

**THE ROLE OF INFORMAL SAVINGS IN EMPOWERING WOMEN IN KAJIADO  
NORTH SUB-COUNTY, KAJIADO COUNTY, KENYA**

**LUCY NJOKI NYATHIRA**

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## DECLARATION

This project paper is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other university.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Lucy Njoki Nyathira**

**N69/65752/2013**

This project paper has been submitted for examination with my approval as the university supervisor.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Prof. Simiyu Wandibba**

## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this work to the Almighty God; the far I have come is because of His love, mercy and grace.

To my two daughters, Naima and Niyah, you were my source of inspiration. You always made me work hard because I knew you were looking up to me. I dedicate this paper to you

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## **ABSTRACT**

This was cross-sectional descriptive study on the role of informal saving in empowering women in Kajiado North, Kajiado County, Kenya. Specifically, the study set out to: establish the existing informal savings and credit opportunities for women and why they are not utilizing them; investigate the extent to which access to informal savings contribute to women empowerment; and identify the problems that women in informal savings/associations experience. The study was guided by the Longwe framework. The study was conducted with 88 women aged between 18 and 55 years conveniently sampled. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, key informant interviews and direct observation and analysed thematically in line with the study objectives. Findings indicate that existing informal savings and credits have a positive impact on the lives of the majority of women as their lives have improved. Existing informal savings provide credit opportunities which increase income generated at the household. Businesses and other self-employment opportunities were facilitated by access to credit from informal savings groups. The challenges identified include coordination and group attendance, group management challenges and lack of access to formal credit. The study concludes that informal savings and credits have been and still are instrumental in the empowerment of women but they are not acknowledged. The study recommends that the state, county government and other development partners should facilitate training for the informal women group members, particularly on financial management, loaning procedures and group management. Further, the study recommends that implementation of research to ensure that societal factors derailing women's participation in development are demystified to improve women's bargaining power and therefore empowering them economically, socially and psychologically. The study also makes suggestion for a similar but more elaborate study to be conducted covering the whole county and, where possible, disaggregate the population in terms of rural and urban/peri-urban. This will be instrumental in rethinking of women empowerment and enhancement of women's voices in development.

## LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AFC	Agriculture Finance Corporation
ASCAs	Accumulating Savings and Credit Associations
DO	Direct Women
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
KII	Key Informant Interview
KWFT	Kenya Women Finance Trust
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
NACOSTI	National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation
ROSCAs	Rotating Savings and Credit Associations
SACCOs	Savings, Credits and Cooperatives Societies
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
UNDESA	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
WEF	Women Empowerment Fund

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY**

#### **1.1 Introduction**

Women informal saving groups in Kajiado North Sub-County are one of the strategies used by most women to empower themselves, both socially and economically. Factors such as zero or minimal collateral, flexible loan repayment plans, proximity between the lender and borrower, and minimal interest rates are some of the informal saving groups' advantages. Formal savings such as Savings, Credits and Cooperatives Societies (SACCOs), Women Empowerment Fund (WEF), Kenya Women Finance Trust and banks, are some of the institutions where women can obtain credit facilities.

However, women do experience various challenges that have contributed to their limited access to formal credit. These challenges include women's perceived roles in society; low educational level which may limit them in loan applications; cultural beliefs; and lack of legally owned assets such as land title deeds which can be used as collateral. Consequently, to improve their socio-economic opportunities, women came up with two forms of informal savings and credit models. These are Rotating Savings and Credit Associations (ROSCAs), popularly known as merry-go-rounds, and Table Banking. The two are used as possible means of overcoming their hindrances to socio-economic empowerment. ROSCAs' credit facilities from women groups are available on a monthly, rotational basis. The first group member to receive the funds becomes a debtor to all the other members. On the other hand, the last member to receive the funds becomes a lender to all the other members. Credit facilities obtained through ROSCAs/merry-go-rounds are interest free. Lending is based on sheer trust, since most of the members are either friends or neighbours.

Membership to the group is normally vetted, prevalence being given to trusted new members and those deemed to have low chances of absconding monthly contributions (Mwaniki, 2011).

Table banking is at times done simultaneously with ROSCAs/merry-go-rounds. In cases where the two are combined, separate financial records are maintained. Capital funds meant for table banking are raised by women group members. Initial members' contributions may range from as low as KES 200 to 1,000. The amount is determined by members' financial ability. Lending capital increases with time, additional funds being obtained from loan interests. Members can borrow as low as KES 500, depending on availability of funds, at any specific meeting sitting. Eligible borrowers may make requests in advance, especially if they need a large sum of money. There may also be impromptu borrowers, who may have an emergency. Impromptu borrowers are given what is available at the time of request. Repayment is flexible, depending on the group's rules. In most cases repayment is done on a monthly basis, for a set period of time, either three or six months, or a year (Mwaniki, 2011).

In a study done by Akeno and Wafula (2017) on "Influence of Women Participation in Group Activities on Empowerment of Communities: A Case of Kajiado North Sub-County, Kenya," it was found that women empowerment is important in economic development. Thus, women's group funding should be considered by both government and development agencies as a means of stimulating women's economic empowerment and elimination of poverty in the community. Similarly, a study by Lambisia *et al.* (2016) reported that the group members before joining the group were neither economically established nor formally employed. Table banking funds were used in fee payments, household needs, businesses as well as repayment of other groups' borrowings.

Akeno and Wafula (2017) state that despite their immense contribution to family, community and national development, through their participation in group activities on empowerment of communities in Kajiado North Sub-County, women still remain a marginalized population. In their study, they recommend that the government should upscale women's involvement in entrepreneurial activities as this has a direct effect on community empowerment and general development of the country. They further state that societal norms and practices are not altered when women involve themselves in group activities on the empowerment of communities. Rather, community empowerment is mostly hindered as women's contribution is often overlooked or their influence goes unnoticed and unfelt, as their potential is rarely utilized. In addition, for any country to achieve its sustainable development goals, women empowerment is a key factor. Despite studies done on various issues regarding women empowerment, the huge contribution of women savings groups is still unfelt. It is against this backdrop, that this study assessed the role of informal savings in empowering women, with particular reference to women self-help groups in Kajiado North Sub-County of Kajiado County, Kenya.

## **1.2 Statement of the problem**

Efforts towards poverty reduction and economic growth have been one of the key focus areas of development by the Kenya Government since independence. The aim has been to curb loss of economic growth. In recognition of existence of limited access to credit facilities by most of the rural women, the Kenya government created the Women Enterprise Fund as an avenue to address this problem. However, this seems not to have changed the prevalent problem. Instead, women groups continue to address limited access to credit through informal savings for self socio-economic empowerment. Therefore, this study sought to respond to the following research questions:

1. Which are the existing informal savings and credit opportunities for women in Kajiado North Sub-County?
2. To what extent has access to informal savings contributed to women's empowerment in that Sub-County?
3. What are the problems experienced by women in informal savings/associations in the Sub-County?

### **1.3 Objectives of the study**

#### **1.3.1 General objective**

To explore the role of informal savings from women groups in empowering women in Kajiado North Sub-County, Kajiado County, Kenya.

#### **1.3.2 Specific objectives**

1. To establish the existing informal savings and credit opportunities for women.
2. To investigate the extent to which access to informal savings contribute to women empowerment.
3. To identify the problems that women in informal savings/associations experience.

### **1.4 Assumptions of the study**

1. Kajiado North Sub-County has informal savings and credit opportunities for women.
2. Access to informal savings contributes to women empowerment in that Sub-County.
3. Informal savings groups for women in the Sub-County experience certain problems.

### **1.5 Justification of the study**

This study on the role of informal savings in empowerment of women in Kajiado North Sub-county has identified the forms of informal savings and factors that impede access to formal savings. Comprehensive understanding of the underlying factors and challenges associated with informal savings is instrumental in bringing about women empowerment. The findings from this study have provided insights into the appropriateness of informal savings by women self-help groups as a strategy for improving women empowerment.

In addition, findings and recommendations from this study should be helpful to other researchers, development practitioners, policy makers and implementers in cases of project/programme design and implementation to come up with relevant initiatives based on people's experiences, but with the potential to advance women empowerment through informal savings. This study has also added to the body of literature that has accrued over the years by researchers and scholars interested in the empowerment of women.

### **1.6 Scope of the study**

The study was conducted in Kajiado North Sub-county and targeted informal registered women members, specifically self-help groups. It focused on informal savings through women Rotating Savings and Credit Associations (ROSCAs), popularly known as merry-go-rounds and Accumulating Savings and Credit Associations (ASCAs), also referred to as table banking. The study focused on the existing informal savings and credit opportunities for women and the extent to which access to informal savings contributes to women empowerment as well as challenges women in informal savings/associations experience. It employed a descriptive research design and was guided by the women's empowerment framework.



## **1.7 Limitations of the study**

The main limitation of this study envisioned right from proposal development was its concepts. Some respondents had difficulties in comprehending some of the main themes of discussion which would have been a threat to the validity and reliability of findings. In order to overcome this challenge, the researcher ensured that the respondents understood the concepts by explaining those concepts to them in a fairly simple way for them to understand. The study instruments were also administered in a private manner so as to ensure the participants felt confident enough to share the information freely. However, the nature of the study problem cannot be measured by a single indicator alone owing to its multi-dimensional nature. The findings are therefore specific to the County and not generalizable to other regions.

## **1.8 Definition of terms**

**Informal savings:** Refers to financial resources accumulated by women group members with intended usage at individual or group level.

**Rotating savings and credit associations (ROSCAs):** This term is commonly known as merry-go-rounds. In this study the terminology was used to refer to voluntary women groups/associations that are formed based on neighbourhood, trust, similar interests/vision and financial ability.

**Accumulating savings and credit associations (ASCAs):** The term was used in the study to refer to what is popularly known as “Table Banking women groups”.

**Women groups:** Refers to voluntary groups formed by women in the area of study. Membership is determined by a common felt need to address and resolve a social, economic or a welfare problem.

**Women empowerment:** The financial ability conferred on women group members who benefit financially from informal savings credit facilities. The acts of empowerment are evident through the items that they purchase, businesses that they start or expand, children whom they educate and the building structures that they construct.

**Empowerment:** Refers to the ability that informal savings credits confer on women group beneficiaries, to meet their most felt financial needs, which they would otherwise not have fulfilled.

**Savings:** Refer to financial monthly contributions by women group members, during group meetings. These savings are either loaned to group members informally to finance their individual or family needs, or are spent in the purchase of items that have been agreed upon.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter focuses on the literature relevant to the research problem. The literature is reviewed using the following subheadings: Formal savings and credit opportunities for women, informal savings and credit opportunities for women; informal savings and women's empowerment; identified problems that women in informal savings groups/associations experience; and how the identified problems can be addressed. The chapter concludes by discussing the theoretical framework which guided the study.

#### **2.2 Formal savings and credit opportunities for women**

There are different forms of formal savings and credit opportunities which exist in Kajiado North Sub-county. Among them are Agriculture Finance Corporation (AFC), Cooperative Bank of Kenya, Kenya Women Finance Trust (KWFT), Ngong Catholic Welfare Fund, Women Enterprise Fund (WEF) and Uwezo Fund. The most popular of these for women in Kajiado North sub-county is the Women Enterprise Fund.

However, women groups in this sub-county do experience different challenges in accessing formal savings and credit opportunities. For example, in her study of women's access to formal credit in Ngong Division, Gathigi (2000) found that the Agriculture Finance Corporation (AFC), was the leading lending institution to farmers residing in Kajiado County at the time of the study. However, AFC credit facilities are available to large and medium scale farmers only. Therefore, loan applicants are required to be in possession of title deeds, which act as the main collateral, among other items. Unfortunately, most of the women do not hold title deeds, as these titles are in their husbands' names.

### **2.2.1 Women Enterprise Fund**

The Women Enterprise Fund is a Kenya government initiative, which offers credit facilities to registered women groups nationwide. The Fund was established in August 2007, in the then Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Development. Its aim was to address two Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). These were MDG one on 'Poverty Reduction' and MDG three on 'Gender Equality and Women Empowerment'. By availing the fund to Kenyan women with limited access to business enterprise loans, the government hoped to reduce poverty among women and empower them economically. It was envisioned that women's economic empowerment would have a trickledown effect, thereby empowering the majority of Kenyan women in other spheres of life (socially, psychologically and politically). However, the Fund's uptake has not been very successful among the majority of rural women, though there are those who have benefitted from it (Women Enterprise Fund, 2009).

### **2.2.2 Women Enterprise Fund loan requirements**

According to the Women Enterprise Fund (2009), applicants to the fund should meet four basic criteria. One, the group must have been registered by the Ministry of Public Service, Youth and Gender Affairs, for not less than three months. Two, the group must have an operational bank account and, three, the group should have an existing business for not less than one year, and be in possession of business records. Finally, for the groups to secure loan, they should have a collateral as security with interest rates ranging from 15% - 20%.

Among the services that are provided by the Fund are access to credit fund, capacity building, facilitation of local and international marketing of women products and networking. Unfortunately, however, a majority of the women groups are not able to meet the above criteria, so as to qualify for the group business loans.

Most of the literature that has been reviewed indicates that the Women Enterprise Fund has empowered women economically. However, a few studies do indicate that the Fund did not empower women economically. An example of such study was done by Omollo (2011). The study's intention was to find out "whether investments in commercial infrastructure, access to credit, marketing facilitation, business networking and capacity building influence economic empowerment of women entrepreneurs in Kisumu Rural". This study concluded that the Fund had not empowered the women economically. The study, therefore, made three recommendations, one of which was that loan facilities should be brought closer to the women entrepreneurs. The second recommendation was that loan packages should be given to individual women entrepreneurs and not as a group. Finally, the study recommended that implementers of the fund should initiate businesses and mentor women entrepreneurs on how to manage these businesses for self-socio-economic empowerment (Omollo, 2011:72).

### **2.2.3 Women Enterprise Fund and women's empowerment**

The empowerment of women through the Women Enterprise Fund has varied from one study area to the other. For example, Ombara (2012) found that the Fund had greatly empowered women economically in Bondo District, Kenya. This economic empowerment had enhanced the women's participation in decision-making processes, both at the household and at the community level. Another success story was observed by Mutinda (2011) in Matuga constituency, Kwale County. The study found that eight types of business activities had been initiated through funds obtained from the Fund. Among them were: "Selling of fuels and clothes, food kiosks, retail shops, water vending, green grocery, poultry, and hiring out of items during events". This economic empowerment translated into psychological empowerment, in form of positive self-perception, self-worth and self-esteem. Mutinda further observes that, through businesses that were initiated

using loans from the Fund, women had been empowered in food provision, consequently alleviating hunger in their families.

However, Mutinda (2011) noted that the Women Enterprise Fund beneficiaries encountered several challenges. One was that most of the beneficiary women groups were formed with the intention of accessing loans from the Fund, but lacked experience in group management. Two, the women found the loan application form too complicated to fill, in addition to the application procedure being long and tedious. Three, the beneficiaries of the Fund had little capacity to fully utilize the loans, although all the respondents complained that the loan funds were inadequate. Finally, the majority of the respondents stated that they had never attended any training to help them improve their business performance. From this study it is evident that, though women entrepreneurs had been empowered economically, it was not smooth sailing. It was a learning experience to both women beneficiaries and the staff of the Fund.

#### **2.2.4 Shortcomings of the Women Enterprise Fund**

Mukua (2010), in her study on disbursement and management of the devolved Women Enterprise Fund, noted that there were several issues that hindered access to this Fund in Mvita Constituency of Mombasa County, Kenya. These bottlenecks included poor community involvement, time taken to disburse funds was longer than necessary, and capacity building for women was not adequately done. The study also noted that although the Fund had a good institutional structure, it was not implementing some of its responsibilities. In another study, Mogaka (2010) noted that women groups too had their own weaknesses including illiteracy, poorly written group objectives and lack of updated accurate progress reports.

From the foregoing literature review, it is evident that the Women Enterprise Fund is an important formal savings and credit facility for women empowerment. However, challenges do exist at the Fund's level and at the women groups' level. To achieve maximum best results, in women empowerment through the Fund, these challenges need to be addressed at both levels.

## **2.3 Informal savings and women's empowerment**

### **2.3.1 Why women opt for informal savings**

Lambisia *et al.* (2016), in their study of Rongai Sub-County, Nakuru County, Kenya, maintain that the success of informal savings and credit is premised on two factors, group cohesiveness and group guarantee. These two factors apply to both merry-go-rounds or Rotating Savings and Credit Associations (ROSCAs) and Table Banking Accumulating Savings and Credit Associations (ASCAs). However, in the more organized Table Banking Women groups (ASCAs), the Grameen Bank model is applied.

Informal savings and credit, and particularly Table Banking, is modelled on the Grameen Bank of Bangladesh. In Kenya, women groups that were using this model initially organized themselves into twenty-five members. The group was further sub-divided into five sub-groups of five members each. Each member of the five sub-groups acted as a guarantor to the other four members. In case one of the five members defaulted, it was the responsibility of the other four members to repay on behalf of the defaulter. On the other hand, in merry-go-rounds (ROSCAS), loan lending is solely dependent on group solidarity. Loan repayment by any group borrower is guaranteed by every group member (Lambisia *et al.*, 2016:107).

As a result of the existence of these favourable borrowing pre-conditions, acquisition of informal loans is easy and affordable, ‘collateral’ being based on personal trust, group connection and familiarity (Mwaniki, 2011). Moreover, the tedious paper work that is required in formal loans is unnecessary. Only a simple agreement or verbal commitment is required.

### **2.3.2 The role of informal savings in empowering women**

The key role of women groups’ informal savings is their economic empowerment. Lambisia *et al.* (2016), in their study, found that table banking contributed 48.8% of the economic empowerment of self-help groups in Rongai Sub-County. Informal savings loans are invested by women borrowers in different ventures. According to Gathigi (2000), Mwaniki (2011), Kurgat (2011), Awiti (2013), Lambisia *et al.* (2016) and Akeno and Wafula (2017), informal savings credit from the groups is used to improve themselves economically by investing in business, agriculture, family needs such as children’s education, medical expenses for family members, purchasing of clothes as well as households items and improvement of homesteads.

Mwaniki (2011), Gathigi (2000), Akeno and Wafula (2017) and Kurgat (2011), add that informal financing through women groups does empower women beneficiaries economically. By starting small businesses or re-financing existing ones, women were placed on a better footing to uplift themselves from abject poverty. The little income that they earn can be spent on personal or family needs.

According to Awiti (2013), Mwaniki (2011), Gathigi (2000) and Kurgat (2011), investment of informal savings in farming does contribute to beneficiaries’ families’ food security. Following improved farming techniques, agricultural yields are usually higher. This does provide adequate food for the family, with the surplus being sold to supplement family incomes. This translates into



women's social and psychological empowerment. Family food sufficiency does build and improve women's self-confidence and self-esteem, as they can contribute to household needs. Moreover, they are socially empowered to comfortably participate in the family's decision-making, since they too have a stake.

According to Mwaniki (2011), in Sagana, Kirinyaga County, informal savings women group members have benefitted from basic technical skills trainings, through the self- help groups that they are affiliated to. This has led to individual self-advancement, which has translated into socio-economic empowerment. Investment in children's education is both social and economic empowerment of the child and the family at large. This translates into the mother's indirect socio-economic empowerment. Socially, women are empowered through improvement of homesteads, better clothing and acquisition of household items, such as furniture, utensils, and beddings. As a result of economic and social empowerment, women do find themselves automatically psychologically empowered.

#### **2.4 Problems that women in informal savings experience**

Gathigi (2000) states that the most evident problems among women groups in Ngong division of Kajiado County were lack of technical knowledge on income generating activities (businesses), for example, business records keeping, livestock, poultry and agriculture. She further asserts that favouritism by leaders in loans, grants, plots and land allocation for women groups who wanted to venture in income generating projects, was rife.

According to Gathigi (2000), Kurgat (2011) and Mwaniki (2011), most of the informal savings and credit associations do experience the fear of high interest rates charged by formal savings institutions. This problem is worsened by complex loan application processes that applicants have to go through.

## **2.5 Problems in informal savings and women's empowerment**

To address the problem of lack of basic technical knowledge (trainings) in business records keeping, agriculture, livestock and poultry, Gathigi (2000) has recommended that women in informal savings activities be trained in identified areas of their needs. Gathigi (2000) further recommends that all women groups be given equal treatment by leaders, local administrators and those in power and authority whenever their assistance is needed in terms of loans, grants and fund-raising.

In their study of Kajiado North Sub-County women groups, Akeno and Wafula (2017) found that access to formal savings and credit facilities and participation in income-generating activities does empower women and help improve community livelihoods. They recommend that government and development agencies should consider funding women group members, through UWEZO Fund grants and other loans, at low interest rates. By so doing, this would alleviate fears among women groups in taking loans from formal savings and credit institutions.

According to Kurgat (2011), Mwaniki (2011) and Gathigi (2000), informal savings women groups experiencing problems with formal loans application forms, maintenance of group records and basic technical skills in farming, livestock rearing and others, should be trained through and by the relevant government institutions that women are affiliated to. Cohesiveness and mutual trust among women group members should be encouraged for the overall success of informal savings groups.

## **2.6 Theoretical framework**

### **2.6.1 Women's empowerment (Longwe) framework**

This study was guided by the women's empowerment (Longwe) framework developed by Sarah Longwe and published in 1990 (Sahay, 1998). March *et al.* (1999) state that the framework helps planners to understand the practical meaning of women's empowerment and equality. This understanding helps in evaluating whether a development initiative supports empowerment.

According to Sweetman (1997) and Sahay (1998), women's development can be viewed in terms of five levels of equality arranged in a hierarchical order, as empowerment is essential at each of these levels. These levels are used to assess women's empowerment in areas of social and economic development and include:

- Welfare, which addresses basic needs;
- Access, which addresses ability to use resources such as credit, land and education;
- Conscientization, which is the key element of the framework as it recognizes that discrimination creates gender-related problems and women may themselves contribute to this discrimination;
- Participation, which indicates that women are equal to men in decision-making; and
- Control, which shows that the balance of power between genders is equal.

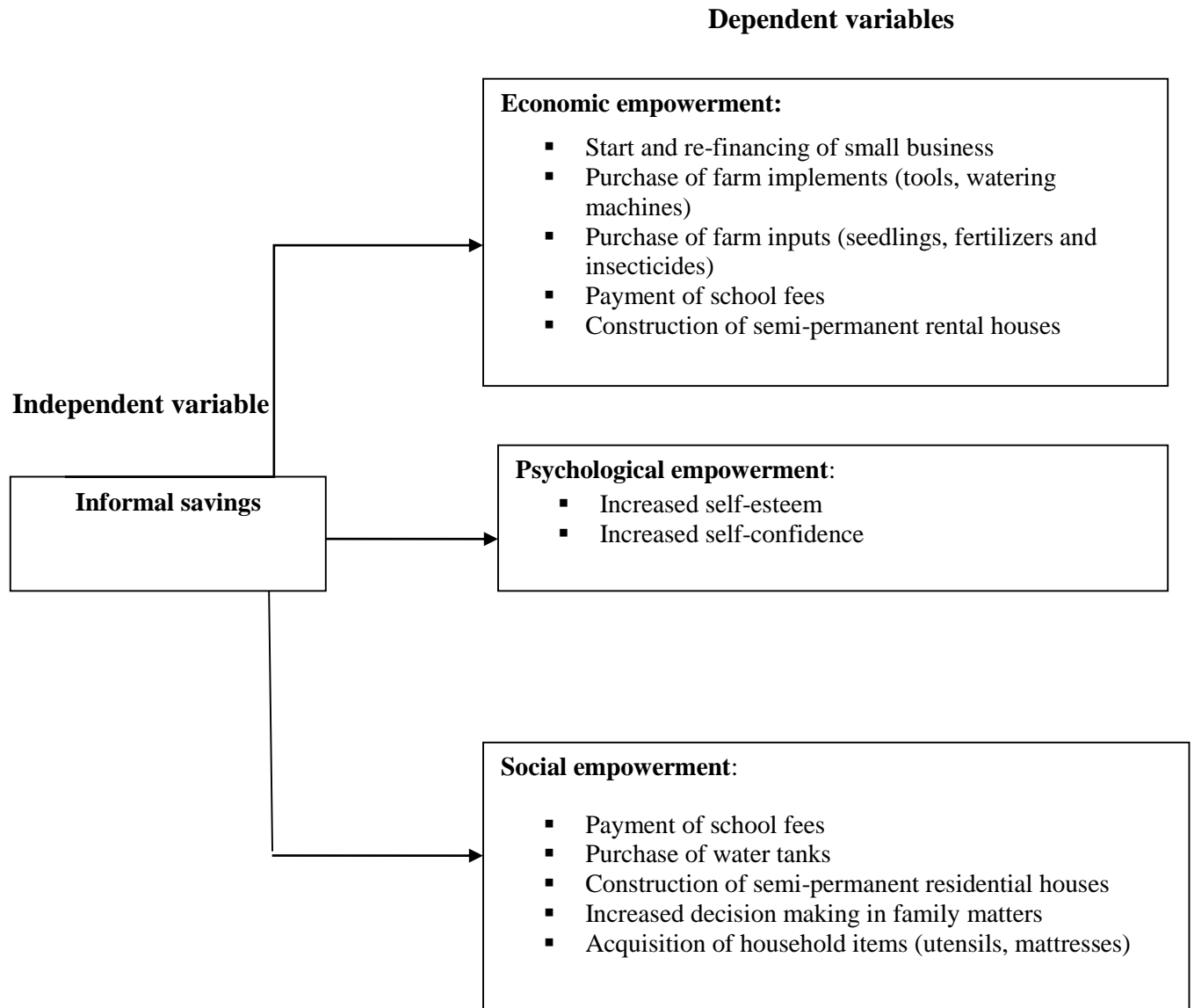
This theory has been used by Mwaniki (2011) in a study on “The role of informal finance in empowering women at household level in Sagana Division, Kirinyaga County”. Mwaniki uses these levels as the bases to assess the extent of women's empowerment in the area of social or economic life. Mwaniki (2011) states that Longwe identifies ‘access’ as one of the five levels of equality in the development process. She defines “access” as equality among men and women in access to land, labour, credit, training, marketing facilities and publicly available services.

Longwe views lack of access to the above resources and services as an obstacle to women's empowerment. Mwaniki (2011) asserts that access to credit does not only increase women's empowerment, but also redress the constraints that women face at household and community levels. Women's access to informal savings credit is an enabling factor for women to participate in household decision-making processes on resource allocation.

### **2.6.2 Relevance of the theory to the study**

Informal savings enable the registered women groups to be social empowered by using their contributions to purchase the family's basic needs such as household needs. They are also economically empowered as they can purchase building materials to build semi-permanent rental houses. Lastly, they are able to participate and make decisions, thus being psychologically empowered as they gain self-esteem and self-confidence. This can be conceptualized as shown in Fig. 2.1 below.

As depicted in Figure 2.1, there is one independent variable which is informal savings. There are two dependent variables which are economic and social empowerment. Access or lack of access to informal savings will directly influence the economic and social empowerment of women and indirectly influence their psychological empowerment. It is hypothesized that informal savings affect economic, social and psychological empowerment of group members.



**Figure 2.1: Conceptual framework**

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter describes the procedures and methodologies that were used in the study. It describes the research site, research design, study population and unit of analysis, sample population and sampling procedure, data collection methods, and data processing and analysis. The chapter ends with a discussion of the ethical issues that were adhered to throughout the study.

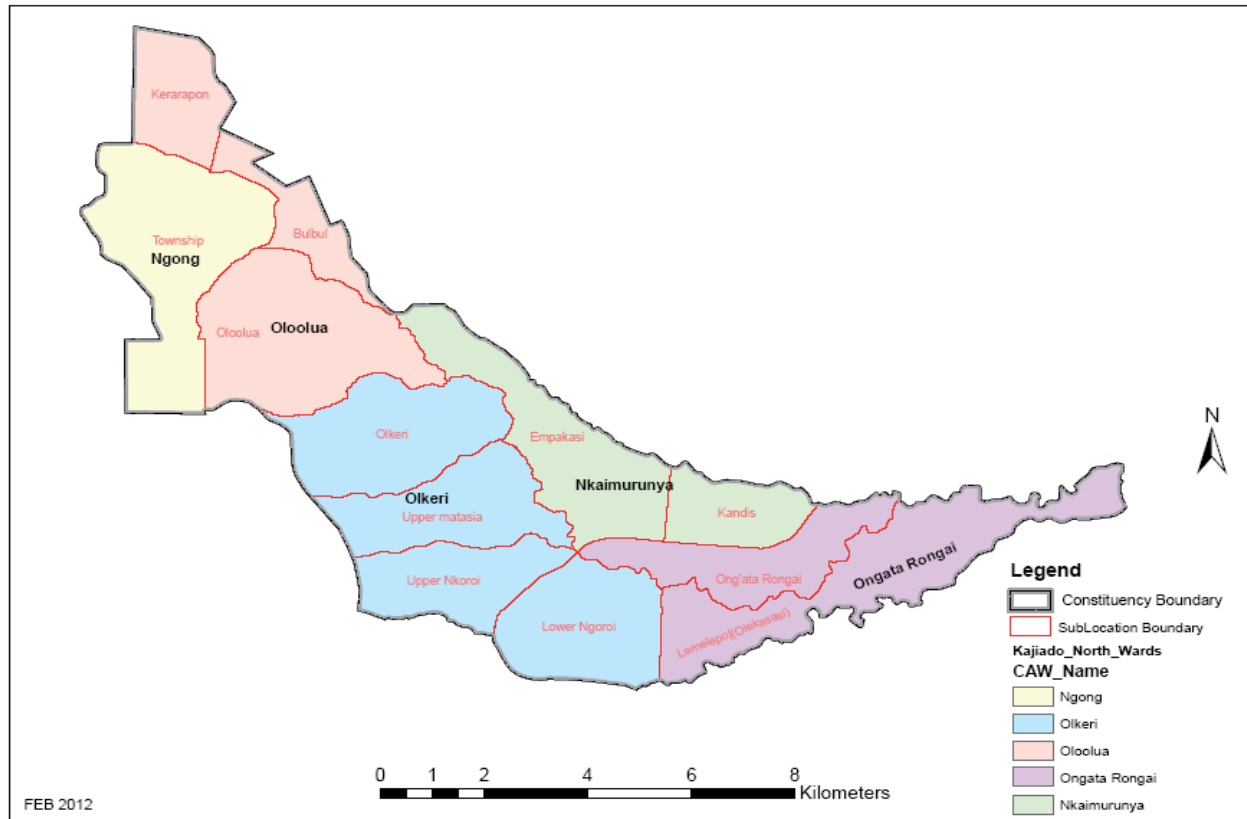
#### **3.2 Research site**

##### **3.2.1 Location**

This study was carried out in Kajiado North Sub-County, Kajiado County, which is one of the counties of Rift Valley Region, Kenya (Figures 3.1 and 3.2). Kajiado is located at the South-East end of Rift Valley Region. Its lies between 36° 25' and 37° East Longitude and 1° 25 and 3° 11' 44" South Latitude. The County is bordered to the East by Machakos and Taita-Taveta Counties, to the West by Nairobi City and Narok Counties, to the North by Kiambu and Nakuru Counties, and to the South, by the Republic of Tanzania (<https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/kajiadocounty>).

The County has six major towns which are located in the respective Sub-Counties. These are Kajiado and Namanga towns (Kajiado Central), Loitoktok (Kajiado South), Magadi (Kajiado West), Mashuru (Kajiado East) and Ngong (Kajiado North). Kajiado County's capital is Kajiado town located in Kajiado Central Sub-County (<https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/kajiadocounty>).





**Figure 3.2: Map of Kajiado North Sub-County**

(Source: Kajiado Sub-County Constituency Information cradle)

### 3.2.2 People

The majority of the inhabitants of Kajiado County are the Maasai, followed by the Agikuyu. Other Kenyan communities found in the county are the Akamba, Luo, Abaluyia, Ameru, Abagusii and Kalenjin. People of foreign origin are also found in Kajiado Country (Kenya Information Guide, 2015).

### 3.2.3 Occupation

According to Gathigi (2000), the main source of income among women in Ngong division (currently Kajiado North and Kajiado West Sub-counties) of Kajiado County, are primarily derived from petty trade in foodstuffs and beverages, craft, agricultural or livestock (dairy farming)



surplus produce, tailoring/clothing business, remittances, gifts, casual employment and formal employment.

Livestock rearing is a major economic activity in Kajiado County, providing a source of livelihood for most of the residents. Dairy farmers mainly sell their milk to neighbouring hotels and households, with the surplus being sold in Nairobi. The county also provides a huge source for beef and goat meat, with over 2,000 animals being slaughtered daily for its market (Kenya Information Guide, 2015).

Although Kajiado's climate is not conducive to agriculture, a growing number of farmers in Kimana, Rombo and Entonet are engaged in irrigation farming to support subsistence crop farming. Crops that are grown under irrigation include kales, cabbages, onions, tomatoes, pepper, beans and maize. Other major economic activities in Kajiado County include tourism particularly in the Amboseli National Park, commodity trading which is carried out both in shops and open-air markets, sand harvesting, quarry mining and soda ash mining at Lake Magadi (Kenya Information Guide, 2015).

#### **3.2.4 Education**

Kajiado County had a total of 514 primary schools. In spite of the high number of primary schools, the enrollment rates among the majority of pastoralists in the county remains low. About 155,955 pupils are enrolled in Kajiado primary schools. There are 104 secondary schools in Kajiado County. Some of the top high schools include Oloolaiser High School, Olkejuado High School, Moi Girls' Isinya Secondary School, Enoomatasiani Girls' Secondary School, Maasai High School, Dawamu Academy and Maasai Academy among others (County Government of Kajiado, 2016).

### **3.3 Research design**

This study used a descriptive research design. According to Kombo and Tromp (2006), descriptive research involves the description of state of affairs as it exists. Orodho (2003) adds that descriptive survey is a method of collecting information by interviewing or administering questionnaire to a sample of individuals. The ultimate goal is to learn about a large population by surveying a sample of that population. In this study, the descriptive design was chosen owing to its versatility, efficiency, and generalizability. In addition, this method lends itself to probability sampling from large populations. Data were collected using semi-structured interviews, key informant interviews and direct observation which were later transcribed, coded and then analysed thematically in line with the study objectives. Verbatim quotes have been used alongside presentation of the findings to project the voices of the informants. The quantitative data collected alongside qualitative data were analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) Version 20. The computed data were analysed using descriptive statistics including frequencies and percentages.

### **3.4 Study population and unit of analysis**

The study population consisted of registered self-help women members aged between 18 and 55 years in the 2 largest wards (Olkeri and Nkaimurunya) out of the 5 wards which were purposively selected. The unit of analysis was the individual registered member.

### **3.5 Sample population and sampling procedure**

Stratified random sampling was used to select the 88 registered women members in the 2 largest wards from the registered self-help women members in the sub-county. To get the 88 the following sampling procedure was followed:

A list of all registered women members in Olkeri and Nkaimurunya was drawn. Simple random sampling was used to complete the selection of the 88 registered women members. Using the lottery method, a representative sample from each ward was selected. Using 2 containers representing each ward, pieces of paper indicating women members' names were put and used to randomly pick 46 and 42 respondents from Olkeri and Nkaimurunya Wards, respectively.

### **3.6 Data collection methods**

#### **3.6.1 Semi-structured interviews**

A semi-structured questionnaire (Appendix 2) was administered to the 88 respondents. According to Bernard (2006), semi-structured interviewing is best used when you will not get more than one chance to interview someone and when you will be sending several interviewers out into the field to collect data. The semi-structured questionnaire provides a clear set of instructions for interviewers and can provide reliable, comparable qualitative data. Semi-structured interviews are often preceded by observation, informal and unstructured interviewing in order to allow the researcher to develop a keen understanding of the topic of interest necessary for developing relevant and meaningful semi-structured questions. The questionnaire had both closed and open-ended questions. It captured the demographic information of the respondents and how the registered members have benefitted from the informal groups.

#### **3.6.2 Key informant interviews**

These were conducted with 5 key informants selected on the basis of their knowledge on the subject matter. The key informants included two group officials (one from each ward), one Social Service Officer, one Maendelo ya Wanawake official and one County office fund committee member. A key informant interview guide (Appendix 3) was used to collect the data.

### **3.6.3 Direct observation**

This went hand-in-hand with semi-structured interviews. An observation checklist (Appendix 4) was used to collect the data.

### **3.6.4 Secondary sources**

Relevant sources of secondary information were used to inform the proposal, and continued to be used to enrich the findings of the study so as to get a better understanding of benefits that women get from informal savings groups and the challenges that impede access and utilization. These included published books and journals as well as unpublished works on the subject matter.

## **3.7 Data processing and analysis**

Data collected from semi-structured interviews, key informant interviews and direct observation were transcribed verbatim. Qualitative analysis involved transcription and checking for clarity. What followed was sorting the data into themes, categories and patterns. Data analysis was done using content and thematic analysis in line with the specific study objectives as the main themes. The quantitative data collected was analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) Version 20. The computed data were analysed using descriptive statistics including frequencies and percentages.

## **3.8 Ethical considerations**

Resnik (2011) defines ethical considerations as principles that protect the rights of participants in a research. They are actions taken to ensure that the safety and rights of participants are not violated during the entire process of the study. According to Shamoo and Resnik (2009), these standards include voluntary participation, informed consent, confidentiality of information, anonymity of research participants and approval from relevant authorities to undertake research studies.

The researcher obtained authorization for the study from the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI/P/18/19419/26281) and reported to the County Commissioner and County Director of Education, Kajiado County, prior to conducting the field work. During the field work, the researcher gave an explanation to the respondents on the voluntary nature of the study and hence the freedom of withdrawal at will. A consent form (Appendix 1) was used to obtain the approval of the respondents' participation in the study. Permission was obtained from respondents before any recording of interviews. The researcher guaranteed the respondents the principles of confidentiality and anonymity throughout the study by using codes and pseudonyms to protect their identity. The results of this study will be made available at the library services of the University of Nairobi as a project paper and publications disseminated to the scientific community.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### ROLE OF INFORMAL SAVINGS IN EMPOWERING WOMEN

#### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the research findings on the role of informal savings in empowering women and it is divided into two sections. The first section is a presentation of the respondents' socio-demographic characteristics while the second section is a presentation of the study findings based on the research objectives.

#### 4.2 Demographic characteristics of the respondents

##### 4.2.1 Respondents' age

In this study, a respondent's age was deemed an important aspect because this could determine her level of experience in associating with financial matters and her need for savings opportunities. The age of respondents could also reveal the level of commitment and responsibilities to participate in savings activities and to a greater extent aid in understanding the dynamics on the role of informal savings in empowering women. The findings indicate that 45% of the respondents were aged between 41 and 50 years, while only 11% were aged 51 years and above (Table 4.1).

**Table 4.1: Respondents' age**

Age Category (years)	Frequency	Percentage
18-30	17	17
31-40	27	27
41-50	45	45
51+	11	11
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

#### 4.2.2 Respondents' marital status

Most (57) of the respondents were married while only 7% were widowed. The unmarried group accounted for 23% while respondents who reported separated status accounted for 13% (Figure 4.1). In the study, marital status was an important variable on women empowerment. This is because the marital status of women is important in determining the nature of empowerment at household levels. It signifies transition including change in social and economic status. The findings show that marital status has an influence on women empowerment. This is because 80% of the unmarried women were more empowered than married and 60% of the separated women were more empowered than married women.

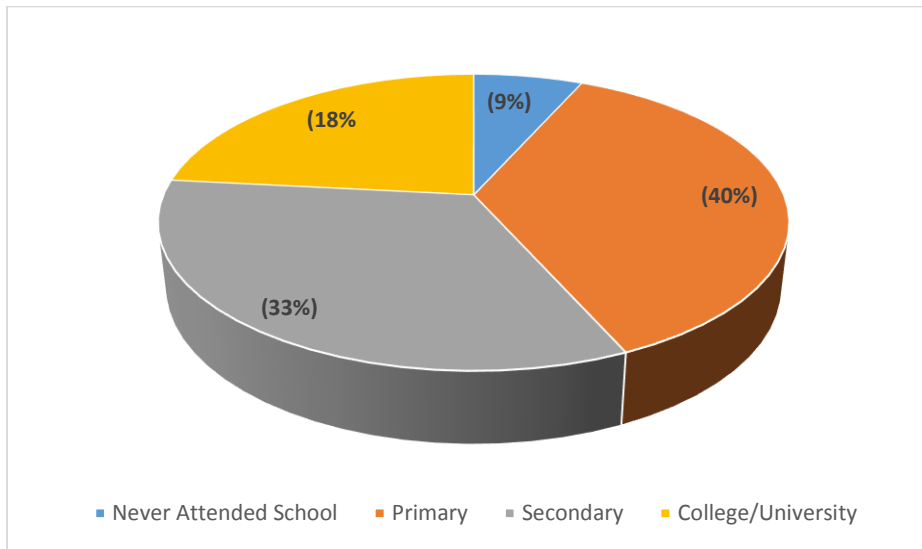


**Figure 4.1: Respondents' marital status**

#### 4.2.3 Respondents' level of education

Level of education was considered important in this study because it could reveal information on the role it plays in influencing women empowerment among the study population. The researcher was of the opinion that the level of education determined the respondent's exposure to information

and the world views. The findings show that 40% of the respondents had primary level of education while 33% had a secondary level education. There were respondents who reported not to have formal education and have not attended school. These accounted for 9% of the respondents. Only 18% reported to have had a college/university level of education (Figure 4.2).



**Figure 4.2: Respondents' level of education**

The level of education was found to directly impact on women. Essentially, education and school means moving to a position of power, thus empowering women. Educated women are empowered with the skills, knowledge and self-confidence necessary to partake in the development process.

According to one respondent:

Well education as has always been said opens doors and helps women have a better voice in participating in development. Women who have been exposed to education or knowledge or just any form of training are better than those who have not undergone any. And you realize these are the leaders in the chammas and other spaces in the communities as well (Respondent 74, 48 years old).



The link between education and women empowerment was reinforced by a key informant who had this to say:

Education plays a role in empowering women and girls. Well educated women get good employment opportunities and therefore are able to have good financial management and saving practices. Those with low education levels are more likely to have poor saving habits (KII 3, Mandeleo ya wanawake official).

Thus, high level of education is an indicator of empowerment.

#### **4.2.4 Respondents' occupation**

The respondents' occupation was categorized into four classes. Formal employment consisted of respondents who reported to professional work and received a salary. This accounted for only 10%. The respondents who reported to earn their living through business activities such as operating kiosks and agribusiness were classified as business/self-employed and accounted for 25% of all the respondents. The informal employment category consisted of respondents who reported to work informally (casual jobs) and received a daily or weekly wage. These accounted for 47%. Finally, there were respondents who reported not to engage in any income generating activity and depended on family or community members. These were classified under unemployed and accounted for 18% (Table 4.2).

Ombara (2012) states that occupation has a positive intervention on empowerment. However, in this study, occupation has not been shown to have an influence on women empowerment. The study findings show that 50% of the respondents were in informal employment, meaning that there was no relationship between women's occupation and empowerment.

**Table 4.2: Respondents' occupation**

Occupation	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Formal Employment	10	10
Business/Self employed	25	15
Informal Employment	47	47
Unemployed	18	18
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

#### 4.3. Existing informal savings and credit opportunities for women

The study findings indicate that there are informal savings and credit opportunities for women in the study area. For example, there are Rotating Saving and Credit Associations (ROSCAs) that those women had formed. In addition, there are Accumulating Savings and Credit Associations (ASCAs), Welfare Groups (WGs) as well as Investment Groups (IGs) (Table 4.3). Collectively and in different combinations, these are used by women for immediate and long-term needs.

**Table 4.3: Informal saving groups**

Informal Savings Group	Frequency (multiple responses)	Percentage
ROSCAs	45	28.8
ASCAs	33	20.8
WGs	69	43.5
IGs	11	7.0
Mean	39.5	100.1
Standard Deviation	24.1	

The findings in Table 4.3 show that there is an average of 39 women belonging to each of the groups for savings and credit. The welfare groups had most members. A respondent would report belonging to more than one savings group, hence the overlapping numbers. Accordingly, the majority of respondents belong to welfare groups that accounted for 43.5%. Rotating Saving and Credit Associations accounted for 28.8% while Accumulating Savings and Credit Associations accounted for 20.8%. Investment groups only accounted for 7.0%. The responses below illustrate felt belongingness to the groups.

We decided to form a welfare group in order to be in control. For example, one might have a problem that needs money. The welfare members come and contribute. However, you must be a member and active (Respondent 6, 27 years old).

Personally, I belong to two welfare groups and an investment group. I decided to join so that I can benefit not only financially but also socially (Respondent 10, 38 years old).

The above sentiments were corroborated by one key informant who had this to say:

Women here run assorted groups. Some even belong to more than one. I see it positively that these groups are able to benefit them (women). I know of an investment group and there are several rotating saving and credit associations (KII 4, County office fund committee member).

Findings also show that the choice of one savings and credit group against another is based on the economic or financial goals as well as the felt need. Respondent 27 stated that she joined because welfare groups provide help. Other respondents stated this:

The main goal is to save. You can get this money back. The other one is that with savings, one is able to borrow if the amount needed is bigger than one's savings (Respondent 61, 44 years old).

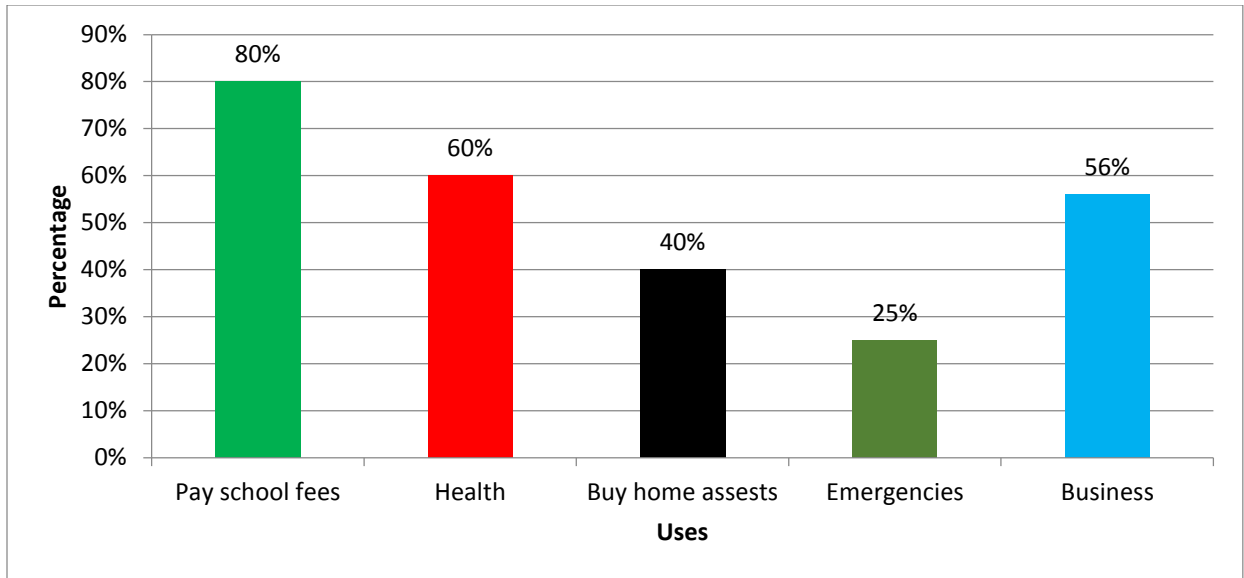
There are school fees, food, and other needs. Being alone, daily earning is not enough. So I find myself in a group that can help me save and borrow. That is how I joined the accumulated savings and credit association (Respondent 51, 37years old).

A key informant pointed out that the present financial capacity is also a factor considered before joining a group. “You find that the present economic status is a key issue. This might make a woman join a welfare group rather than a rotating one because of affordability” (KII 2, Social service officer).

Observation also showed that women have membership cards to the groups. At least every respondent demonstrates membership either through a card or participation in the group activities. Thus, there is a variety of groups that women get affiliated to as members. Essentially, these are largely informal groups. They operate on the basis of informal connections and networks. Lambisia *et al.* (2016) also observed that in merry-go-rounds, loan lending is solely dependent on group solidarity. Due to this, loan repayment by any group borrower is guaranteed by every group member. Study findings also corroborate the findings by Mwaniki (2011), that as result of the existence of these favourable borrowing pre-conditions, acquisition of informal loans was easy and affordable, ‘collateral’ being based on personal trust, group connection and familiarity. Moreover, the tedious paper work that is required for formal loans was unnecessary. Members only engaged in a simple agreement or verbal commitment.

#### **4.4 Contribution of informal savings to women’s empowerment**

Findings show that informal savings are instrumental in shaping the social and economic lives of women. Accordingly, women use the informal savings and credit groups as sources of social and economic well-being. Figure 4.3 below shows the benefits women accrue from the informal savings and credit groups and importance of women empowerment.



**Figure 4.3: Importance of informal savings groups in women empowerment**

Respondents revealed that, apart from helping meet daily need, the groups also help in capital for starting up small scale businesses. For example, respondents 35 started her business with the money she borrowed from her group. This was supported by one key informant who asserted this:

You see that some small scale businesses here are women-owned. Funds for the businesses, including expansion, all come from informal savings and credit groups (KII 1, Group official).

Given the economic disempowerment that women experience, the groups come in handy to solve the economic pressures as espoused by a respondent who is a member in three savings and credit groups.

Women are economically disadvantaged. They experience pressures that only women can explain. However, the savings and credit groups have helped women and families here. Through saving, one can borrow. This way, you can pay for bills (Respondent 11, 43 years old).

The groups are also linked to women's economic independence as declared by one respondent.

There is a sense of freedom and liberation. With the groups, we do not have to depend on other people. It is about independence and we like that fact (Respondent 31, 46 years old).

This was supported by key informant who asserted that "Even if a woman separates with a man or is widowed, savings groups can help her raise the children independently".

In times of bereavement or need for support for hospital bills, the groups are the hubs of support.

As one respondent put it:

When you lose someone, the welfare group, for instance, helps you with bills. My view is that without these welfare groups, many people would have difficulties (Respondent 45, 54 years old).

Sometimes, the groups can be pathways to accessing formal credit facilities.

There is a bank that gave us money because of our intuitive. They gave us a loan because we were in a group. Thus, I can say that these groups help since they give the lender trust and faith (Respondent 38, 24 years old).

Another importance of the informal savings and credit groups is that they can be used to get loans from formal and financial institutions. Mostly, banks and microfinance institutions target groups. Women are found in these groups and have been funded for other projects (KII 4, County office fund committee member).

The informal savings and credit groups thus contribute to women's empowerment through economic independence, running businesses and meeting other daily needs for them and their families. Women starting of small businesses or re-financing existing ones, placed them on a better position to uplift them from poverty as the little income earned spent on personal or family needs.

These findings are consistent with those of Mwaniki (2011) that found that women in Sagana informal savings groups benefitted from basic technical skills trainings, through the self-help groups that they were affiliated to. As a result, there were indications of individual self-

advancement, which translated into socio-economic empowerment. Investment in children's education is both social and economic empowerment of the child and the family at large. Akeno and Wafula (2017) also observe that informal savings credit from the groups are used by women to improve themselves economically by investing in business, agriculture, family needs such as children's education, medical expenses for family members, purchasing of clothes as well as household items and improvement of homesteads.

#### **4.5 Problems women in informal savings experience**

Findings show that despite the demonstrated importance of the informal savings and credit groups for women, there are underlying challenges.

##### **4.5.1 Coordination and attendant challenges**

One of the findings identified in the study is poor coordination and/or attendance in group meetings.

A major challenge is that some people are not able to make it in time. They thus have to be fined for coming late. Even without fines, the meeting delays because some members are not present (Respondent 70, 37 years old).

Nowadays we have phones. It used to be hard to coordinate before the phones came since we also live far apart. But even with phones, you find lack of harmony and uniform way of doing things. People also miss and we may not obtain a quorum (Respondent 4, 30 years old).

However, one key informant revealed that there are mechanisms to improve on coordination.

We have a centralized venue for the meetings. Thus, there is not confusion over the venue. Second, there are incentives. If you come to meetings consistently, there is an award. This makes people look forward for the meetings (KII 5, Group official).

A key informant attributed the meeting attendance challenges to women's gender roles.

Truth is that women have a lot to do (at home). The roles they have in domestic circles may not warrant their attendance in the group meetings. By the time she is through with children or cleaning, time is up. This has been addressed by fixing the meetings late in the evenings (KII 1, Group official).

Thus, the findings suggest that informal savings and credit groups face coordination and attendance challenges although there are innovative practices such as strategic meeting scheduling.

#### **4.5.2 Management challenges**

Findings indicate that women informal savings and credit groups face management challenges. Essentially, there are regular management issues in the groups, including lack of commitment and general fraud. This is linked to frustration and poor group performance.

Sometimes, some people might not contribute as required. This creates pressure and can derail the progress. It also frustrates persons who are supposed to benefit on a given day (Respondent 35, 57 years old).

Mismanagement is common in the groups. We have witnessed some people running away with money or refusing to pay back. Some groups collapse due to mismanagement (KII 3, Maendelo ya wanawake group official).

However, groups have instituted measures to curb fraud, mismanagement and non-commitment.

Rules and checks have been introduced. For example, you cannot borrow more than three times your savings. Again, we have elected knowledgeable and accountable executive committees (Respondent 45, 32 years old).

Nevertheless, mismanagement of the informal savings and credit groups is an apparent challenge. These findings corroborate the findings from a study in Ngong, Kajiado County that showed that the most evident problems among women groups were lack of technical knowledge in income generating activities and proper management of skills. The researcher observed that favouritism by leaders in loans, grants, plots and land allocation for women groups who wanted to venture in income generating projects (Gathigi, 2000).



### **4.5.3 Lack of access to formal credit facilities**

Although some groups cited success in accessing savings and credit services from formal financial institutions such as banks and micro-finance institutions, the informal groups face challenges in accessing formal services.

There are challenges in courting and asking banks. Sometimes, we do not have the requirements such as good constitution or our net worth does not attract the bank's attention (Respondent 1, 35 years old).

We appreciate that banks are approaching some of the groups. However, unless there is something outstanding such as a promising activity, the banks are adamant about helping the groups financially (KII 3, Maendeleo ya wanawake).

Additionally, the interest rates in the formal institutions and other requirements such as collateral make the informal savings and credit groups unable to enjoy the services.

Banks have high interests rates compared to informal groups. This is a major limitation. In fact, the reasons why these informal savings and credit groups are formed is the collateral requirement and high interests loans associated with banks (KII 2, Social service officer).

Therefore, the felt high interest rate and security/guarantee requirement are barrier to accessing credit facilities from formal institutions among the women's savings and credit groups. This corroborates the findings by Gathigi (2000) who found that most of the informal savings and credit associations fear the high interest rates charged by formal savings institutions. Akeno and Wafula (2017) also found that access to formal savings and credit facilities and participation in income-generating activities empower women socially and economically. According to Kurgat (2011) and Mwaniki (2011), women's access to formal credit facilities is limited by the bureaucratic process that formal credit institutions engage in. They recommended an intervention by the state and other development agencies to consider funding women group members, through schemes such as UWEZO Fund grants and other loans, at low interest rates.

By so doing, this would remove the fear from women groups in taking loans from formal savings and, credit institutions and, to a large extent, propel the realization of participation and mainstreaming of women in development.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a summary of the study findings, conclusion and recommendations. It also makes suggestions for further research. The findings are summarized in line with the objectives of the study.

#### 5.2 Summary

The study established that informal savings have empowered women in Kajiado North Sub-County. The findings indicate that some of the respondents belong to more than one savings group. Their decision to form or join welfare groups was driven by the need to be in control and enjoy social benefits accrued by having such status in the household and other spaces in the community. Unlike the formal financial institutions, the informal savings groups offer favourable and easy to manage borrowing conditions.

Informal savings are essential in shaping the social and economic lives of women since women use the informal savings and credit groups as sources of socio-economic well-being. The results indicate that the funds have enabled women to start and expand businesses, meet household obligations as well as other needs. Thus, that women's access to savings and credits empowers them through livelihood improvement. The results further indicate that the economic importance of saving groups is in improving women's economic status.

However, the study established that the informal savings and credit groups experience internal and external challenges. The challenges emanate from poor coordination, mismanagement and irregular attendance of meetings. Group members' commitment to the cause of the group and the

mobilization of meeting are key issues affecting informal savings. Some respondents stated that a major challenge to the group is that some members are not able to make it on time to the meetings. To deal with this problem, those who came late are fined. This puts pressure on the members, leading to the collapse of some groups.

Lack of access to savings and credit services from formal financial institutions was also a major concern. This does not just affect the growth and sustainability of the informal groups but also poses a threat to the empowerment objective.

### **5.3 Conclusion**

The result confirms that the informal savings and credit have empirical positive impact on women socially, economically and psychologically. To enhance women empowerment through the informal savings, the study therefore concludes that the role of informal savings in empowering women is still not felt as much due to unfavourable conditions attributed to lack of full support from both the County and National governments and other development partners.

### **5.4 Recommendations**

Women informal groups are significant in reducing poverty among women and the community but still some are not maximizing their growth potential due to many factors as afore mentioned. The study suggested there is need for:

- i. The state, county government and other development partners should facilitate training for the informal women group members particularly on financial management, loaning procedures and group management. Through such trainings management, leadership and as well as organization skills can be nurtured among the women group members.

- ii. Partners and stakeholders who design programmes for women empowerment should involve women in the entire cycle of the programmes. Such initiatives would put more funds at the disposal of women for investment in the informal sector, thus empowering them and reducing household vulnerability to poverty.

#### **5.5 Suggestion for further research.**

- i. An elaborate study should be done in the whole county and, where possible, disaggregate the population in terms of rural and urban/peri-urban.
- ii. A study should be conducted that compares informal and formal savings in empowering women in Kenya.

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## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX I: CONSENT FORM

#### **Introduction**

I am Lucy Njoki Nyathira master's student from the Institute of Anthropology, Gender and African Studies, University of Nairobi. I am conducting a study on the **Role of informal savings in empowering women in Kajiado North Sub-County**.

#### **Purpose**

The study seeks to establish the role of informal savings in empowering women in Kajiado North Sub-County.

#### **Risks/Discomfort**

There is no risk in participating in this study. Your participation is voluntary.

#### **Benefits**

The study will help in establishing the existing informal savings and credit groups, access and utilization of these informal groups and the challenges they face which is instrumental in mainstreaming development.

#### **Confidentiality**

Your confidentiality will be maintained at all times. There will be no mention of names or identifiers in the report or publications which may arise from the study.

#### **Persons to contact**

If you have any questions regarding the study, you can contact me through telephone number 0723738525 or email on njokinyathira@gmail.com. You may also contact my supervisor Prof. Simiyu Wandibba on 0722552391 or on [swandibba@uonbi.ac.ke](mailto:swandibba@uonbi.ac.ke)

Your participation in the study will be highly appreciated. If you agree to participate please sign below.

Signature\_\_\_\_\_Date\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Reseacher/Assistant\_\_\_\_\_Date\_\_\_\_\_

**APPENDIX II: SEMI-STRUCTURED QUESTIONNAIRE**

Date of interview: \_\_\_\_\_

Respondent's number: \_\_\_\_\_

Ward: \_\_\_\_\_

Sub-Location: \_\_\_\_\_

**Demographic Data (Put an X against your answer)**

1. Age \_\_\_\_\_ years

2. Marital status

a) Unmarried

b) Married

c) Separated

d) Widowed

3. Education level

a) No formal education

b) Primary

c) Secondary

d) Post-Secondary (Diploma/Graduate)

4. Occupation

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Formal savings and credit opportunities for women**

5. Has your group ever applied for a formal loan? Yes  No

5.1 If yes, which formal institution?

a) Uwezo Fund

b) Women Enterprise Fund

c) County Office Fund

d) Affirmative Action Fund

e) Others \_\_\_\_\_

5.1.1 How much did you apply for? \_\_\_\_\_

5.1.2. How much did you receive? \_\_\_\_\_

5.1.3 What was the interest rate? \_\_\_\_\_

5.1.4 What was the repayment period? \_\_\_\_\_

5.1.5 How did you spend it?

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5.1.6 How has it made your life/family better?

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5.1.6 If you applied and the application was declined, what reasons were given?

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5.2 If no, what are the reasons for not applying for formal loans?

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### **Informal savings and women's empowerment**

6. Is your group:

a) Merry-go-round

b) Table banking

c) Both

7. If merry-go-round, how much money have you received during your turn? \_\_\_\_\_

7.1 How did you spend it?

---

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---

7.2 How has it made your life/family better?

---

---

---

7.3 Will you take another loan in future? Yes  No

7.3.1 If yes, how much? \_\_\_\_\_

7.3.2 How would you spend it?

---

---

---

7.3.3 How do you think it is going to empower you/family?

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---

---

8. If table banking, have you ever taken a loan? Yes  No

8.1 Did you notify the group before? Yes  No

Okay how long was the notification? \_\_\_\_\_

8.2 How much was it? \_\_\_\_\_

8.3 What was the interest rate? \_\_\_\_\_

8.4 What was the repayment period? \_\_\_\_\_

8.5 How did you spend the money?

---

---

---

8.6 How has it made your life/family better?

---

---

---

8.7 Will you take another loan in future? Yes  No

8.7.1 If yes, how much would be it? \_\_\_\_\_

8.7.2. How would you spend it?

---

---

---

8.7.3 How do you think it is going to empower you/family?

---

---

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**Identified problems that women in informal savings groups/associations experience**

9. What problems does your group experience?

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**How identified problems in informal savings in women empowerment can be addressed**

10. How did you solve the problems/ can they be solved?

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**Thank you for your time and assistance.**

### **APPENDIX III: KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW GUIDE**

1. How often and what type of assistance does your office offer to registered women informal savings groups?
2. What are the existing informal savings and credit opportunities for women groups in this sub-county?
3. Why are the registered women informal groups not utilizing them?
4. From your point of view as a leader, how do you think access to informal savings contribute to women empowerment?
5. What are some of the problems experienced by informal savings women groups?
6. How can the above mentioned problems be addressed to empower women through informal savings?
7. Are you aware of any other government office(s) or organizations that offer assistance to women in informal savings group? Which ones are they? What type of assistance do they offer?
8. Do you have anything else to add about the women informal savings groups?

**Thank you for participating.**

## **APPENDIX IV: OBSERVATION CHECKLIST**

1. Type of business
2. Stock
3. Ambience
4. Personality
5. Personal appearance



**THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT:  
MS. LUCY NJOKI NYATHIRA  
of UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI, 0-208  
NGONG HILLS, has been permitted to  
conduct research in Kajiado County**

**on the topic: THE ROLE OF INFORMAL  
SAVINGS GROUPS IN EMPOWERING  
WOMEN IN KAJIADO NORTH SUB-COUNTY,  
KAJIADO COUNTY**

**for the period ending:  
29th October, 2019**

**Applicant's  
Signature**

**Permit No : NACOSTI/P/18/19419/26281  
Date Of Issue : 30th October, 2018  
Fee Received :Ksh 1000**



**Director General  
National Commission for Science,  
Technology & Innovation**

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P.O. Box 30623 - 00100, Nairobi, Kenya

TEL: 020 400 7000, 0713 788787, 0735 404245

Email: dg@nacosti.go.ke, registry@nacosti.go.ke

Website: www.nacosti.go.ke



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