity were tested for reliability using the Cronbach Alpha using SPSS.

The formula for calculating Cronbach's alpha is:

$$\alpha = \frac{N \cdot \bar{c}}{\bar{v} + (N - 1) \cdot \bar{c}}$$

Here N is equal to the number of items,

c-bar is the average inter-item covariance among the items and

v-bar equals the average variance.

The analysis of the questionnaire for reliability yielded a Cronbach Alpha coefficient of 7.2., which is within the acceptable level (above 7.0) according to Andrew, Pedersen and McEvoy (2011).

3.7. Data Collection Procedure

Data on meeting dates, times and venues of each group was obtained from the Constituency Women Enterprise Fund officer. Four local graduate research assistants were trained and deployed to administer questionnaires in respective wards. Data was collected from one member or leader per group during group meetings.

3.8. Data Analysis Technique

According to Kumar (2011), data analysis entails processing raw data using statistical methods before presenting the information as the findings of the study. Data from questionnaires was arranged thematically (based on respective sections of the questionnaire). Data was edited, coded and entered into Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The resulting data was analysed using descriptive statistics such as means and percentages and was presented using frequency tables.

3.9. Ethical Issues

Relevant written permission to collect data was obtained from the University and local authorities. Respondents were informed that the information to be collected would be treated confidentially and would be used for research purposes only. Respondents were also not required to write their names in the questionnaire.

3.10. Operational Definition of variables

Table 3:3 explains the approach to be applied in studying each variable in this study. The nature of each variable is explained as well as the pertinent indicator, the way it was measured, data collection method, levels of scale and level of analysis.

Table 3:3. Operationalization of Variables

	Research Objective	Type of Variable	Indicator	How to Measure Indicator	Level of Scale	Type of Analysis	Level of Analysis
1.	To assess the influence of management skills on performance of women self-help groups financed by Women Enterprise Funds in North Imenti Constituency.	Independent: Management skills	Leadership Communication Record keeping Participation of members	Extent of Effectiveness Extent of Effectiveness Extent of Effectiveness Level of involvement	Ordinal Ordinal Ordinal Ordinal	Quantitative Quantitative Quantitative Quantitative	Descriptive Descriptive Descriptive Descriptive
2.	To investigate the effect of capacity building training on performance of women self-help groups financed by Women Enterprise Funds in North Imenti Constituency.	Independent: Capacity building training	Frequency of training Appropriateness of content Effectiveness	No. of times Level of satisfaction Level of satisfaction	Ratio Ordinal Ordinal	Quantitative Quantitative Quantitative	Descriptive Descriptive Descriptive
3.	To determine the role of economic motivation on performance of women self-help groups financed by Women Enterprise Funds in North Imenti Constituency.	Independent: Capacity Economic empowerment	Benefit to business Domestic benefit Personal benefit	Level of satisfaction Level of satisfaction Level of satisfaction	Ordinal Ordinal Ordinal	Qualitative Quantitative Quantitative	Descriptive Descriptive Descriptive
4.	To establish the influence of group	Independent: Group	Frequency of meetings	No. of meetings	Ratio	Quantitative	Descriptive

	cohesion on performance of women self-help groups financed by Women Enterprise Funds in North Imenti Constituency.	cohesion	Participation of members Group unity	Level of involvement Level of cooperation	Ordinal	Quantitative	Descriptive
5.	Performance of women self-help groups financed by Women Enterprise Funds in North Imenti Constituency.	Dependent: Performance of SHGs	Savings and borrowings Loan repayment Sustainability	Level of increase Level of increase Extent of sustainability	Ordinal	Quantitative	Descriptive

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION

4.1. Introduction

This chapter consists of data analysis, presentation and interpretation. Information is presented in frequency tables, followed by interpretation and analysis. Presentation is based on respective sections of the questionnaire. The aim of the study was to investigate factors influencing performance of women self-help groups' projects financed by Women Enterprise Fund (WEF) in North Imenti Constituency, Meru County.

4.2. Questionnaire Return Rate

One hundred and eighty (180) questionnaires were distributed to women self-help groups across the five wards of North Imenti Constituency. Of these, 171 were filled and returned, which represents a return rate of 95%. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), this return rate is 'very good' since it is above 70%.

4.3. Demographic Information of Respondents

The study sought to know the age, marital status and education levels of respective respondents, the objectives and duration of existence of the group and membership status of and the membership status of respondents.

4.3.1. Age of Respondents

Table 4:1 summarizes age distribution of the study's respondents.

Table 4:1. Age of Respondents

Age	Frequency	Percent
18 - 34 Years	52	30.4
35 - 44 Years	60	35.1
45 - 54 Years	31	18.1
55 - 64 Years	20	11.7
65 Years and Above	8	4.7
Total	171	100

From Table 4:1, it is evident that majority (35.1%) of the women are aged between 35 and 44 years. It is noteworthy that a significant number of women (30.4%) are youth. Cumulatively, 65.5% percent of the women fall within the age bracket of 18 years and 44 years, implying that most members of the sampled Self-Help Groups (SHGs) are youthful and productive.

4.3.2. Marital Status of Respondents

The study also sought to establish the marital status of respondents. Table 4:2 presents the findings.

Table 4:2. Marital Status of Respondents

Marital Status	Frequency	Percent
Single	52	30.4
Married	86	50.3
Separated	17	9.9
Divorced	9	5.3
Widowed	7	4.1
Total	171	100

Table 4:2. Indicates that majority of the women (50.3%) were married, while a smaller but significant group (30.4%) was composed of single women. While being single does not necessarily indicated lack of dependents, these findings reveal that most of these women sampled were likely to depend on their SHGs to meet their financial needs, ostensibly to supplement others sources of income.

4.3.3. Education Levels of Respondents

The study also sought for information on the academic qualifications of the women in SHGs. Table 4:3. Summarizes the findings.

Table 4:3. Education Levels of Respondents

Education Level	Frequency	Percent
None	13	7.6
Primary School	35	20.5
Secondary School	61	35.7
Certificate	45	26.3
Diploma	11	6.4
Degree	6	3.5
Total	171	100.0

As indicated in Table 4:3. majority of the women (35.7%) had secondary education and were followed closely in number by those with certificates (26.3%). In addition, 92.4% of the respondents had some form of education, which indicates high literacy levels among women in the constituency. High literacy levels are crucial especially when it comes to capacity building training for women self-help groups since women are likely to understand more of what they are taught.

4.3.4. Objectives of Women SHGs

The study sought to know from women the objectives for forming or joining SHGs. Most of the respondents (40.9%) cited economic empowerment. Other responses included, to inculcate a saving culture / to save (29.8%), to acquire capital for business projects (22.8%) and group investment (6.4%). It is evident that women perceive SHGs as vehicles of personal and communal empowerment. These findings correspond with those of a study carried out in Puducherry, India, Nirmala and Geetha (2009).

4.3.5. Duration of Groups' Existence

The study also sought information on the number of years respective groups had been in operation and summarized the responses in Table 4:4.

Table 4:4. Duration of Group's Existence

Duration	Frequency	Percent
0-2 years	39	22.8
3-5 years	76	44.4
6-10 years	29	17.0
11 years and above	27	15.8
Total	171	100.0

According to Table 4:4. Majority of the sampled groups (44.4%) had been in existence for a period of between three and five years. Cumulatively, most of the groups (77.2%) of the groups has been in existence for more than 5 years. This indicates that the SHG culture among women in the constituency is well-established.

4.3.6. Membership Status of the Respondents

The study further investigated the positions held by respondents in respective groups. Majority of the women (58.5%) were normal members while the rest were leaders. This augured well with the objectives of the study since there was need to get information from both leaders and regular members, for objectivity purposes.

4.4. Group Management Skills and Performance of Women SHGs

The study sought to establish whether group management skills influenced the performance of women SHGs. Respondents were asked to rate their leaders on a number of skills, namely: minute-writing, financial record-keeping, communication, encouragement of participation, decision-making and listening.

4.4.1. Group Management's Skills

The study required women SHGs' members to rate the management skills of their leaders. Table 4:5 summarizes their responses.

Table 4:5. Group Management's Skills

Group Management's Skills	Excellent		Above average		Average		Below average		Very poor	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Minute writing	12	7.0	49	28.7	105	61.4	5	2.9	0	0
Financial record keeping	65	38.0	55	32.2	51	29.8	0	0	0	0
Communication	41	24.0	63	36.8	67	39.2	0	0	0	0
Encouraging participation	76	44.4	53	31.0	24	14.0	18	10.5	0	0
Involving members in decision-making	32	18.7	61	35.7	76	44.4	2	1.2	0	0
Listening	43	25.1	19	11.1	91	53.2	18	10.5	0	0

As evident in Table 4:5 majority of the women (61.4%) opined that SHG management had average minute-writing skills. Moreover, majority of those sampled (38%) indicated that their leaders had excellent financial record-keeping skills. Additionally, majority (39.2%) of the women indicated that their leaders had average communication skills. Majority of SHG members (44.4%) also indicated that group leaders were excellent in encouraging participation in group meetings. Most of the women (44.4%) also rated their leaders' average in relation to involving members in decision-making. Finally, majority of the respondents (53.2) indicated that their leaders had average listening skills.

4.4.2. Influence of Group Management's Skills on Group Performance

The study further probed members of women SHGs on whether management skills of group leaders influenced performance of respective groups. Majority of the respondents (94.7%) answered in the affirmative. When requested to explain their responses, majority (53.2%) indicated that effective management is crucial for attainment of group goals. Other reasons given were that effective group management enhances group disciplines and cohesion among members. Those who had indicated that group management's skills

did not affect performance mainly indicated that members' attitudes were the determinants of group performance.

4.4.3. Pearson Product-Moment Correlation on Group Management Skills and Performance of Women Self-Help Groups' Projects

To establish the relationship between group management skills and performance of women self-help groups' projects Pearson Product-Moment Correlation was computed. Table 4:6 summarizes the results.

Table 4:6. Correlations of Group Management Skills and Performance of Women Self-Help Groups' Projects

		Group Management Skills	Performance of Women SHGs' Projects
Pearson	Group Management Skills	1.000	0.47
Si 2 - tailed	Performance of Women SHGs' Projects	0.47	1.000
N		171	171

Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

It is evident from Table 4.6, that there is a moderate positive correlation (0.47) between Group Management Skills and Performance of Women SHGs' Projects. This implies that better management skills contribute to improved performance and vice-versa, albeit to a moderate extent.

4.5. Capacity Building Training and Performance of Women SHGs

The study further sought to establish how capacity building training affected group performance. Respondents were asked to provide data on frequency of training, rating of different aspect of training and gaps in training content.

4.5.1. Frequency of Training

The study sought information on how many times respondents' groups underwent training annually. The findings are presented in Table 4:7.

Table 4:7. Annual Frequency of Group Trainings

No. of trainings	Frequency	Percent
Once	130	76.0
Twice	41	24.0
Total	171	100

Table 4:7 indicates that majority (76%) of the respondents were in groups that were trained once per year. This is in tandem with Women Enterprise Fund (WEF) regulations which advocate for a group to be trained before it is funded. In essence, each of the sampled groups must have been trained at least once by WEF.

4.5.2. Rating of Aspects of WEF Capacity Building Training for SHGs

Members of women SHGs were also required to rate different aspects of the capacity training(s) they had attended. Table 4:8 presents their findings.

Table 4:8. Rating of Aspects of WEF Capacity Building Training for SHGs

Aspect of Training	Strongly Agree		Agree		Moderately Agree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
	SHG members is satisfied with frequency of training	47	27.5	93	54.4	16	19.4	12	7.0	3
Training content is appropriate for the group	58	33.9	108	63.2	2	1.2	3	1.8	0	0
Training content is helpful in running personal business	86	50.3	74	43.3	8	4.7	3	1.8	0	0
Capacity building training influences performance of the group	70	40.9	96	56.1	5	2.9	0	0	0	0

According to Table 4:8 majority of the women (54.4%) agreed with the frequency of training, with a significant number (27.5%) strongly agreeing with the same. Moreover, majority of the respondents (63.2%) agreed that the content of the training was appropriate and were supported by 33.9% others who strongly agreed with the statement. On whether training content was helpful in running personal businesses, majority of the women (50.3%) strongly agreed with 43.3% agreeing with the assertion. Moreover, majority of the respondents (56.1%) agreed that capacity building training influences performance of a group and were supported by 40.9% who strongly agreed with the statement.

4.5.3. Capacity Training Content Gaps

The study further sought information from members of women SHGs on which topics they felt should have been taught but were not covered during training. Majority (93%) of the members gave their preferred topics in the following order of importance: small-scale manufacturing such as soap-making; communication skills, agribusiness, record-keeping, group dynamics, horticulture, First Aid and life skills. These responses indicate the need to diversify WEF capacity building content, which in most cases deals with entrepreneurial skills.

4.5.4. Pearson Product-Moment Correlation on Capacity Building Training and Performance of Women Self-Help Groups' Projects

Pearson Product-Moment Correlation was computed to establish the relationship between capacity building training and performance of women self-help groups' projects. Table 4:9 summarizes the results.

Table 4.9. Correlations of Capacity Building Training and Performance of Women Self-Help Groups' Projects

		Capacity Building Training	Performance of Women SHGs' Projects
Pearson	Capacity Building Training	1.000	0.59
Si 2 - tailed	Performance of Women SHGs' Projects	0.59	1.000
N	171	171	

Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

According to Table 4:9, there was a strong positive correlation (0.59) between capacity building training and Performance of Women SHGs' Projects. In essence, the more groups are trained, the higher the likelihood that individual and group projects will experience improved performance and vice versa.

4.6. Economic Empowerment of SHG Members

The study sought information from women in SHGs on whether membership to these groups had resulted in economic empowerment of members.

4.6.1. Aspects of Economic Empowerment of Women in SHGs

To establish how women SHGs empowered their members economically, the study required respondents to rate respective statements. Table 4:10 summarizes the women's responses.

Table 4:10. Ratings of Aspects of Economic Empowerment of SHG Members

Statement	Strongly Agree		Agree		Undecided		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
	Group loan meets all credit needs of member	28	16.4	125	73.1	2	1.2	16	9.4	0
Business is performing well since joining group and borrowing	28	16.4	123	71.9	20	11.7	0	0	0	0
Personal budgeting and loan management skills have improved	44	25.7	107	62.6	4	2.3	16	9.4	0	0
Member can contribute to upkeep of family since joining group	57	33.3	75	43.9	39	22.8	0	0	0	0
Member has gained practical / technical skills for	28	16.4	104	60.8	25	14.6	14	8.2	0	0

entrepreneurship											
Member is empowered											
at personal / marital /	68	39.8	90	52.6	13	7.6	0	0	0	0	
parental levels											
Member would quit											
group in the absence of	72	42.1	53	31.0	18	10.5	28	16.	0	0	
benefits stated above.								4			

From Table 4:10, majority (73.1%) of the women agreed that they relied on their groups to meet all their credit requirement. Moreover, majority of the respondents (71.9%) agreed that their businesses were performing better since they joined respective groups and started borrowing. In addition, majority of the women (62.6%) agreed that their budgeting and loan management skills had improved since joining respective groups. It is also significant that majority (43.9%) of the women agreed that they were able to contribute to the upkeep of their families since joining respective groups, with 33.3% strongly agreeing with these sentiments. Additionally, most of the respondents (60.8%) agreed that they had gained practical / technical skills for use in business since joining corresponding groups. Moreover, most of the women (52.6%) agreed that they had become better mothers, wives or parents owing to participation in group activities, with another 39.8% greatly agreeing with those sentiments. Finally, majority of the women (73.1%) either agreed or strongly agreed that they would quit their respective groups if they did not experience economic or personal empowerment. From the ensuing, it is evident that women SHGs funded by WEF are crucial to empowerment of their members, through provision of loans, training and other activities.

4.5.4. Pearson Product-Moment Correlation on Economic Empowerment and Performance of Women Self-Help Groups' Projects

A Pearson Product-Moment Correlation coefficient was computed to establish the relationship between economic empowerment and performance of women self-help groups' projects. Table 4.11 summarizes the results.

Table 4:11. Correlations of Capacity Building Training and Performance of Women Self-Help Groups' Projects

		Economic Empowerment	Performance of Women SHGs' Projects
Pearson	Economic Empowerment	1.000	0.59
Si 2 - tailed	Performance of Women SHGs' Projects	0.59	1.000
N	171	171	

Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

According to Table 4:11, there was a very strong positive correlation (0.91) between economic empowerment and Performance of Women SHGs' Projects. This implies that the more women felt empowered as members of SHGs, the more the women felt their respective groups were performing effectively.

4.7. Group Cohesion and Performance of Women SHGs

The study further sought to establish how group cohesion influences performance of women SHGs. To this end, women were asked to provide information on frequency of meetings, by-laws and group unity.

4.7.1. Frequency of Group Meetings

Women were asked to indicate the frequency of meeting for respective groups. The findings are presented in Table 4:12.

Table 4:12. Frequency of Group Meetings

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Once a week	46	26.9
Once a month	83	48.5
Twice a month	42	24.6
Total	171	100.0

According to Table 4:12, majority of the groups (48.5%) met once in a month. It is evident that all the group met at least one time every month thus increasing the rate of interaction and understanding of group norms and individual members.

4.7.2. Possession of By-Laws

The study also sought to know whether respective groups had by-laws or group constitutions. Majority of the groups (93%) had these important documents. Since by-laws are the rules by which a group is governed, these documents are pivotal in promoting co-existence and cohesion in a group.

4.7.3. Aspects of Group Cohesion

The study also required women in SHGs to rate a number of statements on group cohesion. Their responses are summarized in Table 4:13.

Table 4:13. Ratings of Aspects of Group Cohesion in SHG

Statement	Very Large Extent		Large Extent		Undecided		Little Extent		No Extent at All	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
	Frequency of meetings is appropriate	46	26.9	111	64.9	14	8.2	0	0	0
Group adheres to all by-laws at all times	32	18.7	90	52.6	21	12.3	28	16.4	0	0
Adherence to by-laws improves group performance	110	64.3	48	28.1	13	7.6	0	0	0	0
Elections are held as planned	63	36.8	80	46.8	21	12.3	5	2.9	0	0
Leadership is rotated regularly	30	17.5	104	60.8	4	2.3	29	17.0	4	2.3
Member attends all meetings regularly or sends apologies when appropriate	40	23.4	107	62.6	15	8.8	9	5.3	0	0
Member participates actively in meetings	43	25.1	94	55.0	8	4.7	26	15.2	0	0
Group cohesion influences group performance	94	55.0	75	43.9	2	1.2	0	0	0	0

According to Table 4:13, majority of the women (64.9%) indicated that the frequency of meeting was appropriate to a large extent. In addition, majority of the respondents (52.6%) indicated that their groups adhered to the by-laws at all times to a large extent. Moreover, most of the respondents (64.3%) indicated that to a very large extent, adherence to by-laws improves group performance. On whether elections are held as scheduled, majority of the women (46.8%) indicated that this was the case to a large extent. Majority of group members (60.8%) also indicated that leadership was rotated regularly to a large extent. On whether they attended meetings regularly and sent apologies as appropriate, most of the women (62.6%) indicated that this was the case to a large extent. Additionally, majority of respondents (55%) indicated that they participated actively in group meetings to a large extent. Finally, most of the women (55%) believed that, to a very large extent, group cohesion influences group performance. In essence, most of the members of SHGs contributed to cohesion in respective groups and believed that consistency is a significant factor the influences the performance of SHGs.

4.7.4. Pearson Product-Moment Correlation on Group Cohesion and Performance of Women Self-Help Groups' Projects

A Pearson Product-Moment Correlation coefficient was computed to establish the relationship between group cohesions and performance of women self-help groups' projects. Table 4:14 summarizes the results.

Table 4:14. Correlations of Group Cohesion and Performance of Women Self-Help Groups' Projects

		Group Cohesion	Performance of Women SHGs' Projects
Pearson	Group Cohesion	1.000	0.83
Si 2 - tailed	Performance of Women SHGs' Projects	0.83	1.000
N	171	171	

Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Based on Table 4:14, there was a strong positive correlation (0.83) between group cohesion and Performance of Women SHGs' Projects. In essence, the more cohesive a group was, the more likely that it performed effectively, according to group members.

4.8. Performance of SHGs

The study also sought for information from women SHG members on how their groups were performing in terms of the number of times they had borrowed money from WEF, amount of money borrowed by group, and by the amount of individual savings.

4.8.1. Number of Times Group Has Borrowed from WEF

Women were required to indicate the number of times their groups had borrowed from Women Enterprise Fund (WEF). Their responses are presented in Table 4:15.

Table 4:15. Number of Times Group Has Borrowed from WEF

	Frequency	Percent
Once	70	40.9
Twice	53	31.0
Thrice	36	21.1
Four times	12	7.0
Total	171	100.0

From Table 4:15, it is evident that most of the groups (40.9%) had borrowed once from WEF. However, it is important to note that the remaining groups had benefitted more times from the fund, thus indicating the important role of WEF in women empowerment through SHGs.

4.8.2. Amount Borrowed by Groups from WEF

The study also sought to establish the amount borrowed by groups from WEF. Table 4:16 presents the findings.

Table 4:16. Amount Borrowed by Groups from WEF

Amount	Frequency	Percent
Ksh 50,000 – Ksh 100,000	69	40.4
Ksh 100,001 – Ksh 300,000	53	31.0
Ksh 300,001 – Ksh 500,000	34	19.9
Ksh 500,001 – Ksh 1,000,000	9	5.3
Over Ksh 1,000,000	6	3.5
Total	171	100.0

Based on Table 4:16 majority of the groups (40.4%) had borrowed between Ksh 50,00 and Ksh 100,000. These were groups that had borrowed once or twice since the minimum initial group loan amount from WEF is Ksh 50,000. Groups are upgraded to higher amounts based on how they repay the first loan. The groups with higher amounts in this study were those that had borrowed many times, over the years, from WEF. These findings indicate the importance of Women Enterprise Fund (WEF) as a source of funding for groups, especially because of the absence of interest on loans and flexible repayment periods.

4.8.3. Cumulative Amount Borrowed by Individual From WEF-Funded Group

Women in SHGs were further requested to indicate how much they had borrowed at personal level from the group to fund personal and business needs in the last one year.

Table 4:17 summarizes their responses.

Table 4:17. Cumulative Amount Borrowed by Individual From WEF-Funded Group

Amount	Frequency	Percent
Ksh 1,000 - Ksh 100,000	25	14.6
Ksh 100,001 - Ksh 200,000	53	31.0
Ksh 200,001 - Ksh 300,000	37	21.6
Ksh 300,001 - Ksh 400,000	27	15.8
Ksh 400,001 - Ksh 500,000	21	12.3
More than Ksh 500,000	8	4.7
Total	171	100.0

As illustrated in Table 4:17, majority of women (31%) had borrowed between Ksh 100,001 and Ksh 200,000 from their groups within one year. This is in tandem with earlier findings that respective groups were largely able to meet the credit needs of their members.

4.8.4. Individual Savings in Groups

The also required women in SHGs funded by WEF to indicate how much they had saved in individual groups. Table 4:18 summarizes their responses.

Table 4:18. Individual Savings in Groups

Amount	Frequency	Percent
Ksh 1,000 - Ksh 100,000	56	32.7
Ksh 100,001 - Ksh 200,000	71	41.5
Ksh 200,001 - Ksh 300,000	21	12.3
Ksh 300,001 - Ksh 400,000	19	11.1
Ksh 400,001 - Ksh 500,000	2	1.2
More than Ksh 500,000	2	1.2
Total	171	100.0

From Table 4:18, it is evident that majority of the members (41.5%) had saved between Ksh 100,001 and Ksh 200,000. This is indicative of the financial capabilities of the groups and their ability to lend to members since a member is allowed to borrow up to three times what they have saved with the group.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, DISCUSSIONS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the summary of findings, pertinent discussions and conclusion, recommendations and suggestions for further research. The purpose of this study was to investigate factors that influence the performance of self-help groups financed by Women Enterprise Fund in North Imenti Constituency, Meru County.

5.2. Summary of Findings

The following is a summary of main the findings of the study.

5.2.1. Group Management Skills and Performance of Women Self Help Groups

The first objective of the study was to assess the influence of management skills on performance of women self-help groups financed by Women Enterprise Funds in North Imenti Constituency. Findings indicate that majority of the women (61.4%) indicated that SHG management had average minute-writing skills. Moreover, majority of SHG members (38%) indicated that their leaders had excellent financial record-keeping skills. Most of the women (39.2%) indicated that their leaders had average communication skills. In addition, majority of SHG members (44.4%) also indicated that group leaders were excellent in encouraging participation in group meetings. Majority of the women (44.4%) rated their leaders average in relation to involving members in decision-making. Additionally, majority of the respondents (53.2) indicated that their leaders had average listening skills. Majority of the respondents (94.7%) believed that management skills of group leaders influenced performance of respective groups. Lastly, majority of the respondents (53.2%) indicated that effective management is crucial for attainment of group goals. Based on computation of Pearson Product Moment Correlation, group management skills had a moderate positive influence (0.47) on performance of women SHGs' projects.

5.2.2. Capacity Building Training and Performance of Women Self Help Groups

The second objective of the study was to investigate the effect of capacity building training on performance of women self-help groups financed by Women Enterprise Funds in North Imenti Constituency. Most of the respondents (76%) indicated that their respective groups were trained once per year. Majority of the women (81.9%) either strongly agreed or agreed that the frequency of training was good for their groups. Majority of the respondents (97.1%) either strongly agreed or agreed that the content of the training was appropriate for their groups. Most of the women (93.6%) either strongly agreed or agreed that training content was helpful in running personal businesses. Majority of the respondents (97%) either strongly agreed or agreed that capacity building training influences performance of SHGs. SHG members identified topics / issues that were not covered during training and which they believed were appropriate for them, as follows: small-scale manufacturing such as soap-making; communication skills, agribusiness, record-keeping, group dynamics, horticulture, First Aid and life skills. Computation of Pearson Product Moment Correlation coefficient revealed that capacity building training had a strong positive influence (0.59) on performance of women SHGs' projects.

5.2.3. Economic Empowerment of Women Self Help Groups

The third objective of the study was to determine the role of economic empowerment on performance of women self-help groups financed by Women Enterprise Funds in North Imenti Constituency. Majority of the women (73.1%) agreed that relied on their groups to meet all their credit requirement. Most of the respondents (71.9%) agreed that their businesses were performing better since they joined respective groups and started borrowing. Majority of the women (62.6%) agreed that their budgeting and loan management skills had improved since joining respective groups. Majority of the women (77.2%) either agreed or strongly agreed that they were able to contribute to the upkeep of their families since joining respective groups. Most of the respondents (60.8%) agreed that they had gained practical / technical skills for use in business since joining corresponding groups. Most of the women (92.4%) either strongly agreed or agreed that they had become better women, wives or parents owing to participation in group activities. Majority of the women (73.1%) either agreed or strongly agreed that they would quite their respective groups if they did not experience economic empowerment. Based on Pearson Product Moment Correlation coefficient computation, it was revealed

that economic empowerment had a very strong positive influence (0.91) on performance of women SHGs' projects.

5.2.4. Group Cohesion and Performance of Women Self Help Groups

The fourth objective of the study was to establish the influence of group cohesion on performance of women self-help groups financed by Women Enterprise Funds in North Imenti Constituency. Majority of the groups (48.5%) met once in a month, with all the groups meeting at least once every month. Majority of the groups (93%) had group by-laws or constitutions. Majority (91.8%) of the women indicated that the frequency of meeting was appropriate to a large extent or to a very large extent. Most of the SHG members (92.4%) indicated that their groups adhered to by-laws at all times to a large extent or to a very large extent. Most of the women (92.4%) indicated that to a very large extent or to a large extent, adherence to by-laws improved group performance. Majority of the women (83.6%) indicated that to a large extent or to a very large extent, group elections were held as scheduled. Majority of group members (78.3%) also indicated that leadership was rotated regularly to a large extent or to a very large extent. Majority of the women (86%) attended meetings regularly and sent apologies as appropriate, to a very large extent or to a large extent. Majority of respondents (80.1%) indicated that they participated actively in group meetings to a large extent or to a very large extent. Most of the women (98.9%) believed that, to a very large extent or to a large extent, group cohesion influences group performance. Following computation of Pearson Product Moment Correlation coefficient, it was established that group cohesion had a strong positive influence (0.83) on performance of women SHGs' projects.

5.3. Discussion of Findings

The research study was hinged on four independent variables: group management skills, capacity building training, economic empowerment of group members, and group cohesions, and how these variables influenced the dependent variable – performance of women self-help groups.

5.3.1. Group Management Skills and Performance of Women Self Help Groups

Management skills of group leaders are pivotal in determining performance of a group as attested to by most of the women in this study. Minute writing is a crucial skill for

leaders, especially secretaries, and most groups indicated that their leaders were average in this regard. Considering that about 28.1% of the respondents had attained primary school education or no education at all, the average rating is understandable. Moreover, the excellent rating for readers' financial management skills is significant because the rationale and key activities of women SHGs revolve around monetary issues and financial probity and transparency are mandatory. Members also indicated their leaders were average in communication but excellent in encouraging participation of members. Within the context participatory practices in groups and communication patterns among women, where turn-taking is encouraged, these findings are plausible. SHG leaders were also rated average in terms of listening and involving members in decision-making, buttressing the notion that women practice participatory democracy when leading SHGs. It is also significant that most SHG members believe that the performance of a group is premised on how skilled respective leaders are, and that the attainment of group goals is a direct by-product of leaders exercising effective management. Waithaka's (2014) study in Embu County, Kenya, arrived at comparable findings, asserting that financial management skills were found to be pivotal in determining performance of SHGs.

5.3.2. Capacity Building Training and Performance of Women Self Help Groups

Concerning the influence of capacity building training on performance of SHGs, it is evident that the two variables are closely related. The study established that most of the groups were trained once every year, which is in tandem with Women Enterprise Fund (WEF) practices of training groups before funding them. Group members were also content with the annual frequency of training, indicating it was appropriate for their groups. Another significant finding on training was the acceptability of the training content to the beneficiaries, implying WEF had conducted needs' analysis effectively. More importantly, the content was efficacious in eliciting improved performances in individual businesses, a key objective of entrepreneurship training. The ensuing conclusion that capacity building training influences group performance is, therefore, a natural and logical conclusion of the other findings. From the study, it also emerged that women entrepreneurs in SHG were interested in more than entrepreneurship training. While they wanted content on agribusiness and small-scale manufacturing and expressed the need to scale up record-keeping training, other non-business skills were in demand such as First Aid, life skills and communication skills. Evidently, SHGs can be utilized

as focal points for disseminating socio-cultural, health and existential information to women members. The findings of this study are in conformity with those by Gathuni (2015) who established that business training was a principal component of women empowerment through SHGs. Other researchers who established the importance of training in SHGs for women empowerment include Fazalbhoy (2014) and Sundaram (2012) in India, Mbithi (2016) in Limuru, Kenya, and Kisera and Muturi (2015) in Gucha, Kenya.

5.3.3. Economic Empowerment and Performance of Women Self Help Groups

From the onset of the study, most women indicated that their main motive for joining SHGs was economic empowerment. In this study, it emerged that these groups were the principal source of capital for women entrepreneurs. Considering the high cost of borrowing from conventional financial institutions and the attendant procedures and documentation, SHGs are the logical choice, particularly when these groups access affordable credit from agencies such as the Women Enterprise Fund (WEF). These findings explain the assertions of women in this study that their businesses were performing better after joining SHGs and borrowing from these groups. The fact that women reported having better loan management and budgeting skills can be attributed to the training offered by WEF. Njeru (2017) opines that lack of budgetary skills is one of the key hindrances to performance of personal and group projects. In tandem with acquisition of business management skills, women in this study also reported gaining practical / technical skills e.g. soap making, that they use in generating income. Another important finding was that most of the women were contributing to the upkeep of their families from the benefits accrued from joining SHGs, an indicator of the positive impact of SHGs on family livelihoods. It follows, therefore, that these women would become better in their family responsibilities, particularly as mothers and wives, and more importantly, as women. These findings buttress those of scholars (for instance Raghavan (2009), who conducted a study in Kerala, India), who believe SHGs are effective tools of women empowerment, especially in low-income settings. Finally, the findings reveal that women value SHGs for the economic empowerment worth in these groups, to the extent that many women would consider leaving their respective groups if they did not feel empowered. Nirmala and Geetha (2009), in a study carried out in Puducherry, India, reached corresponding conclusions, though they also established that women joined

SHGs to gain recognition in society, an issue that was not directly cited by respondents in the current study.

5.3.4. Group Cohesion and Performance of Women Self Help Groups

According to the findings of this study, all the groups had a meeting at least once per month, with most groups meeting once every month, thus boosting interaction and cohesion among members. It is a requirement that every group should have by-laws before it is registered by the Department of Social Services (Government of Kenya), implying that the respondents who indicated their groups lacked this document, may have been misinformed, or their groups did not refer to this document often. Participatory democracy was evident from the responses of most women that the frequency of meetings was acceptable, as this is an issue that is agreed upon mutually, and not imposed by leaders. It is also evident from these findings that groups practice self-governance and rule of law since most of them adhere to the stipulations of their by-laws, which in turn boost the performance of groups. Entrenchment of fairness, transparency and participation is apparent in the fact that most groups held elections regularly and in most cases leadership was handed over to a new crop of members, every time elections were conducted. This is in conformity with Anyiro *et al.* (2014), who had concluded that democratic practices were the glue that held SHGs together. Moreover, as Gathuni (2015), observed in a study in Kiambu County, Kenya, SHG leadership is voluntary and rotating leadership position helps to inculcate leadership skills in each of the members of the group. Group discipline and commitment are evident from the fact that most members attended meetings regularly and sent apologies if they were caught up in some other important issues. Active participation was also high, corroborating earlier findings that SHG leaders encouraged participation by members. This section culminated with women indicating that group cohesion was a key pillar of group performance. Lambisa, Ngahu and Wagoki's (2016) study in Rongai, Kenya, arrived at comparable findings.

5.4. Conclusions

It is evident from this study that group management skills significantly influence the performance of women funded by Women Enterprise Fund (WEF). While normal members must participate in group activities, leaders provide direction, harness

members' synergies and guide the group to attain its goals. Leaders who possess effective writing and oral communication skills and are good in keeping financial records can boost performance of their groups significantly.

Similarly, capacity building training influences group performances by disseminating relevant information to group members and inculcating vital skills for effective business and group performance. Appropriate content is tailor-made for group and individual business needs. There is need, however, to diversify the curriculum to include non-business, but equally-important knowledge and skills such as First Aid.

In addition, SHGs are considered to perform effectively when they empower members economically and at personal levels. While women borrow from their groups to invest in personal businesses, the accruing benefits are cascaded to the household level, where women boost their roles either as co-breadwinners or the sole source of sustenance for their families. Participation in SHGs and the concomitant training also improves women at personality level, by creating room for self-appreciation and self-esteem.

Finally, group cohesion is an important ingredient in group performance as it ensures members have a common approach to issues and problems that face them and possess policies and guidelines to guide the group and deal with conflict. Regular attendance of meetings, possessing and adhering to by-laws and mutual understanding gel the group together.

5.5. Recommendations

The following are pertinent recommendations towards boosting the performance of SHGs funded by WEF and similar groups that seek to empower women.

1. Women SHGs required incisive and practical training in management skills for all members, since leadership is rotational.
2. Training on entrepreneurship-related issues should be scaled up and conducted more than once on one year, to inculcate knowledge and skills and to ensure women entrepreneurs in SHGs are up-to-date on issues of business.
3. Women Enterprise Fund (WEF) and other organizations / institutions / agencies that fund women groups should increase amounts disbursed to groups and use the

group as a focal point for disseminating other information is important for women and families.

4. The Department of Social Services should provide assistance to SHGs to write or refine their by-laws to enhance group cohesion.

5.6. Suggestions for Further Research

The following topics could not be handled within the limitations of the current study but can offer insights into self-help groups, their modus operandi and their role in women empowerment and community development in general.

1. The role of group management skills in enhancing performance of women SHGs.
2. Influence of capacity building training on performance of women SHGs
3. Determinants of women empowerment through Self-Help Groups
4. The role of group dynamics in determining performance of women SHGs

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APPENDICES
Appendix 1: Letter of Transmittal for Data Collection

Sella Kithinji

P.O. Box 496 – 60200.

Meru.

5th April 2017

Dear Respondent,

RE: RESEARCH STUDY DATA COLLECTION

I am a Master of Arts (Project Planning and Management) student at the University of Nairobi. I am carrying out a research on Factors Influencing the Performance of Self-help Groups Funded by Women Enterprise Fund in North Imenti Constituency, Meru County.

As part of my research, I am supposed to collect data from women who are members of SHGs. I am therefore requesting you to assist me by filling in this questionnaire as accurately and honestly as possible. The data I will collect will be used purely for academic purposes and will be treated confidentially.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sella kithinji.

Appendix 2: Questionnaire for Women in Self-Help Groups

Preamble

My name is Sella Kithinji, a Master of Arts in Project Planning and Management student at the University of Nairobi. I am conducting a research study titled “Factors Influencing the Performance of Self-help Groups Funded by Women Enterprise Fund in North Imenti Constituency, Meru County.” Kindly help me achieve my objectives by filling in this questionnaire. Please be assured that the information you give will be used for academic purposes only, and will be treated with a lot of confidentiality. This questionnaire is divided into six parts: I, II, III, IV, V & VI.

Instructions

1. Do not write your name on the questionnaire.
2. Please answer all questions where applicable.
3. Please tick [] from any of the alternatives provided.

PART I: RESPONDENT’S PERSONAL INFORMATION

1. Indicate your age (in years)
 - a. 18-34
 - b. 35-44
 - c. 45-54
 - d. 55-64
 - e. 65 and above
2. Marital Status
 - a. Single
 - b. Married
 - c. Separated
 - d. Divorced
 - e. Widowed
3. Your highest level of education
 - a. None
 - b. Primary school
 - c. Secondary school
 - d. Certificate
 - e. Diploma

- f. Degree
 - g. Masters and above
4. Why did you start the group (group objectives and activities)?
-
-
-
-
5. How long has your group been in existence?
- a. 0-2 years
 - b. 3-5 years
 - c. 6-10 years
 - d. More than 10 years
6. What is your membership status?
- a. Normal member
 - b. Official (Please specific position).....

PART II: GROUP MANAGEMENT

7. Please rate the management skills of your group leaders in the following table.

	Excellent	Above average	Average	Below average	Very poor
Minute writing					
Financial record keeping					
Communication					
Encouraging participation					
Involving members in decision-making					
Listening					

8. Do you think leadership and management skills influence how you group performs?
- a. YES
 - b. NO

9. Please explain your answer in Question 7 (above)

.....
.....
.....

PART III: CAPACITY BUILDING TRAINING

10. On average, how many times are you trained in one year?

a. Once () b. Twice () c. Thrice or more ()

11. In the table below, please rate each of the statements (on capacity building training) based on your experience so far.

Strongly Agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly Disagree

I am satisfied with the number of times we have been trained as a group

The content / topics we are taught are appropriate for the group

The content / topics we are taught have helped me in running my personal business

Capacity building training influences performance of my group

12. Which topics were not taught and you would want them to be addressed in future trainings?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

PART IV: ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT OF MEMBERS

13. In the table below, please rate each of the statements (on the benefits you get from being a member of your group) based on your experience so far.

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
My group is able to meet all my credit / loan requirements					
Since I joined the group and started borrowing, my business is performing well					
My budgeting and loan management skills have improved since I joined this group					
I can contribute to the upkeep of my family from the benefits of joining this group					
I have gained practical / technical skills (e.g. goat keeping, poultry keeping, soap making etc.)					
I am a better woman / mother / wife due to the knowledge and skills I have gained as a member of this group					
If my group does not continue to offer all the benefits above, I would consider quitting					

PART V: GROUP COHESION

14. How often does your group meet?

- a. Once a week ()
- b. Once a month ()
- c. Twice a month ()
- d. Other (Please specify).....

15. Does your group have by-laws (constitution) to govern your activities?

- a. YES ()
- b. NO ()

16. To what extent are the following statements true?

Statement	Very large extent	Large extent	Undecided	Little extent	No extent at all
The frequency of our meetings is appropriate					
Our group adheres to our by-laws all the time					
Following by-laws improves the performance of the group					
Elections are held as planned					
There is rotation of leadership in the group					
I attend all meetings without fail or send apologies when I cannot make it					
I participate actively in all meetings					
Group unity and good working relations influence performance of my group					

PART VI: PERFORMANCE OF SELF HELP GROUP

17. How many times has your group borrowed from Women Enterprise Fund?

.....

18. How much money has your group borrowed, in total, from Women Enterprise Fund

- () Ksh 50,000 – Ksh 100,000 () Ksh 100,001 – Ksh 300,000
 () Ksh 300,001 – Ksh 500,000 () Ksh 500,001 – Ksh 1,000,000
 () Over Ksh 1,000,000

19. Approximately how much have you borrowed from your group to fund your business and personal cash requirements in the last one year? Ksh

.....

20. How much money have you saved in the group? Ksh.....

END

Thank you for taking time to fill this questionnaire

Appendix 3: Table for Determining Sample Size from a Given Population

N	S	N	S	N	S	N	S	N	S
10	10	100	80	280	162	800	260	2800	338
15	14	110	86	290	165	850	265	3000	341
20	19	120	92	300	169	900	269	3500	246
25	24	130	97	320	175	950	274	4000	351
30	28	140	103	340	181	1000	278	4500	351
35	32	150	108	360	186	1100	285	5000	357
40	36	160	113	380	181	1200	291	6000	361
45	40	180	118	400	196	1300	297	7000	364
50	44	190	123	420	201	1400	302	8000	367
55	48	200	127	440	205	1500	306	9000	368
60	52	210	132	460	210	1600	310	10000	373
65	56	220	136	480	214	1700	313	15000	375
70	59	230	140	500	217	1800	317	20000	377
75	63	240	144	550	225	1900	320	30000	379
80	66	250	148	600	234	2000	322	40000	380
85	70	260	152	650	242	2200	327	50000	381
90	73	270	155	700	248	2400	331	75000	382
95	76	270	159	750	256	2600	335	100000	384

Note: "N" is population size "S" is sample size.

Krejcie, Robert V., Morgan, Daryle W., "Determining Sample Size for Research Activities", Educational and Psychological Measurement, 1970.Vol 30 p 607 - 610