

**GENDER RELATED BARRIERS AND EFFECTIVENESS OF
INTERVENTIONS TO ENHANCE WOMEN PARTICIPATION IN
AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVES IN KAJIADO COUNTY, KENYA**

JOCINTER ATIENO

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DECLARATION

DECLARATION BY CANDIDATE

This project report is my original work and has not been submitted for a degree in any other University or for any other award



22-11-2024

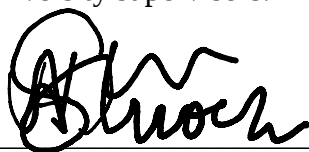
JOCINTER ATIENO

Date

MCMC01/6515/2021

DECLARATION BY SUPERVISORS

We confirm that the work presented in this project report was carried out by the candidate under our supervision and has been submitted with our approval as University supervisors.



22/11/2024

Prof. Wycliffe Oboka

Date

Department of Community Development and Environmental Management

School of Cooperatives and Community Development

The Cooperative University of Kenya



22/11/24

Dr. Charles Wambu

Date

Department of Community Development and Environmental Management

School of Cooperatives and Community Development

The Cooperative University of Kenya

DEDICATION

This project report is dedicated to my loving husband, Gogo, who has been my constant source of encouragement and strength towards this success.

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First and foremost, I give thanks to Almighty God for His grace, strength, and endurance throughout this journey. Without His guidance and blessing, this achievement would not have been possible. Sec

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OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

Agricultural Cooperatives: Refer to the organizations formed by individuals in the agricultural sector that operate based on principles of self-help, equality, and democratic processes to facilitate access to agricultural inputs, marketing of produce, and employment opportunities. In this study, Agricultural cooperatives in Kajiado County are examined as entities where women's participation is crucial for rural development.

Barriers: Refer to the obstacles that restrict women's access to productive resources necessary for participation in agricultural cooperatives, such as land, credit, and livestock. In this study, barriers are examined in the context of Kajiado County focusing on how financial limitations and restricted access to resources hinder effective participation in agricultural cooperatives and impact their overall and leadership within these organizations.

Gender Disparities: In this study, gender disparity is defined as the existence of gaps or differences in access to productive resources between women and men within agricultural cooperatives.

Gender related barriers: Refer to challenges or obstacles that are uniquely faced by women, hindering their full participation on agricultural cooperatives. These may include socio-cultural norms, economic barriers, and political limitations. In this study, Gender-related barriers are identified within the context of Kajiado County, where women face specific obstacles such as traditional gender roles and limited access to resources.

Interventions: Refer to actions strategies implemented to address and mitigate gender specific barriers in agricultural cooperatives. These may include targeted empowerment programs and policies aimed at increasing women's participation and leadership roles. In this Study, the effectiveness of intervention is assessed in the context of Kajiado County, focusing on strategies designed to overcome gender-related barriers and improve women's engagement and leadership within agricultural cooperatives.

Socio-Cultural Norms: Refer to the social expectations and traditions that influence gender roles and limit women's engagement in agricultural cooperatives. In this study, socio-cultural norms in Kajiado County are explored to understand how traditional gender roles and societal expectations affect women's participation in agricultural cooperatives. The study investigates how these norms create barriers to women's full involvement.

Women's participation: Refers to the involvement of women in activities and decision making processes agricultural cooperatives. This includes their representation in cooperative memberships and leadership positions. In this study, women's participation is evaluated in Kajiado County's agricultural cooperatives, with particular attention to how women's roles and decision making capacities within these cooperatives impact their overall engagement and influence.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BETA: Bottom-Up Transformation Agenda

FAO: Food and Agriculture Organization

GDP: Gross Domestic Product

ICA: International Cooperative Alliance

ILO: International Labor Organization

USAID: United States Agency for International Development

SACCOs: Savings and Credit Co-operative Societies

SASRA: Sacco Supervisory and Regulatory Authority

SCT: Social Capital Theory

SDGs: Sustainable Development Goals

SSA: Sub-Saharan Africa

ABSTRACT

Increasing women's participation in agricultural cooperatives is essential for promoting rural development in developing nations. However, women in regions such as Kajiado County, Kenya, encounter numerous barriers that limit their active involvement in these cooperatives. Despite their pivotal role in agricultural productivity, women's participation remains low due to cultural, social, and economic challenges. The purpose of this study is to identify the gender-specific barriers hindering women's participation in agricultural cooperatives in Kajiado County and to assess the interventions that can enhance their engagement. The objectives of the study were: To assess the level of women's participation in agricultural cooperatives in Kajiado County; To evaluate gender-related barriers to women's participation in agricultural cooperatives in Kajiado County; and to assess the effectiveness of interventions to enhance women participation in agricultural cooperatives in Kajiado County. A thorough literature review informed the analysis, which drew on theoretical frameworks such as social capital theory, intersectionality, and leadership theories. The study employed a cross-sectional design, targeting women involved with agricultural cooperatives, cooperative leaders, and officials. Questionnaires, interviews, and focus group discussions were used to collect data. Findings revealed that women's participation is constrained by economic limitations, such as restricted access to credit and resources; socio-cultural norms that undermine their roles in cooperative decision-making; and institutional barriers, including gender-insensitive cooperative by-laws. Although interventions like gender quotas and awareness programs have had positive impacts, their success is often hindered by entrenched structural and cultural issues. The study concludes that promoting women's participation in agricultural cooperatives requires a holistic approach addressing both systemic and cultural barriers. Policy implications include implementing gender-sensitive policies, promoting women's leadership opportunities within cooperatives, and fostering inclusive environments that challenge traditional norms. These measures are essential for achieving equitable participation and unlocking the potential of agricultural cooperatives as drivers of rural development.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

This chapter offers a comprehensive overview of the study, detailing background of the study, problem statement, research objectives, and research questions. It justifies the research relevance, outlines its scope, and acknowledges its limitations and assumptions. Additionally, it defines key terms operationally and universally, ensuring clarity and consistency throughout the study.

1.1 Background of the study

Agriculture is a crucial pillar of Kenya's economy, accounting for about 25% to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), providing 40% of total employment, and supporting nearly 70% of jobs in rural areas (Central Bank of Kenya, 2022). In Sub-Saharan Africa, women are crucial to agricultural production, making up over half of the workforce (Njobe & Kaaria, 2015). Despite their crucial role, women face enduring challenges such as socio-cultural norms, economic barriers, and political limitations that hinder their full potential in agricultural production (Padavic et al., 2020). Almost thirty years since the 1995 adoption of the Beijing Declaration on Women's Rights, which sought to promote gender equity across economic, social, cultural, and political spheres (Platiner, 1995), gender disparities persist in global labor markets and other areas. This underscores the necessity of incorporating women's equality into economic development strategies (Bayeh, 2016). Cooperative enterprises, grounded in principles of self-help, equality, and democratic processes, offer a viable framework to address these challenges and foster inclusive economic growth (Wanyama, 2016).

The cooperative movement began in the 18th and 19th centuries in the UK and the US, with notable examples such as the Rochdale Equitable Pioneers Society,

established in 1844, which laid the groundwork for modern cooperative principles (International Cooperative Alliance, 2018). This society set the foundation for modern cooperative principles (International Cooperative Alliance, 2018). In Kenya, cooperative initiatives emerged during the colonial period, with the establishment of the first dairy cooperative in 1908 in Kipkelion, Kericho County, followed by the enactment of the Cooperatives Ordinance Act in 1931 to regulate cooperative activities (Gyllström, 2023). Both colonial and post-colonial governments in Kenya leveraged cooperatives to commercialize smallholder farming, leading to the creation of enduring cooperative entities like the Kenya Cooperative Creameries (KCC) and the Kenya Planters Cooperative Union (KPCU) in the early 20th century (Gyllström, 2023).

Cooperatives are integral to socio-economic development across various sectors in Kenya, including agriculture (35.2%), insurance (32.4%), wholesale and retail (19.6%), banking and finance (8.1%), and industry and utilities (2.2%) (World Cooperative Monitor, 2018). Kenya ranks seventh globally and first in Africa in terms of cooperative development, with over 23,344 registered cooperatives by 2017 contributing significantly to the economy, enhancing rural livelihoods, and fostering community development (Gweyi & Karanja, 2014; Cooperative Policy, 2019). Despite their pivotal role, participation of women in agricultural cooperatives remains disproportionately low, particularly when it comes leadership positions. For example, women constitute only 24.22% of cooperative leaders according to the Savings and Credit Cooperatives Organizations (SACCO) supervision report (SASRA, 2022), which contradicts Kenya's constitutional provisions for gender equity in elective bodies (Article 81(b)). Empowering women through cooperatives is crucial for poverty alleviation and enhancing rural development through services

such as extension programs, credit facilities, and market access for agricultural produce (FAO, 2012; World Bank, 2019). Scholars like Asamu et al. (2020) contend that enhancing women's engagement in agricultural cooperatives is crucial for fostering economic and social empowerment within rural communities.

Gender disparities exacerbated by the feminization of poverty and domestic responsibilities limit women from accessing essential productive resources such as land, livestock, and credit, which are vital for their active participation in agricultural cooperatives (Kaaria et al., 2016; Kaka, 2013). Traditional gender roles, discriminatory norms, and inadequate education and training further impede women's engagement in cooperative activities (Manuh, 2014). When women are economically and socially empowered through cooperatives, they enhance decision-making within households and communities, contributing to broader development goals such as water, sanitation, health, education, and nutrition (UN, 2015; FAO, 2018). However, realizing the full potential of women in agriculture requires addressing these barriers and promoting gender-sensitive policies and programs that foster inclusive participation and leadership in cooperative settings (Zunaida et al., 2019).

Efforts to increase women's participation in the productive economy are embedded in Kenya's development frameworks, including Vision 2030 and the Constitution of 2010, which emphasize gender equality and inclusivity in all sectors, including cooperative governance (ILO, 2012). Despite these initiatives, women continually become underrepresented in cooperative memberships and leadership roles, highlighting the necessity for targeted interventions to promote gender parity within agricultural cooperatives. In Kajiado County, where pastoralism is predominant, cooperative societies play a crucial role in economic activities despite facing challenges such as gender inequality (Kajiado CIDP, 2023). This study seeks to

investigate the barriers that hinder women's participation in agricultural cooperatives in Kajiado County and evaluate the effectiveness of current interventions aimed at reducing gender disparities within these organizations.

1.2 Problem Statement

Globally, agricultural cooperatives are recognized as pivotal in promoting rural development, enhancing food security, and empowering marginalized communities. These cooperatives contribute to socio-economic progress by facilitating access to agricultural inputs, improving marketing systems, and creating employment opportunities (FAO, 2018). In sub-Saharan Africa (SSA), where agriculture supports a majority of rural households, agricultural cooperatives are increasingly utilized as a tool for poverty alleviation and sustainable development. However, gender disparities in cooperative participation remain a significant challenge across SSA, with women facing limited access to resources, decision-making platforms, and leadership opportunities (Agarwal, 2019).

In Kenya, the cooperative sector plays a critical role in national development, contributing approximately 45% of GDP (ICA Africa, 2021). Although women comprise nearly 50% of the agricultural labor force, their participation in agricultural cooperatives remains constrained. National statistics reveal that women constitute approximately 30% of cooperative members, a marked improvement from the 4–5% reported in the 1980s (Bager, 1980) and 23% in 2005 (Mwambi et al., 2021). Additionally, women hold only 17% of board positions, limiting their influence in decision-making processes (Onyalo, 2019).

In Kajiado County, where agriculture significantly contributes to household livelihoods, barriers such as cultural norms, economic constraints, and institutional biases further impede women's participation in cooperatives. Existing studies, such

as those by Oxfam (2013) and Meador & O'Brien (2019), have broadly explored gender dynamics in agricultural cooperatives but often overlook the specific impacts of these barriers on women in semi-arid regions like Kajiado. Furthermore, there is limited evidence on the effectiveness of interventions targeting these barriers within the unique socio-economic and cultural contexts of the county. This study addresses this gap by investigating the socio-cultural, economic, and institutional factors influencing women's participation in agricultural cooperatives in Kajiado and evaluating targeted interventions to enhance their engagement.

1.3 Research Objectives

The main objective of the study was to investigate gender related barriers to women participation and effectiveness of interventions to enhance women participation in agricultural cooperatives in Kajiado County, Kenya.

1.3.1 Specific objectives

- i. Assess the level of women's participation in agricultural cooperatives in Kajiado County.
- ii. Evaluate gender-related barriers to women's participation in agricultural cooperatives in Kajiado County.
- iii. Assess the effectiveness of interventions to enhance women participation in agricultural cooperatives in Kajiado County.

1.4 Research Questions

- i. What is the level of women's participation in agricultural cooperatives in Kajiado County?
- ii. What are the gender-related barriers to women's participation in agricultural cooperatives in Kajiado County?

- iii. How effective are the interventions to put in place to enhance women participation in agricultural cooperatives in Kajiado County?

1.5 Justification of the Study

Effective participation of women in agricultural cooperatives is pivotal in advancing several Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Women's increased engagement in cooperatives not only contributes to alleviating poverty (SDG 1) by enhancing access to resources and income opportunities but also promotes food security and sustainable agriculture practices, crucial for achieving zero hunger (SDG 2). Moreover, involvement in agricultural cooperatives fosters gender equality (SDG 5) by empowering women both economically and socially, offering them greater access to resources, decision-making opportunities, and leadership roles in these organizations. Additionally, it contributes to decent work and economic growth (SDG 8) by enhancing access to credit, information, and markets, thereby fostering sustainable economic development in rural communities. Enhancing women's engagement in agricultural cooperatives is essential for advancing these Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), thereby ensuring equitable and sustainable development across various agricultural landscapes.

This study aligns with the aspirations of Africa Agenda 2063, which emphasizes gender inclusivity and sustainability in development operations across the continent. By tackling the barriers that hinder women's participation in agricultural cooperatives and assessing the success of initiatives designed to reduce gender inequality, the study advances the overarching sustainable goals and inclusive development.

The study is also relevant to the transformative and uncompromising provisions of an equitable and inclusive society envisioned in the Kenyan Constitution where women

participation and involvement in political and leadership processes has been pronounced (Njagi & Onyango, 2019). The study is also aligned with the Kenya Vision 2030 development agenda where transformation of the agricultural production into a commercially-driven sector is key to realizing inclusive and equitable development especially in rural areas and for marginalized groups such as women and youth.

The relevance of the study is also underscored by the Kenyan Government Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda (BETA) that seeks to transform the country's economy by empowering the less fortunate members of the society including women and youth. Since this study examines factors that hinder women involvement in agricultural cooperatives and effectiveness of interventions to reducing gender inequality in these organizations, these findings will be valuable to the government policy making process. Findings from the study are likely to shape the government approach to addressing marginalization of women especially in pastoral regions in the country.

1.6 Scope of the Study

This study was geographically limited to Kajiado County, Kenya, a region where women's participation in agricultural cooperatives remains relatively low despite policy and regulatory frameworks designed to enhance inclusivity. Within Kajiado, the research concentrated on agricultural cooperatives in Kajiado Central and Kajiado South sub-counties. These areas were chosen due to their significant number of cooperatives linked to the tomato and dairy value chains, which thrive under the region's favorable agro-ecological conditions.

The intellectual scope of the study encompassed analyzing the levels of women's participation in agricultural cooperatives. This included their involvement in leadership roles, decision-making processes, general membership, and cooperative activities. The study explored barriers affecting women's participation, such as limited decision-making authority, role stereotyping, time constraints, financial dependency on principal income earners, and reluctance to volunteer for leadership roles.

The methodological scope involved evaluating interventions implemented by agricultural cooperatives to address these barriers. These interventions included policies, regulatory measures, and affirmative actions aimed at promoting gender inclusivity. The study assessed the effectiveness of these interventions in eliminating obstacles to women's participation and their overall impact on enhancing gender equity within the cooperatives.

Justification for this scope was rooted in the need to address persistent gender disparities in agricultural cooperatives in semi-arid regions like Kajiado, where agriculture is a primary livelihood source. Focusing on tomato and dairy cooperatives allowed for targeted insights into value chains critical to the local economy. Additionally, examining both barriers and interventions provided a comprehensive understanding of challenges and solutions to enhance women's socio-economic empowerment through cooperative participation.

1.7 Limitations of the Study

The study faced the following limitations;

The data collected through surveys, interviews, and focus groups rely on participant self-reporting, which may introduce potential bias and limitations in accurately capturing experiences and perceptions (Farnsworth et al., 2016). Appropriate procedures and actions will be taken to minimize this bias.

- a) The findings were specific to the context of Kajiado County and were not directly applicable to other regions or countries with different socio-cultural, economic, and institutional factors. Thus, generalization of the results was done with utmost caution.

1.8 Assumptions of the Study

The following assumptions were made in this study;

- a) The agricultural cooperatives keep up to date records, by-laws, policies and procedures to increase women participation
- b) The participants would offer accurate and appropriate responses.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the theoretical foundations for thorough review and examination of the research problem, focusing on specific barriers that hinder participation of women in agricultural cooperatives and effectiveness of proposed interventions in overcoming these hurdles. In addition to providing theoretical explanations, the chapter aims to conceptualize women's participation in agricultural cooperatives, identify obstacles to effective participation, and propose strategies to address these challenges.

Beyond theoretical explanations and conceptualizations of key concepts, the chapter also discusses relevant studies on participation of women in agricultural cooperatives in various regions worldwide. Drawing on theoretical reviews, conceptualizations of key concepts, and empirical findings from previous research, the chapter then presents a conceptual framework illustrating the interrelationships among the key variables of study.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

2.2.1 Social Capital Theory

Social capital theory highlights pivotal role of social networks and relationships in fostering collective action and achieving shared objectives (Hauberer, 2011). In Sub-Saharan Africa, where women are central to agricultural activities (Meador & O'Brien, 2019), this theory provides a valuable lens for examining how social connections can empower women within agricultural cooperatives. It emphasizes the importance of familial ties, supportive networks, and empowerment within

community structures, offering insights into how these dynamics influence women's engagement in cooperatives (Hauberer, 2011). The incorporation of social capital theory in this study is reinforced by the strategic policy pronouncements made by governmental and private entities, including operational by-laws designed to cater to specific audiences and goals.

Meador and O'Brien (2019) define social capital in organizational contexts as encompassing social networks, norms, and mutual trust, enhancing interaction, coordination, and collaboration among members for collective benefits. Successful agricultural societies often attribute their sustainability and effectiveness to the cultivation of social capital. For instance, in the United States, agricultural cooperatives leverage social capital by extensive networking and close collaboration with stakeholders to enhance value creation for their members. Cooperative farmers frequently benefit from subsidies, tax incentives, and technological advancements aimed at improving agricultural productivity. Despite its relevance, Claridge (2018) critiques social capital theory for its perceived breadth, suggesting that it may not fully explain how social relationships contribute to sustained progress within groups.

2.2.2 Intersectionality Theory

Intersectionality theory, pioneered by Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw, an African-American feminist activist who is also a legal scholar (Hancock, 2019), addresses the overlapping discrimination faced by Black women due to their race and gender. Crenshaw developed this theory to highlight how marginalized groups, such as women and minorities, experience compounded forms of prejudice that intersect to shape their social and economic realities. Drawing on critical race theory, intersectionality theory examines power dynamics in society where these groups are

systematically disadvantaged and inadequately represented (Atewologun, 2018). It provides a framework for understanding how factors like race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic status intersect to influence individuals' experiences, particularly in contexts like the workplace (Atewologun, 2018).

In reference to this study, intersectionality theory is highly relevant as it illuminates the diverse barriers that women encounter in effectively participating in agricultural cooperatives (Bilge, 2010). Much like the historical discrimination experienced by Black women living in the United States, and also women in developing countries encounter multifaceted challenges that hinder their engagement in socio-economic activities, including agricultural cooperatives (Kaaria et al., 2016). In Kenya, cultural norms impede women's access to crucial productive resources like land and livestock, while also undermining their authority in decision-making within agricultural cooperatives, frequently confining them to domestic responsibilities (Mwambi et al., 2021). Intersectionality theory further suggests that women's participation in these cooperatives is influenced by factors such as age, marital status, and educational level, which shape their degree of engagement within homogeneous groups (Atewologun, 2018).

Despite its explanatory power, intersectionality theory has faced criticism for its perceived lack of depth in fully elucidating why women and minorities remain underrepresented in certain sectors like agricultural cooperatives (Bilge, 2010). Critics argue that while the theory identifies overlapping forms of discrimination, it may not provide a comprehensive understanding of the structural barriers that perpetuate inequality in specific contexts.

2.2.3 Leadership Theory

This theory focuses on the qualities and behaviors of effective leaders, providing insights into the barriers that women encounter in attaining leadership roles within agricultural cooperatives and suggesting interventions to promote their participation in decision-making processes. Among different leadership styles, including laissez-faire, democratic, autocratic, transactional, and transformational, transformational leadership, introduced by Burns in 1978, has gained international recognition. This theory argues that effective leaders exhibit four essential attributes including: inspirational motivation, individualized consideration, intellectual stimulation, and idealized influence.

According to Moore and Rudd (2006), transformational leaders significantly enhance organizational performance by motivating and inspiring their teams to achieve both individual and collective goals. These leaders prioritize understanding and addressing individual needs, fostering intellectual growth among team members, and unlocking creativity and innovation within their organizations. Given the pivotal role of cooperatives in socio-economic development, Martinez-Leon et al. (2020) emphasize that effective leadership and management are crucial for increasing women's participation in these institutions.

Various leadership theories contribute to understanding how different leadership styles influence women's participation in agricultural cooperatives. However, none of these theories alone fully explains the ongoing underrepresentation of women in these organizations. Therefore, integrating theories such as social capital and intersectionality is crucial to comprehensively addressing the complex barriers that inhibit women's full engagement in cooperative leadership and decision-making roles.

2.3 Level of Women Participation in Agricultural Cooperatives

Participation of women in agricultural cooperatives has been extensively studied, revealing significant implications for socio-economic development. Kaaria et al. (2016) argue that active involvement of women enhances cooperative performance across various metrics such as membership size, revenue, and profitability. Coleman and Mwangi (2013) further emphasize that increased gender equality in cooperatives positively impacts governance practices. However, in Ethiopia, despite women constituting a substantial portion of the agricultural workforce (45-75%), their participation in producer organizations remains low, with only 20% in overall membership and 18% in leadership roles (Woldu et al., 2013; Aduna & Woldeyes, 2022). Similar trends are observed in East Africa, where women constitute 30% of cooperative memberships in Kenya, 40% in Tanzania, 42% in Uganda, and 41% in Rwanda (ILO, 2012; Uwimana, 2019). Nevertheless, disparities persist in access to productive resources due to cultural norms and biases within households and communities (Kaaria et al., 2016; Haile, 2016; Damisa & Yohana, 2017; Mwambi et al., 2021). Challenges such as the dual burden of work, inadequate infrastructure, and limited educational opportunities further constrain women from active participation in agricultural cooperatives (Njobe & Kaaria, 2015; Asamu et al., 2020).

sAddressing these barriers necessitates integrated interventions that foster women's leadership and participation in cooperatives while combating gender biases. Effective policy frameworks in nations like Rwanda and Cuba illustrate successful strategies to enhance women's engagement in cooperatives through partnerships with development organizations (Meador & O'Brien, 2019; Benitez et al., 2020). In Chile, initiatives like Café Femenino showcase successful efforts to integrate women into traditionally male-dominated cooperatives (Benitez et al., 2020). This study aims to

explore women's roles in agricultural cooperatives in Kajiado County, analyzing the effects of socio-cultural, economic, and technological factors on their involvement in cooperative activities and decision-making processes.

2.4 Effect of Gender-related Barrier to Women Participation in Agricultural Cooperatives

Socio-cultural norms and traditions significantly hinder women's membership and active participation in agricultural cooperatives. Scholars such as Kaaria et al. (2016), Gallina (2016), Haile (2016), and Echukwu et al. (2022) identify these norms as imposing distinct roles on men and women within societies. Women are typically assigned domestic responsibilities like childcare, cooking, and household chores, while men engage in income-generating activities and decision-making processes (Damisa & Yohana, 2017). These expectations limit women's engagement in public spheres and discourage their involvement in cooperative activities.

Cultural norms also perpetuate the perception that women lack necessary knowledge and confidence to assume leadership roles outside the household (Manfre & Rubin, 2012). In Mozambique, for example, cultural norms confine women to domestic roles, restricting them from participating in producer organizations (Kaaria et al., 2016). Despite women's active involvement in livestock rearing, their decision-making power over these assets remains limited (Gallina, 2016). In Ethiopia, cultural biases contribute to unequal access to land for female farmers, a crucial resource for their effective participation in agricultural cooperatives (Haile, 2016).

The double burden of domestic duties exacerbates these challenges, as highlighted by Mwambi et al. (2021). Women in rural areas not only engage in subsistence agricultural activities but also bear the primary responsibility for domestic tasks such

as cooking, cleaning, and childcare. This workload leaves them with little time and energy to participate actively in cooperatives or take on leadership roles.

Access to productive resources, both financial and non-financial, presents another significant barrier. Njobe and Kaaria (2015) note that women in developing countries face numerous obstacles in accessing resources like land, livestock, and agricultural inputs. In Sub-Saharan Africa, where land ownership among women is disproportionately low, ranging from 3% in Mali to 35% in Malawi and Botswana, women's eligibility for cooperative membership is often compromised (Echukwu et al., 2022). Economic barriers further impact women's participation, affecting their ability to produce consistently and deliver quality outputs to cooperatives throughout the year.

Furthermore, limited access to information, training, and education inhibits women's engagement in agricultural cooperatives. The educational gap contributes to their exclusion from decision-making processes and hinders their adoption of new technologies and farming practices (Haile, 2016; Woldu et al., 2013; Aduna & Woldeyes, 2022). Government investments in agricultural infrastructure and support services remain insufficient in many Sub-Saharan African countries, exacerbating these challenges (Njobe & Kaaria, 2015).

Moreover, the lack of visionary leadership and inadequate representation of women in leadership positions within cooperatives further marginalizes women's participation (Onyalo, 2019; Martinez-Leon et al., 2020; Woldu et al., 2013). In Kenya, for instance, despite constitutional provisions promoting gender parity, women remain underrepresented in decision-making roles within cooperatives and public agencies, hindering their socio-economic advancement (Vision 2030).

This study aims to explore how socio-cultural factors impede women's involvement in agricultural cooperatives in Kajiado County, Kenya. Specifically, it will examine the challenges related to women's decision-making capacity, the burden of domestic responsibilities, access to productive resources, educational barriers, and the lack of appropriate training programs.

2.5 Interventions for Increasing Women Participation in Cooperatives Activities

Multifaceted strategies encompassing policies, affirmative action, and programs at macro level and targeted interventions at micro level are needed to effectively address the issue of limited women participation in agricultural cooperatives. To enhance women's involvement, Kenya Vision 2030 recognizes the necessity of including women in negotiations. In addressing the issue of limited representation of women in public positions, the 2010 Constitution of Kenya mandates that no more than two-thirds of elective positions in the country should be occupied by members of the same gender.

Drawing from constitutional precedence, enhancing women's participation in agricultural cooperatives can be achieved through legislation or policies mandating that at least one third of executive members must be female. The Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives of Zambia has effectively boosted women's involvement in agricultural activities by implementing affirmative action, which reserves 30% of all agricultural extension service positions for women (Farnworth, 2010). From social capital theory, women participation in agricultural cooperatives can be enhanced by building social networks and relationships in these organizations. These can be attained by formation of women-led teams within these organizations to create awareness and encourage female farmers to register and engage in

cooperative activities (Kaari et al., 2016). Effectiveness of social networks and relationship building in enhancing women participation in agricultural cooperatives has seen Bukonzo Joint Cooperative in Uganda increase women membership and participation rate in its activities (Twin, 2013). Adapting membership rules to cater for the unique challenges female farmers face in agricultural production including lack of adequate resources has been found to be effective in enhancing women involvement in agricultural cooperatives. Evidence from Ethiopia suggests improvement in women participation among cooperatives that allow and encourage dual household membership by both husbands and wives (Oxfam, 2013).

Participation in agricultural cooperatives requires resources, access to information and family support. However, women are often weighted down by cultural traditions that limit their ownership and control of productive resources. Women engaged in agricultural activities can be encouraged by their family members including husbands to register in agricultural cooperatives, given the necessary support such land required for specific agricultural activities and encouragement. According to Kaaria et al., (2016) women participation in agricultural cooperatives can be improved by encouraging the society to support women involved in agricultural productions with necessary inputs, land and resources. In Uganda, the perception of coffee of being seen as a male crop to a family crop hence opening participation in a local coffee cooperative society Bukonz Joint was realized through empowerment of women at family level where husbands were encouraged to support their wives in growing of the crop. The need for offering women support at household level as way of addressing cultural traditions that limit their participation in agricultural cooperatives is also underscored by a study by (Echukwu, 2022).

In examining the socio-economic factors influencing women's participation in agricultural cooperatives in Kogi State, Nigeria, employing a descriptive research design with a sample of 210 women cooperative members, the study identified cultural traditions as a significant barrier. Research conducted in the Southeast Nigeria region by Obienafo et al. (2021) revealed that women from economically disadvantaged backgrounds often struggle to access and utilize technology, hired labor, and improved farming inputs in agricultural production. The study also highlighted cultural norms as major obstacles, particularly those that restrict women's ownership of land, access to farming resources, and availability of credit. Similarly, findings from Waldu et al. (2013) in Ethiopia underscored the challenges faced by women in accessing modern inputs, markets for their produce, and extension services within agricultural cooperatives. Unlike men, women are constrained by cultural traditions that limit ownership of productive resources, access to education and training, and engagement in active management of these organizations. While Waldu et al., (2013) recommends capacity building, provision of financial literacy, and equipping women with leadership skills key to participating in management of these organizations; Obienafo et al., (2021) the study suggests implementation of policies that empower women economically and those that reduce the cultural burden many women encounter in their efforts for socioeconomic mobility. On the other hand, Kaaria et al., (2013) lessening women domestic work burden can help unlock the potential of these women to engage in agricultural cooperatives.

Training, education and capacity building is a direct intervention to enhancing women's participation in agricultural cooperative societies. Capacity building can be attained by enhancing access to information and engaging in outreach activities designed to encourage female farmer to engage in cooperative activities (Kaaria et

al., 2016). Capacity building should encompass training and educating women on how they can join existing cooperatives or if they can form new cooperatives to champion their needs and aspirations. A training session can be designed to teach entrepreneurial skills, marketing, leadership, negotiation and confidence among female farmers (FAO, 2013). However, for these training activities to be effective, they need to be tailored to specific socio-economic and cultural circumstances hindering full participation of women in cooperative activities (Kaari et al., 2016). In most instances, these training sessions and capacity building are geared to break cultural traditions that limit women engagement in productive economy, participation in leadership and decision-making outside the conventional norms (FAO, 2013). In their research, Ogunbameru et al. (2010) found that over half of the 150 female farmers sampled in Maiduguri metropolis, Nigeria, lacked formal education and training. Low educational attainment and training was identified as a significant barrier that inhibited women's participation in agricultural cooperatives. According to Ogunbameru et al. (2010), proactive measures such as engaging in training and capacity-building initiatives are recommended for producer organizations. These efforts are crucial for improving the performance of agricultural cooperatives and addressing the educational and skill-related challenges faced by women in these settings. Similarly, Waldu et al. (2013) suggested equipping women with both financial and non-financial skills, including leadership training, to enhance their participation in agricultural cooperatives in Ethiopia.

Another way for enhancing women participation on producer cooperatives is by incorporating women into leadership teams (Martinez-Leon et al., 2020). This can be achieved by developing structures, training and programmes that support and require women active participation in cooperatives activities. Cooperatives can enhance

women participation by ensuring they have visionary leadership that is sincere to the challenges that women encounter while seeking to engage and participation in agricultural cooperative. Promoting transformational leadership style in these organizations especially the aspect of individualized consideration and intellectual stimulation has the potential of unlocking women effective participation in agricultural cooperatives (Moore & Rudd, 2006). For example, allowing women members in a producer cooperative to develop innovative product, undertake product differentiation through branding has the potential of not only increasing women participation but value creation and proposition in producer cooperatives.

In Chile, Oxfam (2013) reports male-dominated coffee cooperatives have supported female members to produce organic coffee under special women label Café Femenino which has been in production since 2004. The strategy is highly effective as it enhances confidence levels of female members and status in these organizations. While government led initiatives and policy programmes in addressing gender disparity in participation in agricultural cooperatives in countries such as Chile, Cuba and Rwanda have proved successful, there is no evidence of the same programmes being implemented in Kenya. In addition to policy measures, this study also examines whether specific initiatives and programmes has been initiated by the Kenyan national government as well as the Kajiado government in efforts targeted at addressing gender disparity in agricultural cooperatives. The study also details how effective the third gender leadership affirmative action as expressed in the Kenyan Constitution has been implemented and its effectiveness in addressing the issue of women participation in agricultural cooperatives especially at leadership levels within Kajiado County.

2.6 Critique of Existing Literature

Extensive research has explored barriers to women's participation in agricultural cooperatives, yet most studies fail to provide a nuanced differentiation between active and nominal participation. While the works of Kaaria et al. (2016) provide valuable insights into socio-cultural, economic, and technical barriers, they do not specify current levels of women's participation. This omission limits their ability to contextualize the effectiveness of interventions proposed to enhance inclusivity. Similarly, while Woldu et al. (2013) and Aduna and Woldeyes (2022) estimate participation rates of women in Ethiopian agricultural cooperatives at 20% and 17%, respectively, their methodologies are unclear. These studies do not distinguish between the total number of women registered in cooperatives and those actively involved in core activities such as attending general meetings, participating in leadership, or contributing to decision-making processes. This lack of clarity raises questions about the validity and applicability of their findings.

Another critical gap in the literature pertains to the influence of access to and ownership of productive resources on women's participation in agricultural cooperatives. Njobe and Kaaria (2015) identify significant disparities in land ownership across Sub-Saharan Africa, ranging from 3% in Mali to 35% in Malawi and Botswana. However, their study does not establish a direct causal relationship between land ownership and women's active participation in cooperatives. This limits their ability to propose targeted interventions that address resource-related disparities effectively. Furthermore, while their methodology is robust in quantifying ownership disparities, it fails to incorporate qualitative analyses that could reveal the lived experiences of women navigating these barriers.

Similarly, while education and training are widely acknowledged as critical factors for enhancing women's participation, existing studies lack comprehensive methodological frameworks to examine their specific impact. For example, studies often fail to explore how variations in education levels affect women's ability to assume decision-making roles or engage in cooperative leadership. Moreover, most interventions discussed in the literature, such as capacity-building programs and awareness campaigns, are evaluated superficially. Researchers rarely employ longitudinal designs to assess the sustainability of these interventions or adapt them to distinct socio-cultural contexts.

The methodological approaches used in previous studies also present significant gaps. For instance, the reliance on cross-sectional surveys to estimate participation rates often overlooks the dynamic nature of participation and the evolving challenges women face. Additionally, few studies use participatory research methods that engage women directly in identifying barriers and co-designing solutions. This lack of inclusivity in research design may contribute to interventions that fail to resonate with the targeted demographic.

To address these gaps, the current study employed a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative data on participation levels with qualitative insights into women's lived experiences. This approach will provide a detailed analysis of active versus nominal participation while evaluating the interplay of socio-cultural, economic, and institutional barriers. Furthermore, the study will assess the effectiveness of existing interventions, using participatory methods to ensure that proposed solutions are both practical and contextually relevant. By bridging these

methodological and contextual gaps, the study aims to contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of gender dynamics within agricultural cooperatives.

2.7 Literature Gaps

Research on barriers to women's participation in agricultural cooperatives in developing countries, especially in Sub-Saharan Africa, has increased. These studies often emphasize issues such as cultural norms, limited access to productive resources, and insufficient education and training. However, a significant gap exists in research focusing on effective interventions aimed at addressing these barriers and enhancing women's engagement in these organizations. For the few studies that examine interventions, such as Kaaria et al. (2016), Woldu et al. (2013), and Mwambi et al. (2021), they fail to document the effectiveness of these interventions in eliminating gender disparities in agricultural cooperatives. Consequently, there is a need to investigate the extent to which various interventions such as women's involvement in leadership roles, education and training, and improved access to productive resources have been adopted among agricultural cooperatives in Kajiado County and to evaluate the effectiveness of these interventions. Therefore, there is need to investigate the extent the various interventions including women involvement in leadership, education and training, and enhancing access to productive resources have been adopted among agricultural cooperatives in Kajiado County and the level of effectiveness of these interventions.

While gender is an important factor that shapes social and economic relations other factors as highlighted by intersectionality theory such as race, ethnicity, social class, marriage status, age, and level of education are also critical in determining participation of women in agricultural cooperatives. As such, the study seeks to

determine the extent factors such as marriage status, education level, and age affect women participation in agricultural cooperatives. Similarly, existing studies with few exceptions such as Meador & O'Brien (2019), Benitez et al., (2020) and Oxfam (2013) have not documented the role and effectiveness of social networks as highlighted in social capital theory in examining women participation in agricultural cooperatives.

2.8 Conceptual Framework

The framework serves as a guide for analyzing relationships among key constructs utilized in the study: barriers to women's participation, interventions addressing these barriers, and level of women's involvement in agricultural cooperatives in Kajiado County. In other words, the conceptual framework demonstrates the interplay between socio-cultural factors, economic factors and technological factors (interventions) which together comprises the predictor variables on women's level of participation in agricultural cooperatives or outcome variable. By utilizing this framework, the research aims to comprehensively understand the complex issues that hinder women involvement in agricultural cooperatives and the extent various interventions have been successful in improving participation rates.

Socio-cultural factors, the first predictor variable comprises of items such as patriarchy nature of the society, land ownership and control and livestock key resources that directly affect involvement in agricultural sector and cooperative activities for many rural communities, decision making capacity of women with regard to farm resources including income, livestock and land, limited education and training as well as the issue of domestic duties which limit time available for women to take part in activities that are outside their households. The economic factors, as

predictor variables, include indicators such as income level, access to capital, market access, and women's ownership of productive resources. The third predictor variable encompasses interventions aimed at enhancing women's participation in agricultural cooperatives, such as education and training opportunities, promotion of women's leadership and innovation, facilitation of ownership and access to productive resources, promotion of access to agricultural inputs, and provision of extension services. The dependent variables, representing the outcomes of women's participation in agricultural cooperatives, were measured by indicators such as the number of active female members, women in leadership roles, time dedicated to cooperative activities, and the level of women's influence on decision-making within these cooperatives.

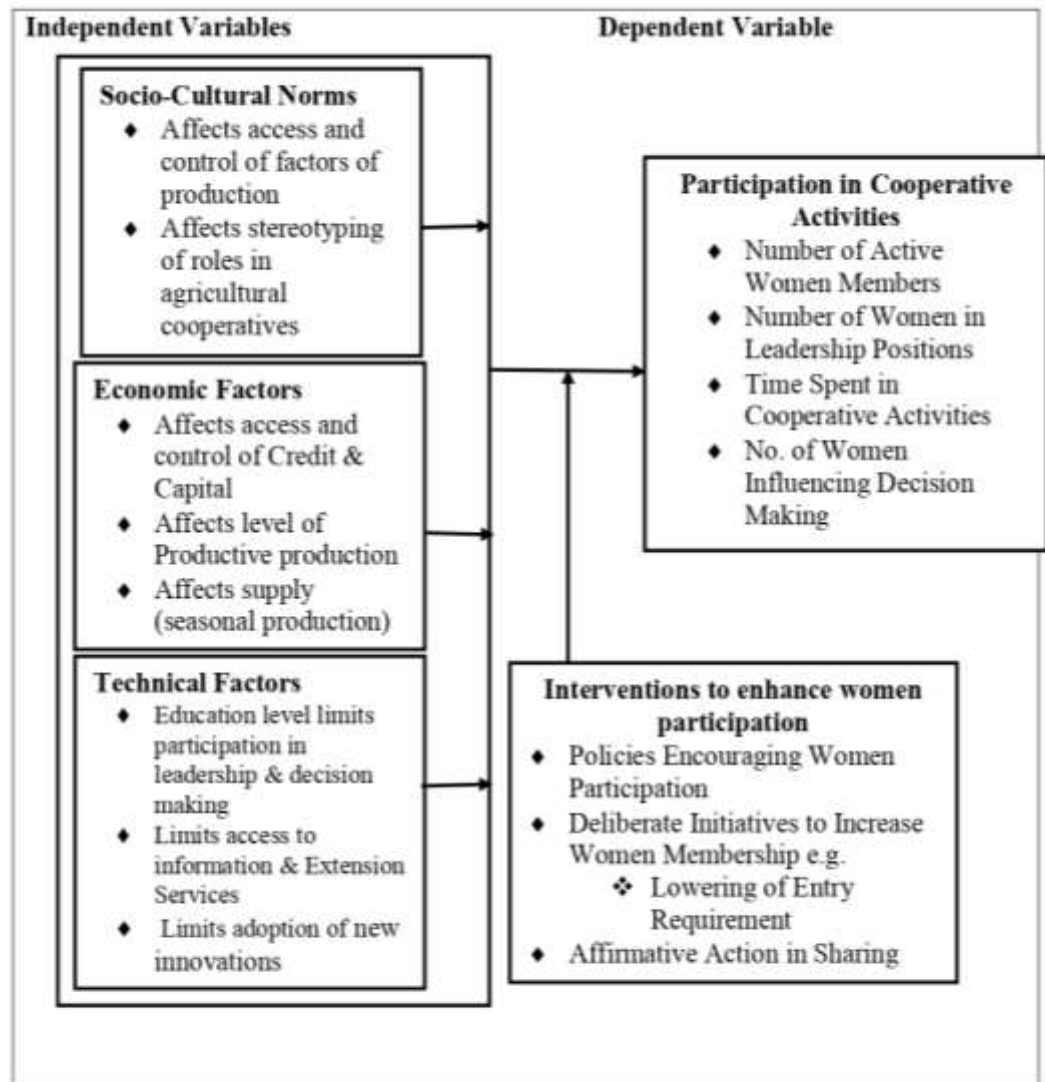


Figure 2. 1: Conceptual Framework

Source: (Author, 2023)

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the research methods used to investigate the research problem. It encompasses several key components: research design, operationalization and measurement of variables, target population, sampling design, data collection instruments, validity and reliability of research instruments, data collection procedures, data analysis and presentation, and ethical considerations. Each of these components is crucial for ensuring a comprehensive and rigorous study that effectively addresses the study objectives.

3.2 Research Design

A research design refers to the structured framework and procedures used to address a research problem or question, guiding how data is collected, analyzed, and interpreted (Sounder et al., 2016; Alavi et al., 2018). For this study, a cross-sectional survey research design was chosen. This design involves examining a sample population at a single point in time to evaluate the prevalence and relationships among variables relevant to the research objectives. It provides a snapshot of the current state of the study population, allowing for an effective assessment of various factors simultaneously.

The cross-sectional survey design was particularly suitable for this study for several reasons. First, it enabled a comprehensive assessment of women's current levels of participation in agricultural cooperatives, as well as the identification of gender-specific barriers and the effectiveness of interventions. By capturing data at one point

in time, the design offered immediate insights into the prevailing conditions and challenges faced by women in these cooperatives.

This design also allowed for the simultaneous analysis of multiple variables, such as participation levels, barriers, and intervention impacts. This holistic approach was essential for understanding the complex interactions between these factors and their influence on women's involvement in agricultural cooperatives.

Additionally, the cross-sectional survey design facilitated efficient data collection from a large sample. This efficiency was critical for gathering a broad range of information quickly, which is valuable for addressing the study's objectives and making timely recommendations.

To complement the cross-sectional survey design, this study employed both qualitative and quantitative methodologies. This concurrent mixed-methods approach aimed to provide a comprehensive analysis by integrating numerical data with detailed textual descriptions. Qualitative methods proved valuable in revealing deeper insights into intangible elements such as social norms, socioeconomic status, and gender roles, which are key to understanding the obstacles and experiences faced by women in agricultural cooperatives (Mack et al., 2005).

3.3 Operationalization and measurement of variables

In order to systematically explore the gender related barriers to women participation and effectiveness of interventions to enhance women participation in agricultural cooperatives in Kajiado County, Kenya, this table outlines the operationalization of variables aligned with specific research objectives.

Table 3. 1: Operationalization and measurement of variables

Objective	Variable	Type	Operationalization	Operational definition of variable	Measurement	Expected Outcome
1	Women's Participation in Agricultural Cooperatives	Dependent variable	Assessing the level of women's involvement in cooperative activities.	The extent of active participation of women in decision-making, leadership roles, and cooperative activities.	Quantitative data on women's roles in cooperatives (e.g., positions held, involvement in decision-making processes).	Increased level of participation with effective interventions.
2	Gender-related barriers to women's participation	Independent variable	Identifying barriers that hinder women's engagement in agricultural cooperatives.	Factors such as cultural norms, access to resources, discriminatory practices, and lack of support systems affecting women's participation.	Qualitative and quantitative analysis of barriers identified through surveys, interviews, and focus groups.	Negative impact on women's participation if barriers are not addressed.
3	Effectiveness of interventions to enhance women's participation	Intervening variable	Evaluating the impact of interventions aimed at improving women's participation.	The degree to which interventions address identified barriers, promote gender equality, and empower women in cooperatives.	Qualitative assessment of intervention outcomes, including changes in women's roles, empowerment measures, and cooperative performance indicators.	Positive impact on women's participation if interventions are effective and gender-responsive

3.4 Target population

The target population included; 3,436 individuals affiliated with agricultural cooperatives across Kajiado County's five sub-counties: Kajiado South, Kajiado West, Kajiado Central, Kajiado East, and Kajiado North. This comprised of both men and women who are actively involved in cooperative activities leveraging collective resources and enhance agricultural productivity. Among these individuals,

the study focused on specific categories to gain clear understanding of cooperative dynamics; Of the total population, 1,106 were women engaged in dairy and horticultural cooperatives. This group was a primary focus of the study, as the research aimed to explore their levels of participation and the gender-specific barriers they encounter within these cooperatives.

Additionally, other category of individuals targeted by this study was the cooperative officers, these officers are integral to the governance and day-to-day operations of the cooperatives, making their input crucial for assessing management practices and strategies at the sub-county level. Their involvement provided valuable insights into the cooperative governance structure across the entire county. Each sub-county is represented by a cooperative officer, and in this study, a total of 5 cooperative officers were drawn representing the 5 sub-counties under study.

The research also included the five CEOs of the major agricultural cooperatives spread across the five sub-counties. These CEOs offered perspectives on cooperative leadership and strategic decision-making, contributing to a deeper understanding of how cooperatives function at the executive level. The study

Further, the study included 29 supervisory committee members, a figure derived from cooperatives' management registry data and reports. Each cooperative in Kajiado County typically has a supervisory committee, though the exact number of members varies depending on the cooperative's size and structure. According to the registry and statistical reports, the total number of supervisory committee members across the five cooperatives involved in the study is 29. These individuals were key to the study due to their role in overseeing cooperative governance, ensuring compliance with regulations, and maintaining accountability, providing essential insights into operational challenges, including gender participation.

Lastly, the study included 39 management board members, a figure derived from cooperative registry data and reports. Each cooperative has a management board responsible for strategic direction and administration, and total number of board members across cooperatives involved in the study is 39. These members were included because their role in shaping high-level decisions and strategies is crucial for understanding the broader challenges and opportunities within agricultural cooperatives in Kajiado County.

This structured approach to identifying and categorizing the target population ensured a thorough examination of the various factors influencing cooperative management and women's participation within the agricultural sector in Kajiado County. By including representatives from different levels of cooperative structures, study aimed to capture a wider range of perspectives and experiences relevant to the research objectives.

Table 3. 2: Target Population

Name of Sub-county	Cooperative officers	Name of Dairy Cooperative	Type of Value Chain	No. of Members	Women as Accessible Population	CEOs	Supervisory Committee Members	Management Board Members
Kajiado South	1	Loitokitok Dairy Cooperative	Dairy	1445	364	1	5	7
Kajiado West	1	Foki Farmers Cooperative	Tomato	670	59	1	5	7
Kajiado East	1	ISNET Horticultural Cooperative	Tomato	580	544	1	7	9
Kajiado Central	1	Namanga Dairy Cooperative	Dairy	320	44	1	5	7
Kajiado North	1	Ololaiser Dairy Cooperative	Dairy	421	95	1	7	9
Total	5			3436	1106	5	29	39

3.5 Sampling design

This study employed a multi-stage sampling approach to capture a representative and diverse view of the target population within agricultural cooperatives in Kajiado County, Kenya. The sampling design was carefully tailored to each category of the target population, ensuring comprehensive coverage and accurate analysis.

To start, the research focused on women members of agricultural cooperatives, with a total of 1,106 identified across the five sub-counties of Kajiado South, Kajiado West, Kajiado East, Kajiado Central, and Kajiado North. Sample size for this group was calculated using Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) formula, following the guidance of Mugenda and Mugenda (2003). This formula provided a statistically significant sample size to accurately reflect the views of women involved in cooperative

activities. From this pool, a sample of 285 women was selected through simple random sampling, ensuring there was an equal representation of members and no biasness was reported.

The following Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) formula was applied;

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

Where (S) = required sample size, (N) = given population size, (P) = population proportion assumed to be 0.5 for maximum possible sample size, (D) = degree of occurrence with the highest occurrence, and (X^2) = table value of Chi-square for one degree of freedom. Inserting the required information into the formula where $N=1106$, $P= 0.5$, $D= 0.05$ and $X^2 = 3.841^2$ gives:

$$S = \frac{3.841^2 \times 1106 \times 0.5(1-0.5)}{0.05^2(1106-1) + 3.841^2 \times 0.5(1-0.5)}$$

=285 respondents obtained from households with women as registered members of the five agricultural cooperatives in Kajiado County

For insights into cooperative governance, the study purposively selected 29 supervisory committee members. The purposive sampling method allowed the study to target those with significant expertise and knowledge pertinent to the governance and management practices within the cooperatives.

In addition, 39 management board members were included in the sample using purposive sampling. This selection was based on their influential positions in decision-making processes within the cooperatives.

5 CEOs were also engaged, one from each of the five sub-counties. These CEOs were selected purposively due to their pivotal roles in leading and strategizing within the cooperatives.

Finally, 5 cooperative officers were included in the study, each representing a different sub-county. These officers were chosen purposively to provide insights into local governance and operational practices.

To ensure the sample accurately reflected the diversity within the agricultural cooperatives, the study employed stratified random sampling. This technique enabled proportional representation from both dairy and horticultural cooperatives, capturing the significance of each value chain within the study area. By integrating these varied sampling methods, the study was able to gather comprehensive data and provide a thorough analysis of gender-related barriers and the effectiveness of interventions within agricultural cooperatives in Kajiado County.

3.6 Data collection instruments

A variety of data collection tools tailored to different respondent groups were used. Questionnaires were administered to women members of dairy cooperatives within agricultural cooperatives to gather quantitative data. In-depth interviews (IDIs) were conducted with CEOs/Managing Directors, Chairs of the board of management, and Chairs of the Supervisory Committee to delve into detailed insights. Key informant interviews (KII) were employed with sub-county cooperative officers and sub-county gender officers to obtain expert perspectives. Additionally, focused group discussions engaged members of the supervisory committee and management board to facilitate interactive exchanges and deeper qualitative exploration of the research themes.

3.6.1 Questionnaire guided interviews

The researcher issued questionnaires to 285 respondents randomly selected from the agricultural cooperatives. The questionnaires were found to be particularly useful in this study due to their efficiency in gathering data from a bigger sample within a short duration. Additionally, questionnaires are easy to administer, cost-effective, and provide respondents with the flexibility to answer at their convenience, increasing the likelihood of accurate and honest responses, while their structured nature ensures consistency in data collection, which is crucial for reliability and validity, as Mugenda and Mugenda (2016) emphasize their effectiveness in resource utilization, especially in studies involving large, geographically dispersed populations.

The questionnaire of this study was structured into four key sections, each designed to address specific aspects of the research objectives. As detailed in Appendix II, the first section gathered background information, including age, marital status, household size, and level of education. This information provided an overview of the demographic profile of the women members in agricultural cooperatives in Kajiado County.

The focus of second section of the questionnaire was on identifying and assessing barriers that hinder women from participating in agricultural cooperatives. Respondents were asked to provide insights into the various obstacles they face, such as accessing resources, decision-making power, and social norms that may limit their involvement in cooperative activities.

The third section addressed the interventions currently in place to mitigate these barriers and effectiveness of these interventions from the perspective of the

respondents, allowing the study to evaluate which strategies have been most successful in reducing gender disparities within the cooperatives.

Finally, the fourth section of the questionnaire aimed to gather additional insights or suggestions from the respondents on how to further enhance women's participation in agricultural cooperatives. This open-ended section allowed for the collection of qualitative data, providing a deeper understanding of respondents' experiences and perspectives.

3.6.2 Focus Group Discussions (FDGs) guide

As part of the study, 3 focus group discussions (FGDs) were conducted: one comprised exclusively of women, another of men, and a third mixed-gender group. Participants were selected from the supervisory committee and management boards of agricultural cooperatives, each FGD included a minimum of 8 members who were knowledgeable about the study's subject matter as specified in Appendix VI. This was in line with recommendations recorded by Mugendi and Mugendi (2017) that an FGD should comprise of 8 to 15 members to ensure there is an adequate representation of diverse perspectives within the discussion.

FGDs were chosen because they effectively elicited participants' attitudes, perceptions, knowledge, and experiences regarding gender related barriers to women participation and effectiveness of interventions to enhance women participation in agricultural cooperatives. Specifically, the FGDs sought qualitative insights into how social norms, economic factors, organizational dynamics, and other barriers impact women's participation in cooperatives. Participants also discussed their perspectives on various interventions aimed at enhancing women's engagement, providing

valuable feedback on their implementation and outcomes. Data from the FGDs were taken using a voice recorder with full consent of all participants, ensuring accurate capture and preserving the integrity of their contributions to the study.

3.6.3 Key Informant Interview (KII)

The key informant interviews (KII) comprised of 5 cooperative officers representing each sub-county in Kajiado County, as detailed in Appendix V. This approach was instrumental in gathering their perspectives and insights on level of women's participation in agricultural cooperatives within the county, focusing on interventions aimed at mitigating participation barriers. The researcher aimed to assess the effectiveness of policy measures and affirmative actions implemented by both the county and national governments in enhancing women's involvement in agricultural cooperatives. Additionally, the interviews sought to explore the roles and impacts of external partners, including intergovernmental organizations, involved in initiatives to bolster women's participation. Specifically, the researcher inquired about targeted programs and their outcomes, assessing whether these efforts had effectively increased women's engagement in these cooperatives.

3.6.4 In-depth interviews

The in-depth interview schedule (Appendix IV) was used on CEOs, Chairs of the Management Board, and Chairs of the Supervisory Committee from the five sampled agricultural cooperatives in this study. The aim of the IDIs was to provide a comprehensive understanding of women's participation levels in agricultural cooperatives. This included assessing the proportion of total membership represented by women, their extent of participation in cooperative activities such as meetings, and identifying specific interventions implemented by cooperatives to enhance

women's involvement. Additionally, the IDIs explored barriers preventing women from accessing decision-making and leadership roles within their communities. The interviews with top leadership delved into perspectives and experiences related to gender and leadership dynamics within their organizations. Key topics included reasons behind the underrepresentation of females in leadership committees, opportunities available to female leaders, barriers experienced by women executing leadership roles, and the readiness of female members to assume leadership positions.

3.7 Validity of Research Instruments

Ensuring the validity of the instruments employed in the study was critical to guaranteeing the accuracy and reliability of the collected data. The study employed two types of validity: content validity and face validity. Face validity assessed how effectively the measurement instrument appeared to evaluate the intended construct under investigation. It essentially evaluated whether the instrument "looked" like it was measuring what it claimed to measure (Wilson, 2014). To enhance face validity, the researcher ensured that the questionnaire appeared relevant, feasible, and understandable to the participants. This included aspects such as readability, consistency of style and formatting, and clarity of language. In the study, face validity was enhanced through expert reviews. Experts in the field of public policy and management, including supervisor, reviewed the questionnaire to provide feedback on its appropriateness and clarity. Their input helped ensure that the questionnaire appeared relevant and suitable for measuring the intended construct.

Content validity, on the other hand, measured the extent to which the items in an instrument adequately measured or represented the content of the property or trait that the researcher wished to measure (Gilliland, McKemmish & Lau, 2017). It

focused on whether the instrument's content was comprehensive and relevant to the research objectives. In this study, content validity was evaluated using a systematic approach. Expert judgment from the School of Cooperatives and Community Development at The Cooperative University of Kenya determined the validity of instruments. Their expertise ensured that the instruments had both content and face validity, meaning they effectively measured the intended constructs and were deemed appropriate for the study's objectives.

3.8 Reliability of Research Instruments

Mugenda and Mugenda (2018) define reliability as the extent to which a research instrument yields consistent results despite potential random errors that might affect its accuracy. Under this study, reliability was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient for internal consistency. This coefficient measures how well responses from one participant correlate with those from others in the study, with values ranging from 0 (signifying no internal consistency) to 1 (indicating high internal consistency).

To evaluate the reliability of the research instruments, a pilot study was carried out in Taita-Taveta County, following Mugenda and Mugenda's (2016) recommendation to use 10% of the planned sample size for the main study. The pilot study involved selecting participants from two agricultural cooperatives, one focused on horticulture and the other on dairy, ensuring diverse perspectives. The questionnaires were distributed to 30 women members, and interviews were held with key informants to obtain feedback on the research instruments. This pilot study facilitated adjustments and enhancements based on participant responses and feedback, thereby improving the reliability of the tools.

3.9 Data collection procedure

Before the data collection begun, the researcher acquired a research permit from the National Commission for Science, Technology & Innovation (NACOSTI), following approval by board of postgraduate studies. This permit authorized the study to proceed in Kajiado County. Subsequently, the researcher visited selected agricultural cooperatives included in the study sample to be familiar with the location of the research and explaining the goal of research to participants. An introductory note provided by the cooperatives facilitated the researcher's introduction to respondents. Prior to initiating the study, the researcher conducted home visits, scheduling meetings at the participants' convenience. Questionnaires and interview schedules were then issued to respondents. To achieve high response rate, the researcher personally conducted interviews and administered questionnaires during these visits. Clear instructions were provided to ensure accurate completion, particularly for illiterate respondents. This approach minimized the need for follow-up visits, thereby reducing time and costs associated with data collection. Following data collection, the instruments were organized, coded, and prepared for analysis. Lastly, the respondents were assured of confidentiality of their responses in the entire research period.

3.10 Data analysis and presentation

The study employed a meticulous approach to processing and analyzing both quantitative and qualitative data, to enable a clear understanding of gender-related dynamics within agricultural cooperatives in Kajiado County. Initially, all collected data underwent a thorough assessment for completeness to ensure data integrity. Incomplete questionnaires were excluded from the analysis to maintain the quality of the dataset. Subsequently, the data were systematically coded and cleaned, a process

that involved assigning labels or codes to responses and rectifying any discrepancies or errors.

Once cleaned and coded, the data were entered into NVivo software to allow for analysis. Quantitative data, derived from semi-structured questionnaires administered to 285 respondents from households with women as registered cooperative members, were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistical techniques. Descriptive statistics were used to summarize key characteristics of the study participants.

Simultaneously, qualitative data gathered from FGDs, IDIs, and KIIs underwent thematic analysis using NVivo software. Qualitative analysis commenced by transcribing recorded statements, followed by the development of a codebook to categorize and align responses according to the study's predefined objectives. This method ensured that insights from qualitative data were systematically organized and interpreted to uncover underlying themes related to women's participation, barriers faced, and the effectiveness of cooperative interventions.

The findings from both quantitative and qualitative analyses were integrated into a unified report. This integration was guided by pre-established thematic areas corresponding to the study's specific objectives: assessing levels of women's participation, identifying barriers, and evaluating intervention effectiveness. Overall, this rigorous data processing and analysis approach ensured that the study's conclusions were robust, grounded in empirical evidence, and relevant for informing policies and practices aimed at enhancing gender equity within agricultural cooperatives.

3.11 Ethical Considerations

The researcher strictly adhered to ethical standards in both the planning and execution phases of the study. An approval was obtained from Cooperative University of Kenya, and a research permit was gotten from NACOSTI before the study began.

Participants were fully informed of the study's purpose and given the opportunity to participate voluntarily. Data collection was carried out in a manner that ensured confidentiality, and participants' anonymity was guaranteed, with no responses attributed to individuals personally. These ethical measures fostered trust, encouraged participation, and ensured academic integrity, safeguarding the study's accuracy and credibility.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS, FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATIONS

4.1 Introduction

The purpose of this study was to investigate gender-related barriers to women's participation and effectiveness of interventions designed to enhance women's participation in agricultural cooperatives in Kajiado County, Kenya. These three research questions guided the study:

1. What is the level of women's participation in agricultural cooperatives in Kajiado County?
2. What are the gender-related barriers to women's participation in agricultural cooperatives in Kajiado County?
3. How effective are the interventions implemented to enhance women's participation in agricultural cooperatives in Kajiado County?

To address these questions, data collection involved the use of questionnaires, focus group discussions (FGDs), in-depth interviews, and key informant interviews (KIIs). Quantitative data were examined using descriptive statistics to give a detailed picture of the current level of women's participation in agricultural cooperatives, the varying effects of barriers on their involvement, and the effectiveness of gender-responsive interventions. Qualitative data were analyzed thematically using NVivo software. This chapter presents the analysis and findings aligned with the research objectives.

4.2 Demographic characteristics

This study gathered demographic information from participants, focusing on their age, marital status, principal income earner in the household, and monthly household income.

4.2.1 Age of respondents

Respondents in the study were asked to provide their age. The highest number of respondents in the cooperatives (60%) were aged below 35 years, while the highest proportion of respondents in the dairy cooperatives (50%) were aged between 35-50 years (see figure 4.1).

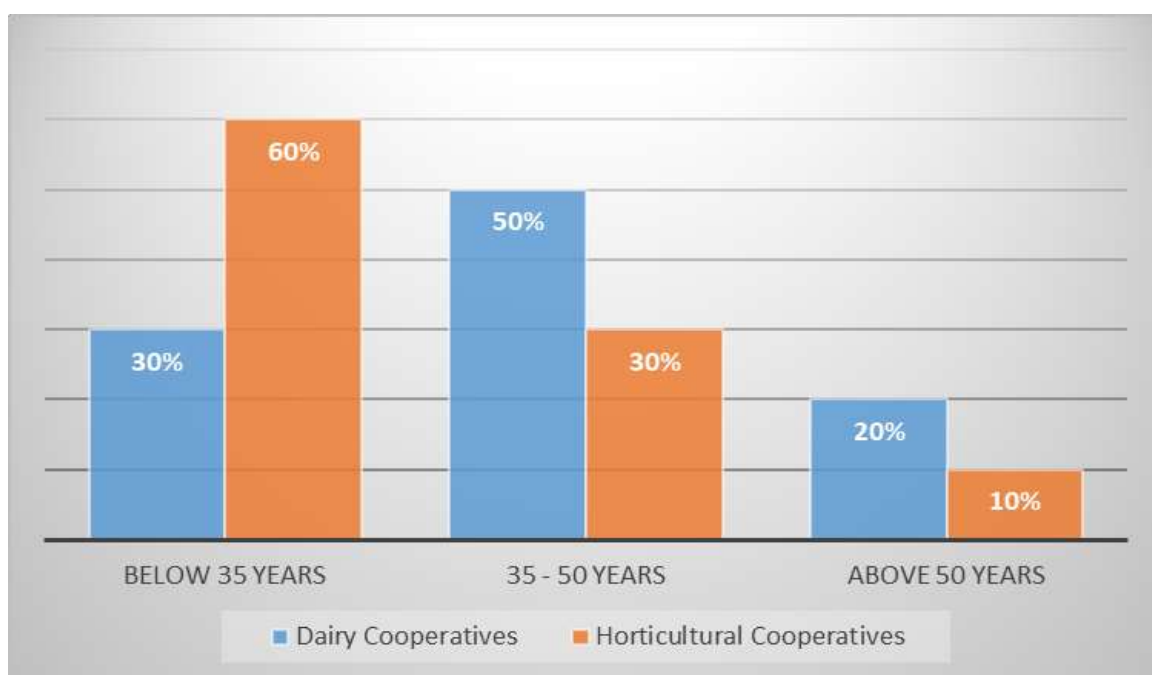


Figure 4. 1: Age of the respondents

As illustrated on Figure 4.1, age distribution among participants in dairy and horticultural cooperatives, all of whom are female. Notably, this distribution highlights that horticultural cooperatives attract a younger demographic, whereas dairy cooperatives have a higher proportion of middle-aged participants.

4.2.3 Marital status of respondents

Figure 4.2 presents distribution or of participants in different marital statuses, such as married, single, divorced, or widowed, within the sample population.

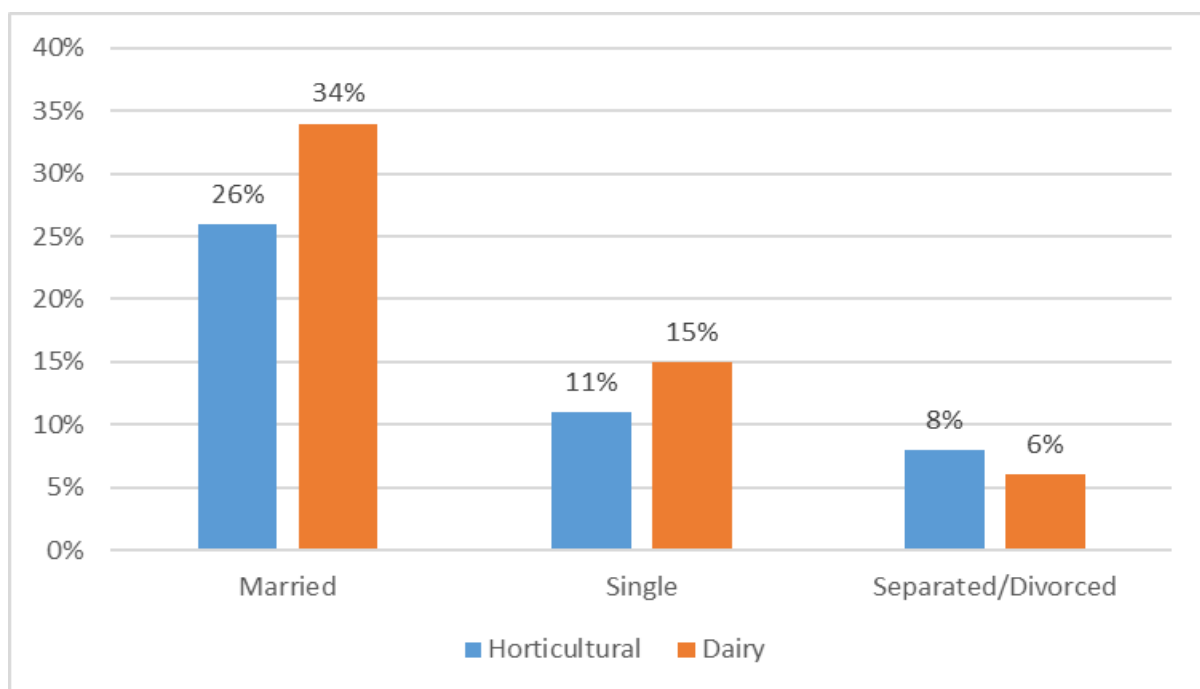


Figure 4. 2: Distribution of Marital Status

Figure 4.2 presents data on the marital status of participants in horticultural and dairy cooperatives. Out of 285, 34% (97) of participants in dairy cooperatives are married, which is the highest percentage across all categories.

4.2.4 Level of education

Respondents were required to state their level of education. The results revealed that most of respondents in both horticultural and dairy cooperatives had achieved certain level of education.

Table 4. 1: Level of education

Level of education	Value Chain			
	Horticultural		Dairy	
	Frequency (n)	Percent (%)	Frequency (n)	Percent (%)
No formal education	20	7%	14	5%
Primary level	63	22%	29	10%
Secondary level	50	18%	63	22%
College	11	4%	17	6%
University	9	3%	9	3%

As shown in Table 4.1, the majority of participants in both dairy and horticultural cooperatives had completed either primary or secondary education, with 22% (63 individuals) falling into these categories. In contrast, a small minority of participants, only 3% (9 individuals), had reached university-level education. This finding suggests that most of cooperative members have a basic to intermediate level of education, while higher education is less common among the participants. This educational background may influence their engagement and capacity to fully participate in cooperative activities, as well as their ability to benefit from more complex interventions.

4.2.5 The principal income earner in household

Participants were asked to give their principal income earner in the households of women registered as members of agricultural cooperatives in Kajiado County. Men (spouses) were the principal income earners, representing 56% of the total.

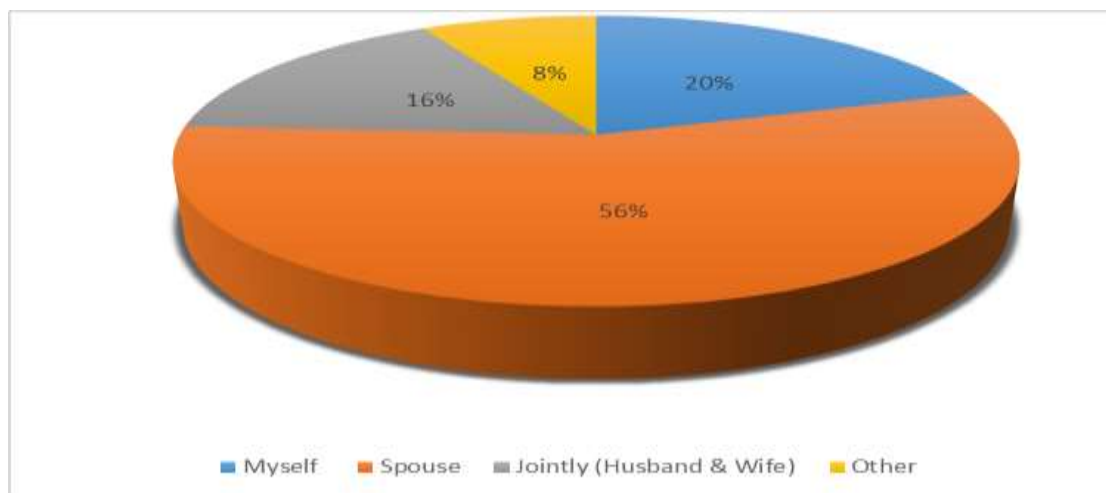


Figure 4. 3: Principal income earner in household

This finding suggests that in the majority of these households, men play a dominant role in providing financial support, which may impact the economic dynamics and decision-making processes within the cooperatives and the households.

4.2.6 Monthly household income

Respondents were told to indicate their levels of monthly household income and results were as illustrated on the Figure 4.4 below.

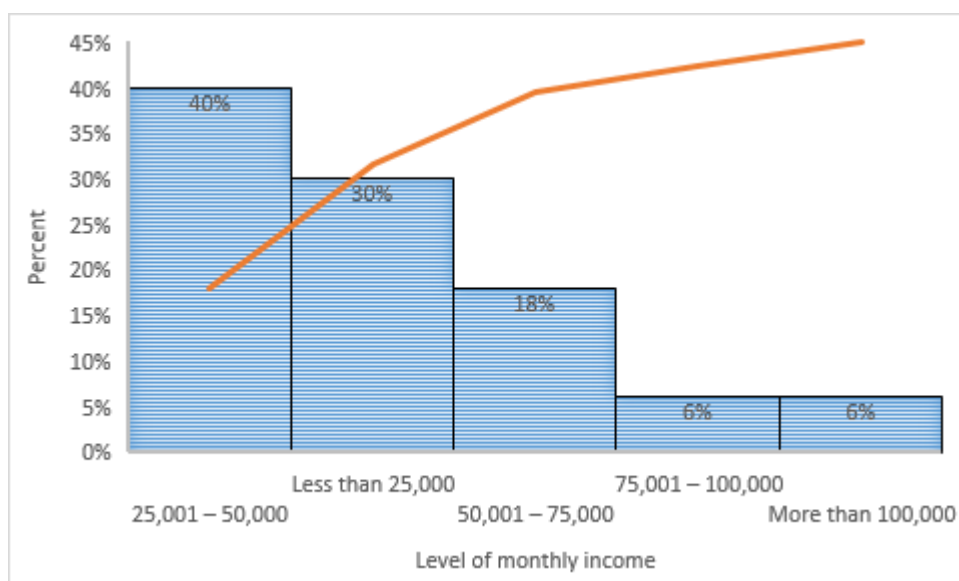


Figure 4. 4: Monthly household income

From Figure 4.4, it was found that majority of households had a monthly income ranging between Ksh. 25,001 and Ksh. 50,000, while only a small percentage (6%) of households earned a monthly income of Ksh. 75,000 and above. This indicates that most households fall within the lower to middle-income brackets, with relatively few reaching higher income levels. The income distribution highlights potential economic challenges for many households, which could influence their participation in agricultural cooperatives and their ability to invest in and benefit from cooperative activities.

4.3 Level of women's participation in agricultural cooperatives

The first objective sought to assess the level of women's participation in agricultural cooperatives in Kajiado County. Under this section, the findings are presented into 4 sub-themes, including; number of years as a registered member to agricultural cooperatives, the level of involving in agricultural cooperatives activities including attending of annual meetings, the proportion of women members in the agricultural cooperatives and the extent to which the respondents agreed or disagreed with statements regarding cooperative activities.

4.4.1 Number of years as a registered member to agricultural cooperatives

The researcher asked the respondents to indicate the number of years they had been registered as members to their respective agricultural cooperatives. From the analysis, majority, 41% of the respondents reported they had been registered members of the agricultural cooperatives in Kajiado County for 10 years and more. See Figure 4.5 below for a more detailed analysis.

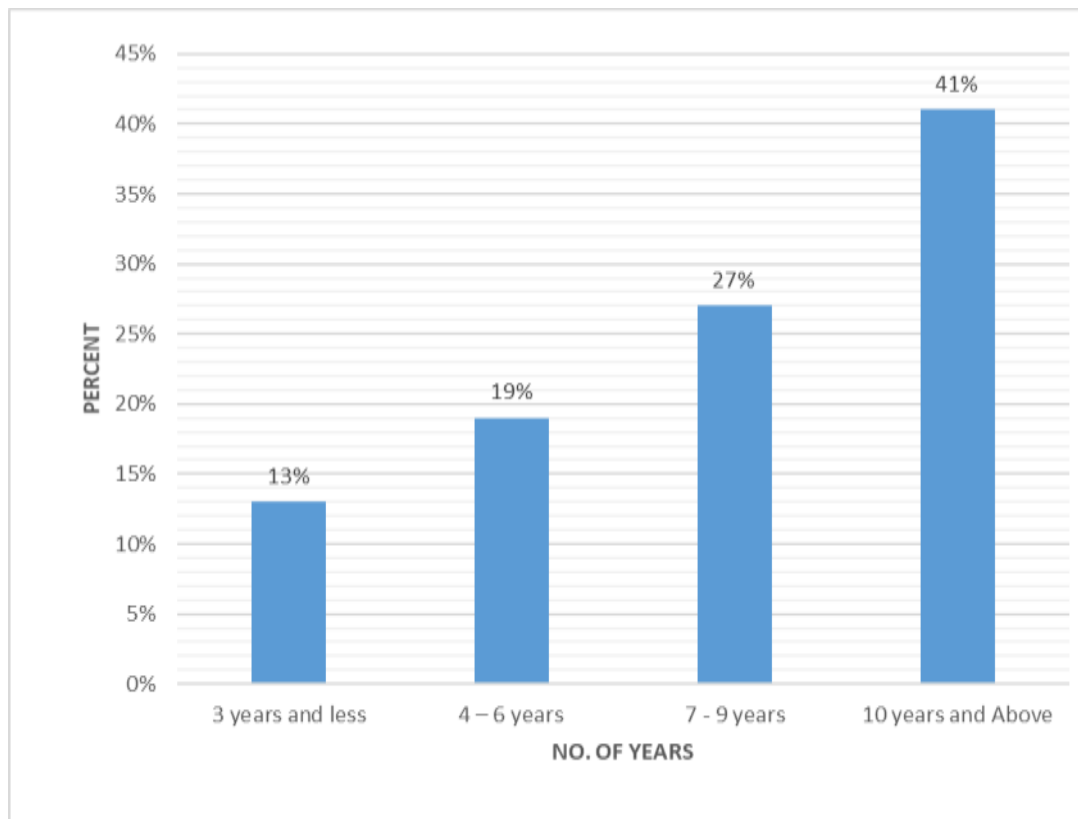


Figure 4. 5: Level of women's participation

The results implied that the study participants had vast experience with agricultural cooperatives and therefore, had adequate information required for this study.

4.4.2 The extent of involving in agricultural cooperatives activities including attending of annual meetings

The research assed the extent to which respondents were involved in agricultural cooperatives activities including attending of annual meetings. The results were illustrated on Figure 4.6 below.

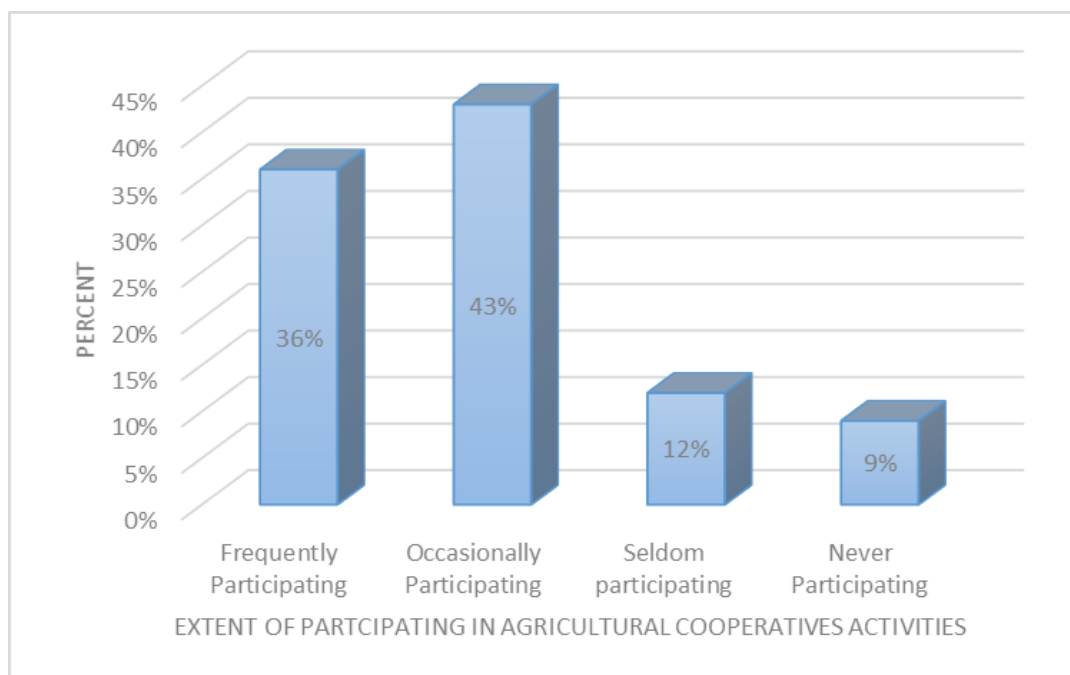


Figure 4. 6: Extent of participating in agricultural cooperatives activities

The analysis revealed a relatively high level of participation among women, as the majority (43%) indicated that they occasionally participated in these activities. This suggests that while women are engaged in cooperative activities, their involvement may vary, highlighting the potential for increased participation and more consistent engagement in the cooperatives' operations.

4.4.3 The proportion of women members in the agricultural cooperatives

Respondents were requested to specify the proportion of women members within their cooperatives.

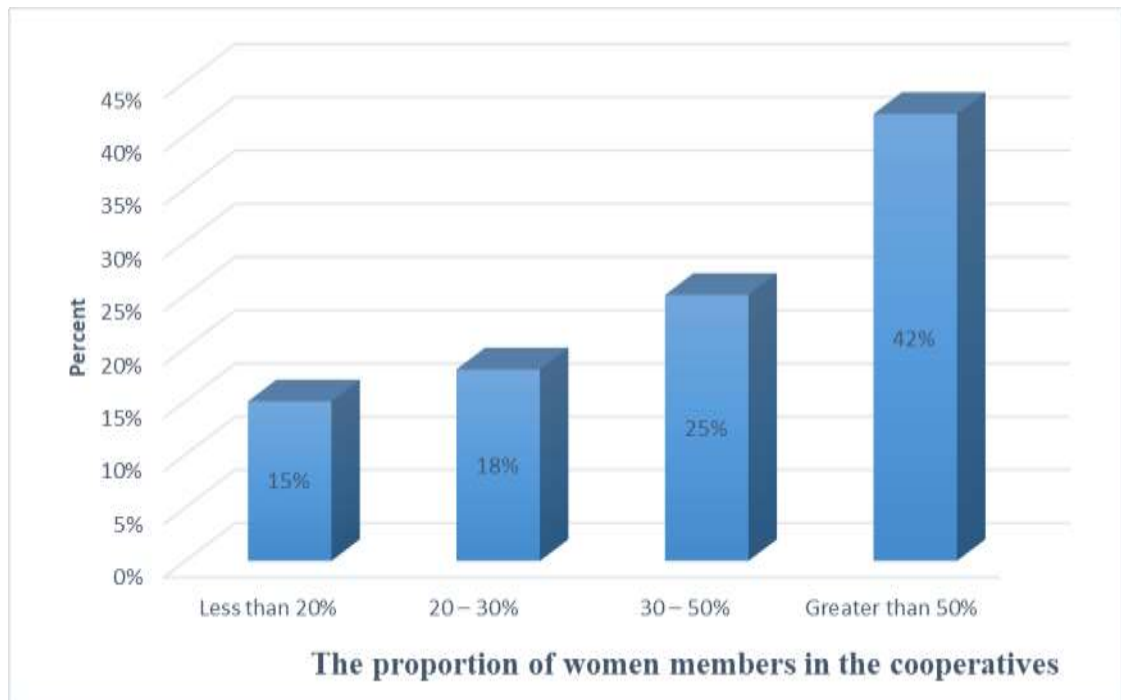


Figure 4. 7: Proportion of women members in the cooperatives

The analysis found that the largest proportion of women members in the cooperatives was greater than 50%, representing 42% of the respondents, while the smallest proportion of women was less than 20%, representing 15% of the respondents. This clearly indicates that women make up the majority in agricultural cooperatives in Kajiado County. The finding underscores the significant role women play in these cooperatives, highlighting their substantial presence and potential influence within the agricultural sector in the region. Figure 4.7 provides a detailed visual representation of this distribution.

4.4.4 The extent of agreement/disagreement on the statements concerning the cooperatives' activities

Respondents were asked to express their agreement or disagreement with the following statements regarding their cooperative activities and responses were arranged in a Likert scale that is: 1 – Strongly Disagree, 2 – Disagree, 3 – Neutral, 4 – Agree, and 5 – Strongly Agree.

Table 4. 2: Extent of agreement/disagreement on the cooperatives' activities

Statements	1	2	3	4	5
Women are actively involved in management of cooperatives operations	12%	18%	22%	35%	11%
Women are adequately represented at the decision-making table (board of management, top management team and committees)	32%	24%	14%	22%	20%
Women are involved in decision making in cooperative activities	16%	19%	10%	37%	18%
Women participation in annual general meetings, and special meetings is comparable to that of men	17%	13%	20%	31%	19%

Results showed that 32% of participants strongly disagreed that women are adequately represented at the decision-making table (board of management, top management team, and committees). This finding suggests a considerable gender disparity in leadership and decision-making roles within the agricultural cooperatives in Kajiado County. The lack of adequate female representation at these levels may reflect broader systemic challenges in achieving gender equity in governance. For a more detailed analysis, refer to Table 4.1 above.

4.4 Gender-related barriers to women's participation in agricultural cooperatives

The second objective sought to assess the gender-related barriers to women's participation in agricultural cooperatives in Kajiado County. The section is divided into 5 sub-themes which include; the respondents' participation in decision-making

in their households, how much control the respondents have over income that they generated from agricultural production, who made major decisions on sales, purchase and transfer of farm assets such as livestock and farm equipment, factors affected the level of participation in agricultural cooperatives activities and extent to which the provided statements applied to the respondents concerning participating in cooperatives activities.

4.4.1 The respondents' participation in decision-making in their households

The respondents were requested to specify their involvement in decision-making within their households.

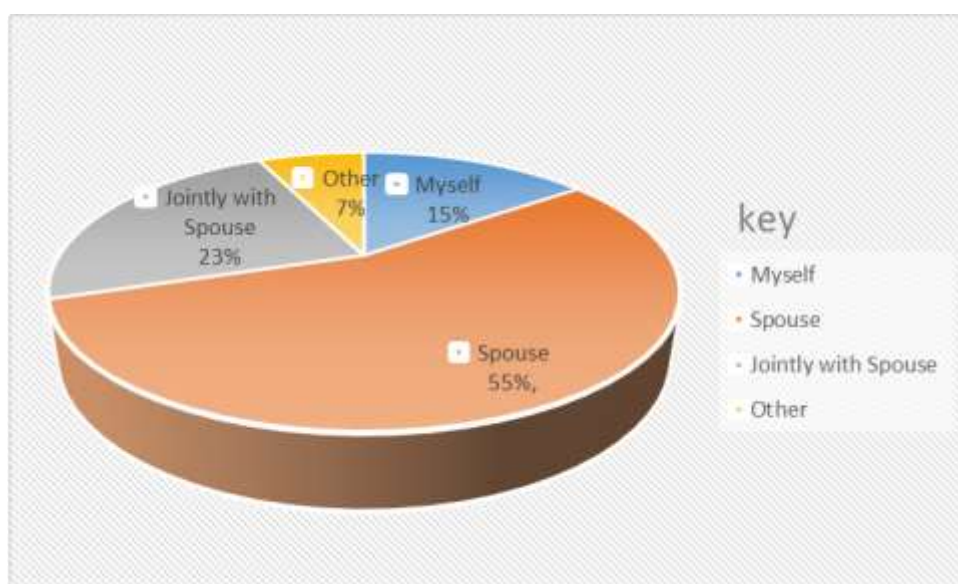


Figure 4. 8: Distribution of the participation in decision-making

The most notable finding is that 55% of the participants indicated that their spouses participated largely in the decision-making of the households. See more detailed analysis on figure 4.8 above. These results were supported by findings from the qualitative analysis, which appeared to suggest that decisions were largely influenced by men in the households. The men only FGD reported:

In many cases where women are not involved in income-generating activities, it's often observed that decisions within the household, including expenditures in traditionally considered "women's" domains like purchasing clothes for children, are predominantly made by men.

One respondent from the mixed-gender FGD said:

In my household, my partner is a housewife, which means I take on the sole responsibility for decision-making. This includes tasks typically associated with women, such as grocery shopping and meal planning. It often feels like I am the one navigating our daily needs, deciding what to buy, planning meals for the week, and ensuring that we have everything we need to function smoothly.

In contrast to this response, one woman from the women only FGD provided a strikingly different perspective on household decision-making dynamics. She stated:

In my household, I am the one who makes the decisions. They (the men) may be the ones who bring in the money, but I decide how it is spent and what we prioritize. Their role is mostly to provide, while I ensure that the household runs smoothly according to the plans and choices I make.

4.4.2 Women Control Over Income Generated from Agricultural Production

The researcher determined the level of control respondents had over income generated from agricultural production. See figure 4.9 for a more detailed analysis.

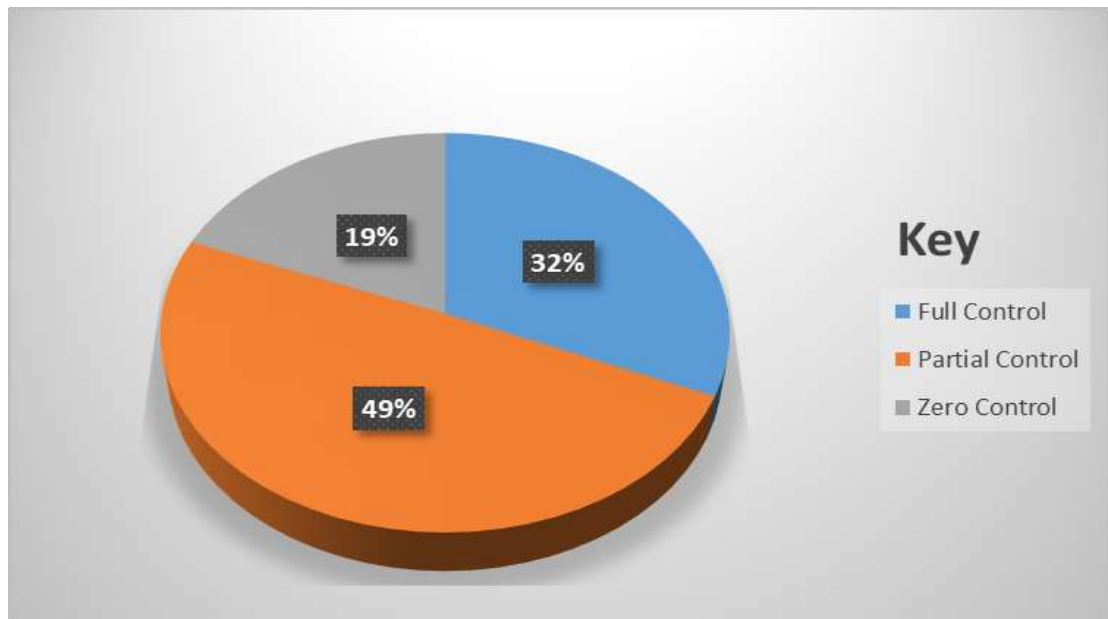


Figure 4. 9: Control over income from agricultural production

The analysis revealed that nearly half of the participants, 49%, reported having partial control over the income generated from agricultural production. This was the most common response, indicating that while women have some influence over financial decisions, their autonomy is often limited. Additionally, 32% of the participants stated they had full control over the income, suggesting that a significant minority of women exercise complete financial independence in managing agricultural earnings. Conversely, 19% of the respondents indicated they had no control at all, highlighting that a portion of women remain excluded from financial decision-making within their households. This distribution reflects the varying degrees of economic empowerment among women in agricultural cooperatives in Kajiado County.

Interviews with participants revealed nuanced perspectives on this partial control. A participant from the mixed group articulated:

I can decide how to use the money I earn, especially when it comes to buying necessities like food for our children or small household items.

However, when it comes to larger expenses or significant financial decisions, my husband tends to take charge, and his opinion usually determines how the money is ultimately spent.

Further, qualitative analysis indicated that women with full control often reported increased confidence and satisfaction in their financial decision-making. One respondent from women only group shared:

Having control over my income gives me the power to make decisions that benefit my farm, like investing in better seeds or buying fertilizers to improve production. It's empowering, and I feel a sense of pride in what I'm able to accomplish on my own without having to rely on anyone else.

In the analysis also revealed that some respondents highlighted feelings of frustration and helplessness that they had no control, with one participant from the mixed FGD stating:

I put in a lot of effort working in the fields, but when it comes to how the money is spent, my husband makes most of those decisions. There are times when I don't even know exactly how much we earn from our work.

4.4.3 Major decision-maker on sales, purchase and transfer of farm assets

Respondents were asked to indicate who made major decisions on sales, purchase and transfer of farm assets such as livestock and farm equipment.

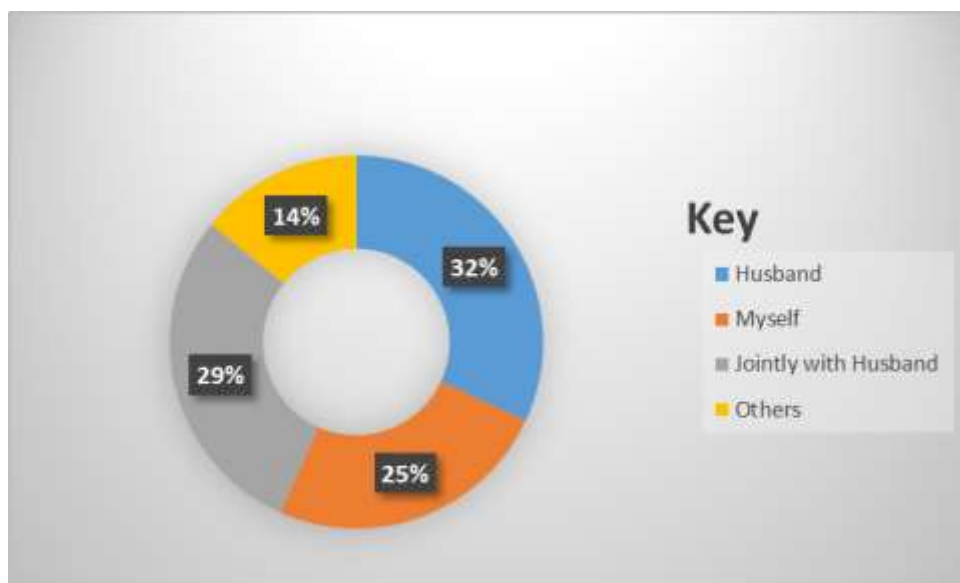


Figure 4. 10: The decision maker in the household

The most notable finding is that 32% of the respondents said it was the husband who made major decisions on sales, purchases, and transfers of farm assets such as livestock and farm equipment. The results were backed by a qualitative analysis of responses from both men and women FGD where a male participant's explanation of joint decision-making illustrated this point:

I discuss with her, expressing my concerns about the sales, purchase, and transfer of farm assets. We share ideas, but ultimately, I have the final say on major decisions. While I value her input, I feel responsible for making sure everything runs smoothly, especially when it comes to big expenses or investments.

This jointly way to decisions making was as also highlighted in the women only FGD, with one woman noting:

I inquire about our farm products, and he responds, emphasizing the necessity for both of us to be involved because a woman cannot manage

alone without a man's assistance. He believes that while I handle certain aspects, the bigger financial decisions, like investments or major purchases, need his input to make sure everything is done right.

In the mixed focus group discussion, a man described joint decision-making, saying:

I communicate with her, expressing my views on the sales, purchase, and transfer of farm assets. We often sit down together to discuss how things are going on the farm, and I make sure to include her thoughts in the conversation. It's important for me that she feels valued in these discussions, as her input helps guide our decisions.

The collaborative decision-making approach was evident in the accounts provided by women. One woman described consulting her husband about decisions concerning their farm products, emphasizing the need for joint effort and highlighting that mutual collaboration was essential for effective management. This illustrates the intertwined roles of men and women in managing agricultural activities.

4.4.4 Factors affecting the level of participation in agricultural cooperatives activities

Participants were requested to identify the factors that influenced their level of involvement in the activities of their agricultural cooperatives.

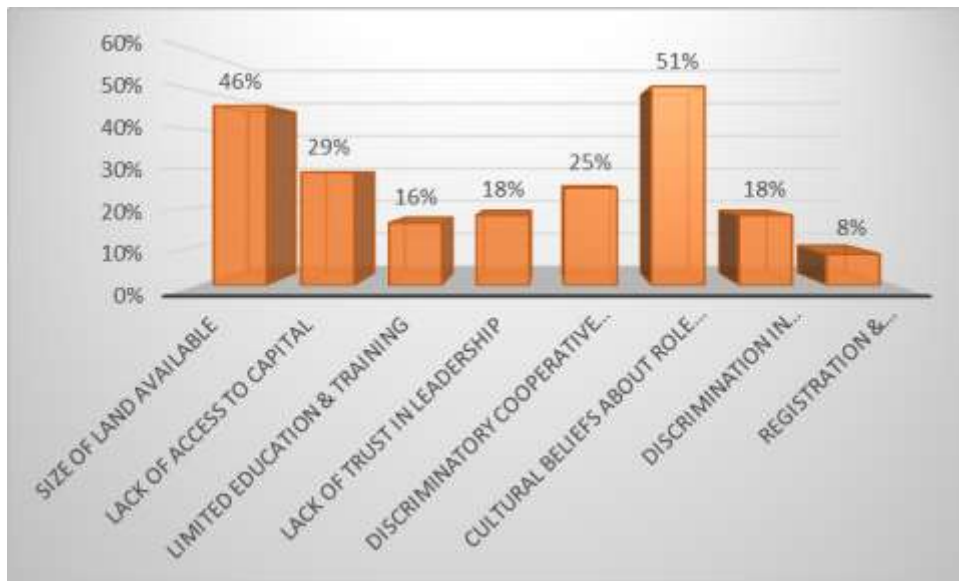


Figure 4. 11: Factors Affecting Participation in Agricultural Cooperative Activities

The analysis revealed that 51% of respondents identified cultural beliefs about the role of women as the most significant barrier to their involvement in agricultural cooperatives. This finding was corroborated by qualitative data obtained from key informant interviews. Participants indicated that cultural norms and traditional gender roles pose obstacles to women's full participation. They observed significant disparities in access to resources, education, and training between women and men. Furthermore, the division of labor often mirrors these traditional roles, restricting women's involvement and contributions within cooperatives. The qualitative responses also emphasized that women's underrepresentation in decision-making roles discourages their active engagement in cooperative activities. These insights demonstrate how entrenched cultural norms and structural inequalities persistently affect women's participation in agricultural cooperatives.

A KII based at Kajiado South stated that:

There are unfair differences in how resources, education, and training are accessed, and in how work is divided between women and men.

Women are not well-represented in cooperatives, which discourages them from taking part in many activities within these agricultural groups.

4.4.5 Extent of Relevance of Statements on Respondents' Participation in Cooperative Activities

Participants were requested to express their agreement or disagreement with statements concerning their participation in cooperatives. The responses were arranged on a Likert scale of 5 items that is: 1 – Strongly Disagree, 2 – Disagree, 3 – Neutral, 4 – Agree, 5 – Strongly Agree, as shown on Table 4.3 below;

Table 4. 3: Relevance of Statements on Respondents' Participation in Cooperative Activities

Statements	1	2	3	4	5
I rarely have enough time to participate in cooperative activities	9%	15%	16%	38%	22%
I spend most of my time taking care of children and other domestic duties	12%	16%	7%	37%	28%
I am actively engaged in decision making concerning sales, purchases and production at the farm	28%	22%	15%	17%	18%
I have the right education and training to make informed decisions concerning production	29%	41%	6%	14%	10%
Time limits my availability to attend meetings, trainings and other cooperative activities	10%	14%	9%	30%	37%
My level of education make me shy of to participate in discussions, elections and decision making in agricultural cooperatives	5%	10%	8%	39%	38%
Our cultural believes and norms affects my access and control to factors of production such as land and my participation in discussion elections and decision making where men are majority	9%	9%	6%	37%	39%

The results showed that 39% of respondents strongly agreed that cultural beliefs and norms affect their access to and control over key production factors, such as land, and their involvement in discussions, elections, and decision-making processes where men predominately hold power.

This quantitative finding was further supported by qualitative insights from women-only focus group discussions (FGDs) which reported:

We encounter more challenges than men when it comes to accessing capital and commodity markets, thus, the cooperatives' management prefer involving men in discussion of elections and key decision-making

processes concerning the cooperatives because they are more informed than us.

Participants expressed that they face greater challenges compared to men in accessing capital and commodity markets. Additionally, it was noted that cooperative management often favors involving men in discussions about elections and critical decision-making processes, as men are perceived to be better informed. In contrast to this response, a man from the men only FGD reported:

Women can never be good decision makers, and their main duty is take care of the family property including children, and cooking for the family as the man should have his own time to run his errands away from home. Therefore, men always available to participate in the activities of the cooperative unlike women who are tired at home by household chores. Again, in our clan women are not allowed to make any decisions for me, they should only listen to their men always. Therefore, I can never support women trusted to make leadership decisions in the cooperatives.

The findings revealed that women face multiple, interrelated barriers to participating in cooperatives, including time constraints, domestic responsibilities, educational gaps, and cultural norms.

4.5 Effectiveness of interventions to enhance women participation in agricultural cooperatives in Kajiado County

The third objective of study sought to assess the effectiveness of interventions to enhance women participation in agricultural cooperatives in Kajiado County. The results in this section are presented in to 4 sub-themes; the extent of respondents' agreement/disagreement with the provided statements concerning their cooperative activities, extent to which they believed the provided policies/programmes can be effective in enhancing women participation in agricultural cooperatives, measures that have been taken to eliminate barriers to women participation in agricultural cooperatives and lastly, intervention/measures should be undertaken at household/community level to enhance degree of women participation in agricultural cooperatives.

4.6.1 The extent of respondents' agreement/disagreement with the provided statements concerning their cooperative activities

Respondents were asked to express their level of agreement or disagreement with several statements related to their involvement in cooperative activities using a Likert scale consisting of 5 items: 1 = Strongly Disagree; 2 = Disagree; 3 = Neutral; 4 = Agree; and 5 = Strongly Agree.

Table 4. 4:Indicators of cooperative activities

Statements	1	2	3	4	5
The cooperative provides extension services to all members	15%	12%	27%	29%	17%
Cooperative offers training sessions to farmers	6%	4%	4%	39%	47%
The cooperative has empowered women through seminars, training activities and special support	2%	1%	1%	45%	51%
Women are given equal preference when it comes to accessing cooperative services	30%	24%	8%	15%	23%
Specific positions at cooperative management hierarchy are meant for women	33%	26%	7%	14%	20%
My cooperative has been instrumental in my access to credit	12%	10%	3%	40%	35%

The most notable finding is that 51% (145) of participants strongly agreed that their cooperatives have empowered women through seminars, training activities, and special support. This finding indicates that most respondents recognized and values the cooperatives' efforts to enhance women's roles and capabilities, suggesting that these organizations are actively engaged in practices to increase women's involvement and provide necessary resources for their empowerment and effective participation.

The qualitative analysis uncovered several significant responses from interviews that underscore the effect of cooperatives on women's empowerment. One interviewee, the CEO of Ololaiser Dairy Cooperative, provided valuable insights into their initiatives aimed at enhancing women's participation. Initially, the cooperative had about 30 women members compared to over 100 men. The CEO implemented programs designed to recruit more women, resulting in a significant increase in

female members, including their representation in senior management committees. This response reflects a wider trend in which cooperatives are actively striving to boost women's economic and social empowerment, enhance their participation in the labor force, and contribute to the advancement of the formal economy.

4.6.2 Opinion on effective policies/programmes in enhancing women participation in agricultural cooperatives

Respondents were asked to assess the degree to which they believed the policies and programs listed in Table 4.6 were effective in promoting women's participation in their respective agricultural cooperatives. Their responses were arranged on a Likert scale consisting of 5 items: 1 = Strongly Disagree; 2 = Disagree; 3 = Neutral; 4 = Agree; and 5 = Strongly Agree.

Table 4. 5: Opinion on Effective Policies/Programs for Enhancing Women's Participation in Agricultural Cooperatives

Statements	1	2	3	4	5
Review of registration and contribution requirements to accommodate more members	4%	5%	23%	37%	31%
Creation of special incentive programs targeted at women members	2%	4%	8%	35%	51%
Promoting women led innovation products within the cooperative	4%	3%	8%	40%	45%
Prioritize equitable representation in leadership and membership	2%	1%	15%	22%	60%
Introduction of 1/3 gender rule for leadership positions for management team and committees where applicable	1%	2%	1%	30%	65%
Review of cooperative by-laws to accommodate affirmative action	2%	2%	1%	48%	47%
The bylaws allow ensure equal participation of women and men in elections	2%	1%	1%	57%	39%

The most notable finding is that 65% (185) of participants strongly agreed that the introduction of the 1/3 gender rule for leadership positions in management teams and committees enhanced women's participation in agricultural cooperatives, indicating widespread recognition of this policy's positive effect on gender equity within these cooperatives.

The qualitative analysis of responses from the IDI based at Kajiado Central, revealed that although women perform about 60% of the agricultural work and contribute 40% of the food production, their contributions are not fully acknowledged. The officer emphasized the need for comprehensive policies, programs, and investments to deal with challenges experienced by both men and women, including unequal access to resources, outdated social norms, and institutional rules that do not promote gender equality. Addressing these issues requires coordinated action at all levels, from local communities to national policies.

4.6.3 Measures taken to eliminate barriers to women participation in agricultural cooperatives

The respondents were asked to mention what measures had been taken to eliminate barriers to women participation in agricultural cooperatives.

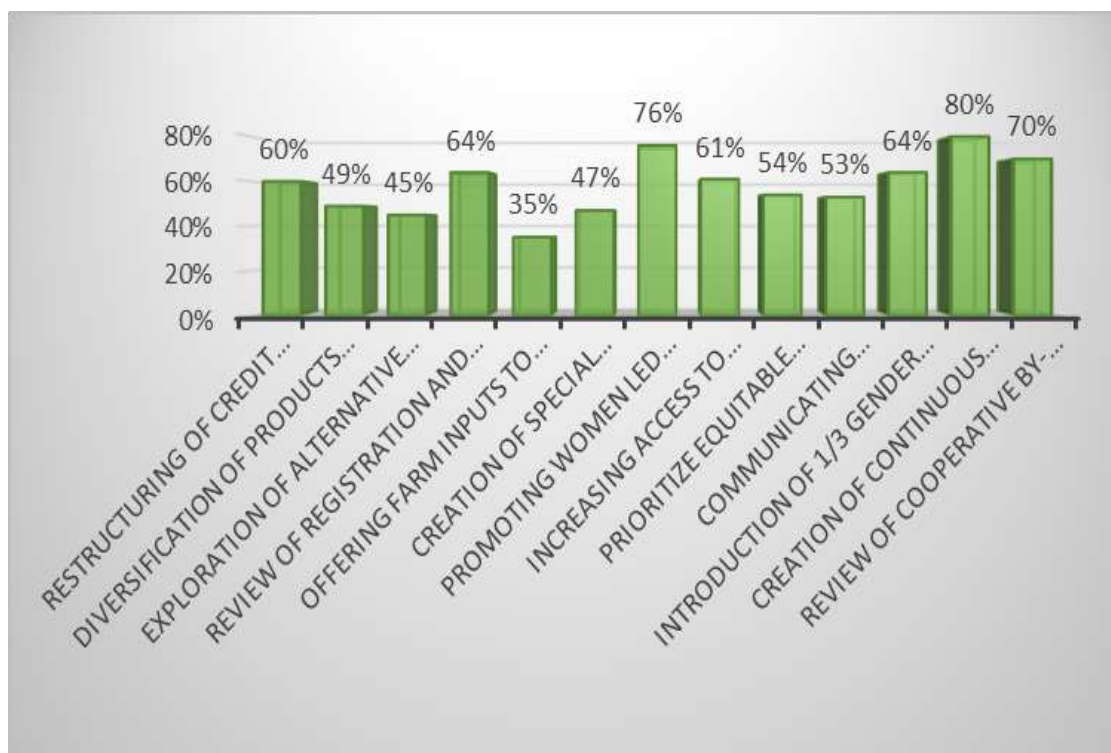


Figure 4. 12: Measures to Eliminate Barriers to Women's Participation

The most notable finding is that 80% of the respondents indicated that creating continuous awareness about joining and the benefits of membership is a key strategy for enhancing participation in agricultural cooperatives. This suggests that ongoing education and communication about the advantages of cooperative membership are crucial in motivating and increasing the involvement of potential and current members.

Further, the findings revealed that a substantial number of respondents, including cooperative officers, CEOs, and women members themselves, identified the provision of training and capacity-building opportunities as a key measure to eliminate barriers to women's participation in agricultural cooperatives. Cooperative officers and CEOs noted that these programs have significantly improved women's skills and engagement in cooperative activities, while women members reported that the training has empowered them and facilitated their active involvement in cooperative operations. This broad recognition underscores the effectiveness of such

initiatives in overcoming obstacles and enhancing women's roles within the cooperatives.

4.6.4 Intervention/measures undertaken at household/community level to enhance women participation in agricultural cooperatives.

The respondents were queried about their views or responses regarding the possible interventions/measures that should be undertaken at household/community level to enhance degree of women participation in agricultural cooperatives.

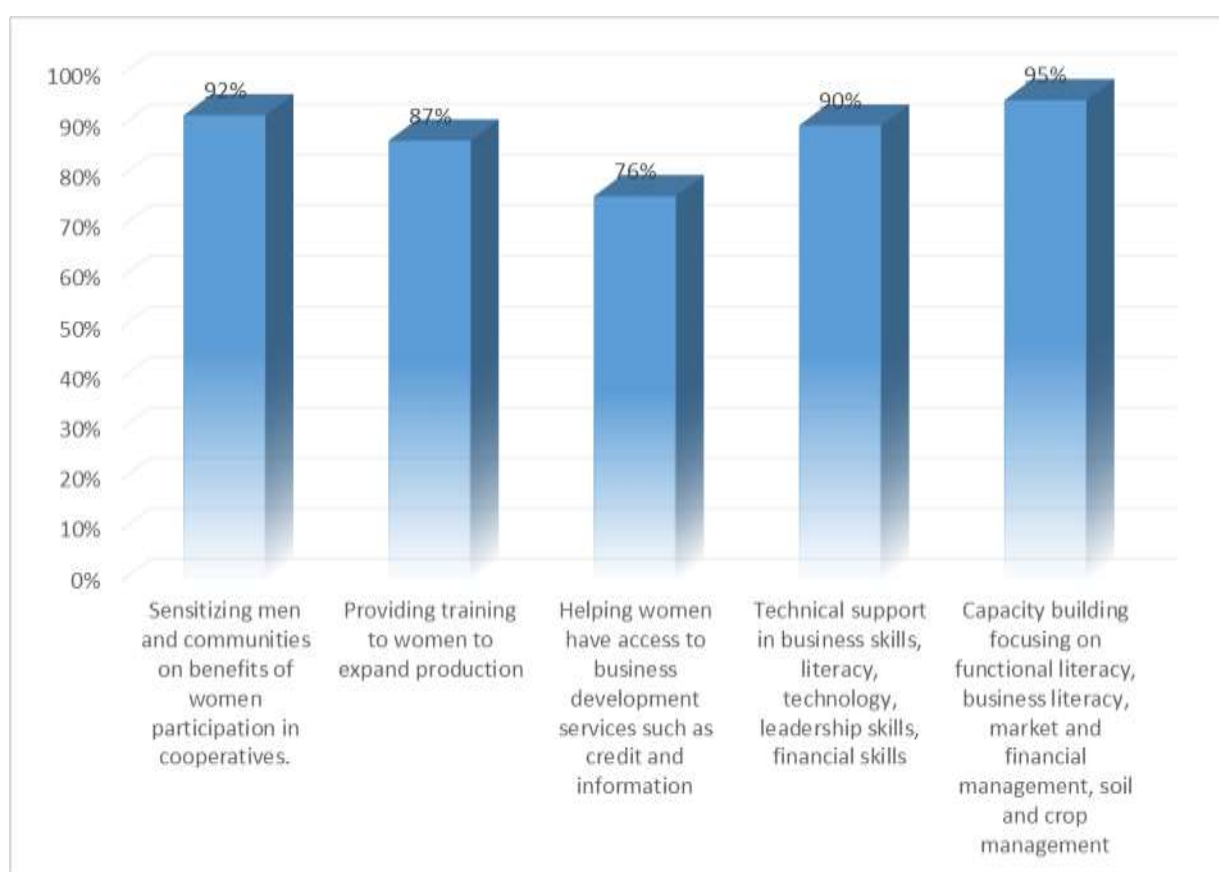


Figure 4. 13: Possible interventions/measures

The most striking finding is that 95% of the respondents emphasized the importance of capacity building focusing on functional literacy, business literacy, market and financial management, as crucial for enhancing women's participation

in cooperatives. This is a clear indication that all respondents greatly supported all the possible interventions/measures that should be undertaken at household/community level to enhance degree of women participation in agricultural cooperatives.

These findings were reinforced by insights from the qualitative analysis, indicating a need for effective strategies to enhance women's engagement in cooperatives across various levels.

For instance, a KII respondent who was a gender officer based at Kajiado North noted:

In my extensive experience in this region, I have witnessed firsthand the significant obstacles that women face, including gender-based violence, limited access to education, training, land ownership, financial resources, technology, and markets. It is imperative to confront these challenges directly to empower women in agriculture fully. Implementing focused interventions that improve access to resources and advance gender equality can unleash the complete potential of women, thereby advancing sustainable development goals and promoting broader economic growth within our community.

The findings indicate a clear need for effective strategies to boost women's participation in agricultural cooperatives. As evidently realized in the results from the KIIs reported that many women face significant barriers due to traditional beliefs and insufficient support. Addressing these issues requires implementing targeted educational programs and providing access to financial resources and technology. By

focusing on these areas, cooperatives can enhance women's involvement and productivity.

Another response from the IDIs emphasized the importance of overcoming institutional biases and inadequate representation in decision-making. To tackle these challenges, introducing mentorship and leadership training programs can empower women and ensure their contributions are more fully recognized and valued. These steps are essential for creating a more inclusive environment within cooperatives and improving overall engagement.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter summarizes the findings, draws conclusions, and provides recommendations based on the study on women's participation and the effectiveness of interventions in addressing gender disparities within agricultural cooperatives in Kajiado County.

5.2 Discussion of findings

Under this section, the discussion of findings in line with the study objectives is outlined and it starts with the demographic data analysis which illustrated the interplay of age, marital status, education, income, and gender roles in shaping engagement levels within agricultural cooperatives. Notably, the age analysis revealed that 60% of younger participants (under 35 years) were involved in horticultural cooperatives, indicating that this sector's growth attracted younger women, while dairy cooperatives featured a more established workforce, with 50% of participants aged 35-50. Previous studies, such as those by Huyer (2016), supported the idea that younger individuals were generally more adaptable to new agricultural practices. Regarding marital status, 34% of dairy cooperative participants were married, underscoring the importance of familial support on cooperative engagement; research by Njuguna et al. (2020) suggested that married women often negotiated their participation based on household responsibilities, indicating that cooperative policies should have considered these dynamics to enhance engagement. Educationally, most respondents had only completed primary or secondary education, with a mere 3% attaining university-level qualifications, which hindered women's empowerment and their ability to leverage cooperative

benefits, aligning with Doss's (2018) findings on the link between educational attainment and women's involvement in cooperative activities.

Furthermore, with 56% of principal income earners being men, there was a clear male dominance in financial decision-making. This dynamic can be examined through social capital theory, which highlights the pivotal role of social networks and relationships in fostering collective action and achieving shared objectives (Hauberer, 2011). In Sub-Saharan Africa, where women are central to agricultural activities (Meador & O'Brien, 2019), this theory provides a valuable lens for understanding how social connections empower women within agricultural cooperatives. The emphasis on familial ties and supportive networks offers insights into how these dynamics influenced women's engagement in cooperatives. Lastly, the majority of households earned between Ksh. 25,001 and Ksh. 50,000, highlighting economic constraints that limited participation in cooperative programs, as supported by studies from Mutua and Tschirley (2019), which emphasized that economic stability was vital for enhancing engagement in agricultural cooperatives.

The first objective sought to assess the level of women's participation in agricultural cooperatives in Kajiado County. The findings indicated that economic constraints significantly hindered women's engagement, with approximately 75% of respondents citing limited access to credit facilities. This concurs with the findings of Handa et al. (2017), who emphasize that financial resources are critical for empowering women in agricultural settings. Analyses from FGDs, KIIs and IDIs highlighted that women often lack collateral, making it challenging to secure loans, which in turn fosters frustration and disengagement from cooperative activities.

Participants expressed a strong desire for financial literacy programs to help navigate these obstacles effectively. However, contrasting evidence from Karanja (2016) suggests that socio-cultural factors, such as traditional gender roles, may overshadow economic constraints in limiting participation. Karanja's work highlights that societal expectations can heavily influence women's engagement, indicating a need for a nuanced understanding of the barriers faced.

Socio-cultural barriers emerged as another significant issue, with about 65% of participants reporting discrimination in decision-making processes. This finding resonates with Oduor et al. (2019), who documented how societal norms restrict women's agency in agricultural settings. Results from FGDs, KIIs and IDIs revealed that many female cooperative leaders feel sidelined by patriarchal structures. This emphasizes the deep-rooted cultural barriers that persist. Conversely, Mwangi (2020) presents a contrasting view, suggesting that some communities are beginning to shift towards greater inclusivity for women in decision-making roles. This perspective challenges the notion that socio-cultural barriers are uniformly restrictive across different contexts.

Institutional barriers were also prominent, with 70% of respondents noting that cooperative by-laws do not support gender equality. This finding is consistent with Njuki and Sanginga (2013), who argue for the necessity of gender-sensitive policies to enhance women's participation in cooperatives. Insights from FGDs, KIIs and IDIs indicated that while there are attempts to revise by-laws, implementation often remains inconsistent due to entrenched gender biases. One cooperative manager noted. In contrast, Kibet (2018) argues that the absence of enforcement mechanisms undermines the effectiveness of gender-sensitive policies, highlighting an area that requires deeper exploration. Further, as revealed by the study findings, the

compounded barriers faced by women reflect Intersectionality Theory, highlighting how overlapping discriminations shape their engagement in cooperatives (Hancock, 2019)

The second objective sought to evaluate gender-related barriers to women's participation in agricultural cooperatives in Kajiado County. The study found that 80% of respondents reported increased household income since joining a cooperative, a finding echoed by Doss (2018), who asserts that collective marketing enhances income generation for women. Analyses from FGDs, KIIs and IDIs indicated that women successfully leveraged cooperative membership to negotiate better prices for their produce, which significantly boosted their financial status. However, Kimani (2019) presents contrasting findings, revealing that income improvements can vary widely across demographic groups, suggesting that not all women benefit equally from participation. This points to the need for more nuanced analysis when assessing the economic impacts of cooperative involvement.

Access to resources was another crucial aspect of empowerment, with 78% of women feeling more capable of accessing agricultural resources after joining a cooperative. This finding supports Makhura (2018), who highlights that access to resources is vital for improving women's productivity and economic status. Similar findings from FGDs, KIIs and IDIs showed that women reported increased access to training and information on modern farming techniques, demonstrating the positive impact of these resources. Yet, Wanyama (2020) notes that many women still struggle to access essential resources due to entrenched societal biases and inadequate infrastructure, suggesting that barriers persist despite cooperative membership.

The influence of women on decision-making within households and cooperatives also surfaced prominently, with 65% of women reporting increased agency in financial decisions. This is in line with Kabeer (2016), who links economic empowerment to women's ability to influence decisions. Also, FGDs, KIIs and IDIs revealed that many women felt more confident in advocating for their interests within family discussions. However, Njuguna (2021) critiques that, while women may perceive an increase in agency, actual decision-making power often remains dominated by male counterparts. This gap between perceived and actual empowerment suggests a more complex reality than our findings might imply.

The third objective sought to assess the effectiveness of interventions to enhance women participation in agricultural cooperatives in Kajiado County, revealing that 51% of respondents strongly agreed that introducing gender quotas for leadership positively impacted women's involvement. This finding aligns with Beaman et al. (2012), who found that quotas can effectively increase women's representation in decision-making roles. Analysis from the FGDs, KIIs and IDIs indicated that the implementation of quotas has encouraged more women to take on leadership positions, fostering a culture of empowerment. One leader stated underscoring the transformative potential of such policies. However, Waweru (2019) raises concerns that quotas can lead to tokenism, where women are placed in roles without real power, undermining the intended benefits. This critique suggests that while quotas are a step forward, they must be supported by substantial measures to ensure genuine participation.

Participants also emphasized the importance of awareness-raising initiatives regarding the benefits of cooperative membership, with over 80% identifying this as

crucial for motivating involvement. This aligns with FAO (2020), which advocates for comprehensive awareness programs to empower women in agriculture. Results from FGDs, KIIs and IDIs indicated that many women joined cooperatives after attending workshops that highlighted potential benefits, affirming the effectiveness of these outreach efforts. Nonetheless, Otieno (2021) argues that awareness alone is insufficient without addressing underlying socio-economic barriers, suggesting that a multi-faceted approach is essential for effective interventions.

5.3 Conclusions

The conclusions of this study were formulated in accordance with the research objectives as follows:

Firstly, the study concluded that while there has been a notable increase in women's participation in agricultural cooperatives in Kajiado County, economic constraints and socio-cultural barriers continue to hinder their full engagement. The findings highlighted that access to financial resources and decision-making roles remains limited, suggesting the need for targeted interventions to empower women further within these cooperatives.

Secondly, the study concluded that various gender-related barriers affected women's participation in agricultural cooperatives in Kajiado County, including time constraints due to domestic responsibilities, educational gaps, and restrictive cultural norms. These interrelated factors, along with discrimination in decision-making processes and inadequate access to resources, hinder women's engagement and confidence within cooperatives. The findings reflect deeper societal norms and institutional biases that require comprehensive strategies to ensure equal opportunities for women.

Thirdly, the findings demonstrated that interventions such as gender quotas and awareness-raising initiatives have had a positive impact on increasing women's involvement in leadership roles within cooperatives. However, the study concluded that these measures must be complemented by sustained efforts to eliminate underlying socio-economic barriers. A multi-faceted approach is essential to create a truly supportive framework for women's empowerment and active participation in agricultural cooperatives in Kajiado County.

5.4 Recommendations

Based on the research objectives, the study provides the following recommendations: First, there is a need to conduct public awareness campaigns and sensitization programs aimed at encouraging greater involvement of women in cooperative activities. These initiatives should emphasize the importance of women's participation in leadership roles, decision-making, production, and the sale and purchase of agricultural products. By doing so, the campaigns will help promote women's leadership at household, community, and national levels, fostering gender equality and inclusion.

Second, cooperatives should implement gender-supportive by-laws and provide continuous gender-transformative training programs for their members. These measures are essential for addressing the cultural and institutional barriers that hinder women's participation in leadership and decision-making processes. By creating an inclusive environment and equipping both men and women with the necessary knowledge and skills, such interventions will help ensure more equitable governance and improved socio-economic outcomes for cooperative members.

Lastly, it is crucial to design and implement practical, context-specific programs to bridge the gender gap in agricultural cooperatives, particularly within Kajiado County. These programs should address the unique challenges faced by women, such as limited access to credit, time constraints, and cultural stereotyping of roles. Tailored interventions, such as leadership training and financial support mechanisms, will help eliminate these barriers and ensure sustainable and impactful changes in women's participation in agricultural cooperatives.

5.5 Suggestion for Further Research

The current study examined the effects of barriers to women participation and effectiveness of intervention on gender disparities in agricultural cooperatives in Kajiado County. Therefore, the researcher suggests a similar study should be conducted to determine whether similar results can be replicated in other agricultural cooperatives across the country and other corporate institutions.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: Letter of Transmittal

Jocinter Atieno Omondi
Cooperative University of Kenya

Dear respondent,

RE: DATA COLLECTION

My name is Jocinter Atieno, a post-graduate student Cooperative University of Kenya pursuing a Degree of Masters of Cooperative Management. In partial fulfillment of the requirements for award of a Degree of Masters of Cooperative Management, the University expects every student to engage in research of relevant socio-economic problems affecting a given population within a specific community, administrative region or the county at large.

For the above purposes, my topic of study is *Barriers to Women's Participation and Effectiveness of Interventions to Reduce Gender Disparity in Agricultural Cooperatives in Kajiado County, Kenya*. You are invited to take part in this study by filling out the questionnaire provided. All information collected will be used strictly for academic purposes. Your responses will be handled confidentially and with the utmost care by the researcher.

Thank you in advance.

Yours Faithfully,

Jocinter Atieno Omondi.

APPENDIX II: Household Survey Questionnaire

HOUSEHOLD QUESTIONNAIRE FOR WOMEN AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVE MEMBERS

PRELIMINARY INFORMATION

Date of Interview: _____ Start time: _____ End time: _____

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION

Researcher's Information: This study is being carried out by Jocinter Atieno as a requirement for completing a Master's degree at the Cooperative University of Kenya.

Purpose of this Study: The aim of this research is to investigate gender related barriers to women participation and effectiveness of interventions to enhance women participation in agricultural cooperatives in Kajiado County, Kenya. I will inquire about your experiences and the difficulties you face in engaging with cooperative activities. The interview is anticipated to take no longer than 45 minutes.

Potential Harms, Risks, or Discomforts to Participants: I do not expect any risks to arise from your participation in this study. Nonetheless, engaging in this research will require some of your time, roughly 45 minutes. Should you feel uneasy during the interview, we will halt the session, and you will be provided with a connection to a community leader for assistance.

Benefits of Participating in the Study: While there are no direct personal advantages to participating, the expected findings may lead to recommendations that promote greater involvement of women in agricultural cooperatives, potentially benefiting the wider community.

Confidentiality: All personal identifying details (such as names or addresses) will be kept confidential and will not be disclosed to anyone outside this research. Prior to sharing any data with other researchers or making it public, any identifying information will be either removed or modified. Your identity will not be revealed in any publications or results arising from this study, ensuring your privacy throughout the research process.

RESPONDENT'S SURVEY INFORMED CONSENT FORM

I acknowledge that I have thoroughly reviewed and comprehend the purpose and details of this study.

- I have carefully read and understood the information sheet and consent form provided.
- I have had the opportunity to ask questions about my participation, and I realize that my involvement in the study is completely voluntary.
- I am aware that I have the right to withdraw from the study at any point without having to explain my reasons.
- I understand that all information I provide will remain confidential, except in situations where confidentiality may need to be compromised for safety reasons.
- I am aware of the procedure for raising any concerns or issues during the study.
- I willingly agree to participate in this study.

I understand that this research has been authorized by the Cooperative University, and the researcher possesses a study permit from the National Commission for Science, Technology & Innovation (NACOSTI).

Name: _____ Signed: _____ Date: _____

Study Participant

Name: _____ Signed: _____ Date: _____

Researcher

SECTION 1: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION OF RESPONDENTS

1. What is your gender identity?

Male []

Female []

Other []

2. What is your age in years

Below 35 []

35 - 50 []

51 – 65 []

Above 65 []

3. What is your marital status?

Single []

Married []

Separated/Divorced []

If Other Specify []

4. What is the highest level of education you have attained?

No formal education []

Primary []

Secondary []

College []

University []

Review of registration and contribution requirements to accommodate more members	
Offering farm inputs to farmers on credit for enhanced production	
Creation of special incentive programs targeted at women members	
Promoting women led innovation products within the cooperative	
Increasing access to cooperative resources to all members such as farm machinery such as tractors	
Prioritize equitable representation in leadership and membership	
Communicating agricultural cooperative targets and sharing progress	
Introduction of 1/3 gender rule for leadership positions for management team and committees where applicable	
Creation of continuous awareness on how to join and benefits accruable to members	
Review of cooperative by-laws to accommodate affirmative action	

What in intervention/measures should be undertaken at household/community level to enhance degree of women participation in agricultural cooperatives?

Sensitizing men and communities on benefits of women participation in cooperatives	
Providing training to women to expand production	
Helping women have access to business development services such as credit and information	
Technical support in business skills, literacy, technology, leadership skills, financial skills	
Capacity building focusing on functional literacy, business literacy, market and financial management, soil and crop management	

14. To what extent do you believe the following policies/programmes can be effective in enhancing women participation in agricultural cooperatives?

1 – Strongly Disagree, 2 – Disagree, 3 – Neutral, 4 – Agree, 5 – Strongly Agree

	1	2	3	4	5
Review of registration and contribution requirements to accommodate more members					
Creation of special incentive programs targeted at women members					
Promoting women led innovation products within the cooperative					
Prioritize equitable representation in leadership and membership					
Introduction of 1/3 gender rule for leadership positions for management team and committees where applicable					
Review of cooperative by-laws to accommodate affirmative action					
The bylaws allow ensure equal participation of women and men in elections					

15. What are some of the measures that have been taken to eliminate barriers to women participation in agricultural cooperatives?

Restructuring of credit terms (including on farm inputs) repayment periods	
Diversification of products & services offered to members	
Exploration of alternative markets for greater value to cooperative members	

I have the right education and training to make informed decisions concerning production					
Time limits my availability to attend meetings, trainings and other cooperative activities					
My level of education make me shy of to participate in discussions, elections and decision making in agricultural cooperatives					
Our cultural believes and norms affects my access and control to factors of production such as land and my participation in discussion elections and decision making where men are majority					

SECTION 4: INTERVENTIONS TO IMPROVE PARTICIPATIVE IN AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVES

13. In a scale of 1 to 5 with to what extent to you agree with the following statements concerning your cooperative activities. 1 – Strongly Disagree, 2 – Disagree, 3 – Neutral, 4 – Agree, 5 – Strongly Agree

	1	2	3	4	5
The cooperatives provides extension services to all members					
Cooperative offers training sessions to farmers					
The cooperative has empowered women through seminars, training activities and special support					
Women are given equal preference when it comes to accessing cooperative services					
Specific positions at cooperative management hierarchy are meant for women					
My cooperative has been instrumental in my access to credit					

10. Which of the following factors affect the level of your participation in activities of your agricultural cooperatives? *(Select all that apply)*

Size of land available	[]
Lack of Access to Capital	[]
Limited Education & Training	[]
Lack of Trust in Leadership	[]
Domestic Workload Burden	[]
Lack of Control of Productive Resources	[]
Limited Decision Making Power	[]
Discriminatory Cooperative Policies	[]
Cultural Beliefs about Role of Women	[]
Discrimination in cooperatives	[]
Registration & Contribution Requirements	[]
If Other Specify	

11. To what extent do you think the following statements apply to you concerning participating in cooperatives activities? 1 – Strongly Disagree, 2 – Disagree, 3 – Neutral, 4 – Agree, 5 – Strongly Agree

	1	2	3	4	5
I rarely have enough time to participate in cooperative activities					
I spend most of my time taking care of children and other domestic duties					
I am actively engaged in decision making concerning sales, purchases and production at the farm					

SECTION 3: GENDER-RELATED BARRIERS TO WOMEN PARTICIPATION IN AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVES

5. How do you participate in decision-making in your household?

Myself []

Spouse []

Jointly with Spouse []

If Other Specify

6. How much control do you have over income that you generate from agricultural production?

Full Control []

Partial Control []

Zero Control []

7. Who makes major decisions on sales, purchase and transfer of farm assets such as livestock and farm equipment?

Husband []

Myself []

Jointly with Husband []

If other (specify).....

- 18. To what extent are you involved in agricultural cooperatives activities including attending of annual meetings (Please pick the most appropriate option)**

Frequently Participating []

Occasionally Participating []

Seldom participating []

Never Participating []

Production decision making []

- 19. What is the proportion of women members in the cooperative?**

Less than 20% []

20 – 30% []

30 – 50% []

Greater than 50% []

- 20. In a scale of 1 to 5 with to what extent to you agree with the following statements concerning your cooperative activities. 1 – Strongly Disagree, 2 – Disagree,**

3 – Neutral, 4 – Agree, 5 – Strongly Agree

	1	2	3	4	5
Women are actively involved in management of cooperatives operations					
Women are adequately represented at the decision-making table (board of management, top management team and committees)					
Women are involved in decision making in cooperative activities					
Women participation in annual general meetings, and special meetings is comparable to that of men					

Who is the principal income earner (breadwinner) for your household?

Myself []

Spouse []

Jointly (Husband & Wife) []

Other (Specify).....

9. What is the monthly total household income in Ksh. (Approx.)?

Less than 25,000 []

25,001 – 50,000 []

50,001 – 75,000 []

75,001 – 100,000 []

More than 100,000 []

SECTION 2: LEVEL OF WOMEN PARTICIPATION IN AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVES

17. Please indicate number of years you have been registered as a member to agricultural cooperative

3Years and less []

4 – 6 []

7 – 9 []

10 and more []

APPENDIX III: Focus Group Discussions

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION

Researcher's Information: This study is being carried out by Jocinter Atieno as a requirement for completing a Master's degree at the Cooperative University of Kenya.

Purpose of this Study: The aim of this research is to investigate gender related barriers to women participation and effectiveness of interventions to enhance women participation in agricultural cooperatives in Kajiado County, Kenya. I will inquire about your experiences and the difficulties you face in engaging with cooperative activities. The interview is anticipated to take no longer than 45 minutes.

Potential Harms, Risks, or Discomforts to Participants: I do not expect any risks to arise from your participation in this study. Nonetheless, engaging in this research will require some of your time, roughly 45 minutes. Should you feel uneasy during the interview, we will halt the session, and you will be provided with a connection to a community leader for assistance.

Benefits of Participating in the Study: While there are no direct personal advantages to participating, the expected findings may lead to recommendations that promote greater involvement of women in agricultural cooperatives, potentially benefiting the wider community.

Confidentiality: All personal identifying details (such as names or addresses) will be kept confidential and will not be disclosed to anyone outside this research. Prior to sharing any data with other researchers or making it public, any identifying information will be either removed or modified. Your identity will not be revealed in any publications or results arising from this study, ensuring your privacy throughout the research process.

RESPONDENT'S SURVEY INFORMED CONSENT FORM

I acknowledge that I have thoroughly reviewed and comprehend the purpose and details of this study.

- I have carefully read and understood the information sheet and consent form provided.
- I have had the opportunity to ask questions about my participation, and I realize that my involvement in the study is completely voluntary.
- I am aware that I have the right to withdraw from the study at any point without having to explain my reasons.
- I understand that all information I provide will remain confidential, except in situations where confidentiality may need to be compromised for safety reasons.
- I am aware of the procedure for raising any concerns or issues during the study.
- I willingly agree to participate in this study.

I understand that this research has been authorized by the Cooperative University, and the researcher possesses a study permit from the National Commission for Science, Technology & Innovation (NACOSTI).

Name: _____ Signed: _____ Date: _____

Study Participant

Name: _____ Signed: _____ Date: _____

Researcher

INTRODUCTORY SECTION	
Location	Date:
Number of participants	Facilitator:
Contact Information email/phone	Cooperative Address/Location
FDG group	Men only Women only Mixed Gender group

Focus Group Discussion (FGD) Objective: The goal of the FGD is to gain understanding on gender related barriers to women participation and effectiveness of interventions to enhance women participation in the agricultural cooperatives.
Participants: The focus group discussions (FGD) will consist of three groups: one exclusively for women, another for men, and a mixed-gender group. Each group will include participants with similar backgrounds, allowing them to share their experiences from a common household or individual perspective. It is important to ensure that the discussions remain balanced, with no participant dominating the conversation. Time Management: The focus group discussion (FGD) will be scheduled for 60 to 90 minutes. While it is essential to gather input from a range of participants, not every question must be addressed by each individual. If a full 90 minutes isn't feasible, the time allocated for each section can be adjusted accordingly. Some groups may engage more readily in conversation, while others might require some prompting to share their thoughts. FGD Format: This format incorporates facilitated discussions to explore the research questions in depth. The study aims to comprehend the issues at hand, achieve consensus, and identify any outliers. Additionally, it allows for flexibility to address relevant topics that may not be included in the questions. The provided questions in each section are not set in stone; they act as prompts to steer the conversation. As a facilitator, be an active listener, maintain a welcoming attitude, avoid creating an intimidating atmosphere, and refrain from pressing too hard on sensitive topics.
How do cultural norms and practices in Kajiado County impact women's involvement in agricultural cooperatives? In what ways do women perceive the barriers they face in participating in agricultural cooperatives? How do men in the community view women's participation in agricultural cooperatives? What role do existing cooperative structures play in either facilitating or hindering women's participation? Are there any specific training programs or resources available for women to improve their skills in agricultural cooperatives? How does control and ownership of productive resources such as land and farm equipment affect women's participation in agricultural cooperatives in Kajiado County?

Are women allowed to own livestock and control how to utilize the proceeds generated from the sale of these animals or their products? Are there differences between men and women in accessing credit, including the amount received or the conditions under which credit is provided? To what extent do women have control over the income and resources they generate from cooperative activities? How do women engage in and influence decision-making processes within their households regarding agricultural activities? What are the key factors within agricultural cooperatives that affect the degree of women's participation? What measures can agricultural cooperatives implement to enhance the participation of women? How effective are current interventions aimed at promoting women's participation in agricultural cooperatives? What recommendations do you have for improving gender responsiveness in agricultural cooperatives in Kajiado County?
Closing Remarks Do you have any final questions or comments? I would like to express our sincere gratitude for your valuable contributions to this discussion.

APPENDIX IV: Key Informant Guide

KII GUIDE FOR INTERVIEW WITH COUNTY DIRECTORS OF COOPERATIVES

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION

Researcher's Information: This study is being carried out by Jocinter Atieno as a requirement for completing a Master's degree at the Cooperative University of Kenya.

Purpose of this Study: The aim of this research is to investigate gender related barriers to women participation and effectiveness of interventions to enhance women participation in agricultural cooperatives in Kajiado County, Kenya. I will inquire about your experiences and the difficulties you face in engaging with cooperative activities. The interview is anticipated to take no longer than 45 minutes.

Potential Harms, Risks, or Discomforts to Participants: I do not expect any risks to arise from your participation in this study. Nonetheless, engaging in this research will require some of your time, roughly 45 minutes. Should you feel uneasy during the interview, we will halt the session, and you will be provided with a connection to a community leader for assistance.

Benefits of Participating in the Study: While there are no direct personal advantages to participating, the expected findings may lead to recommendations that promote greater involvement of women in agricultural cooperatives, potentially benefiting the wider community.

Confidentiality: All personal identifying details (such as names or addresses) will be kept confidential and will not be disclosed to anyone outside this research. Prior to sharing any data with other researchers or making it public, any identifying information will be either removed or modified. Your identity will not be revealed in any publications or results arising from this study, ensuring your privacy throughout the research process.

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- I understand that all information I provide will remain confidential, except in situations where confidentiality may need to be compromised for safety reasons.
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- I willingly agree to participate in this study.

I understand that this research has been authorized by the Cooperative University, and the researcher possesses a study permit from the National Commission for Science, Technology & Innovation (NACOSTI).

Name: _____ Signed: _____ Date: _____
Study Participant

Name: _____ Signed: _____ Date: _____
Researcher

Broad Questions to guide the interview

1. Kindly share some of the key highlights concerning development of agricultural cooperatives and participation of women in these entities in within Kajiado County.
2. How does socio-cultural norms that assign women and men different duties within the household and at community level affected women membership and participation in agricultural cooperatives in this county?
3. How does decision-making at the household and community levels impact women's involvement in agricultural cooperatives in Kajiado County?
4. Which constraints do women experience in ownership access and control over land and other resources of agricultural production in this County?
5. What measures need to be undertaken by agricultural cooperatives in this County to increase participation of women in agricultural cooperatives?
6. What intervention need to be undertaken at household and community level in this County to eliminate barriers to women participation in different aspects of agricultural cooperatives.

APPENDIX V: In-Depth Interview

IDI GUIDE FOR AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVE CEO/CHAIRPERSONS OF COOPERATIVE BOARD AND COOPERATIVE SUPERVISORY COMMITTEES

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION

Researcher's Information: This study is being carried out by Jocinter Atieno as a requirement for completing a Master's degree at the Cooperative University of Kenya.

Purpose of this Study: The aim of this research is to investigate gender related barriers to women participation and effectiveness of interventions to enhance women participation in agricultural cooperatives in Kajiado County, Kenya. I will inquire about your experiences and the difficulties you face in engaging with cooperative activities. The interview is anticipated to take no longer than 45 minutes.

Potential Harms, Risks, or Discomforts to Participants: I do not expect any risks to arise from your participation in this study. Nonetheless, engaging in this research will require some of your time, roughly 45 minutes. Should you feel uneasy during the interview, we will halt the session, and you will be provided with a connection to a community leader for assistance.

Benefits of Participating in the Study: While there are no direct personal advantages to participating, the expected findings may lead to recommendations that promote greater involvement of women in agricultural cooperatives, potentially benefiting the wider community.

Confidentiality: All personal identifying details (such as names or addresses) will be kept confidential and will not be disclosed to anyone outside this research. Prior to sharing any data with other researchers or making it public, any identifying information will be either removed or modified. Your identity will not be revealed in any publications or results arising from this study, ensuring your privacy throughout the research process.

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- I have carefully read and understood the information sheet and consent form provided.
- I have had the opportunity to ask questions about my participation, and I realize that my involvement in the study is completely voluntary.
- I am aware that I have the right to withdraw from the study at any point without having to explain my reasons.
- I understand that all information I provide will remain confidential, except in situations where confidentiality may need to be compromised for safety reasons.
- I am aware of the procedure for raising any concerns or issues during the study.
- I willingly agree to participate in this study.

I understand that this research has been authorized by the Cooperative University, and the researcher possesses a study permit from the National Commission for Science, Technology & Innovation (NACOSTI).

Name: _____ Signed: _____ Date: _____

Study Participant

Name: _____ Signed: _____ Date: _____

Researcher

Broad Questions to guide the interview

1. Kindly share with me some key highlights concerning membership composition of your agricultural cooperative?
2. What factors within your cooperative do you think can affect the degree of participation of women in your cooperative?
3. What are gender-based factors that impact on women's participation in different aspects of agricultural cooperatives?
4. What intervention need to be undertaken at household and community level to eliminate barriers to women participation in different aspects of agricultural cooperatives?
5. What measures is your cooperative taking to enhance participation of women in different aspects and activities of your cooperative?

APPENDIX VI: Research Permit

 REPUBLIC OF KENYA	 NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION
Ref No: 344883	Date of Issue: 09/November/2023
RESEARCH LICENSE	
	
This is to Certify that Ms. JOCINTERATIENO OMONDI of The Cooperative University of Kenya, has been licensed to conduct research as per the provision of the Science, Technology and Innovation Act, 2013 (Rev.2014) in Kajiado on the topic: GENDER RELATED BARRIERS AND EFFECTIVENESS OF INTERVENTIONS TO ENHANCE WOMEN PARTICIPATION IN AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVES IN KAJIADO COUNTY, KENYA for the period ending : 09/November/2024.	
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