

**STRATEGIES FOR ADDRESSING BARRIERS TO WOMEN'S
PARTICIPATION IN AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVES IN THE POST-
COVID-19 RECOVERY PERIOD IN KIAMBU COUNTY**

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Partial Fulfillment for the Award of the Degree of Master of Community
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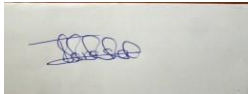
NOVEMBER, 2024

DECLARATION AND APPROVAL

This thesis is my original work and has not been presented for award of a degree in any other University or for any other award

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my father Thomas Bitange Ondieki, my mentor Dr. Joseph Akuma Misati, my sisters Mary Boyani and Norah Mong'ina. Thank you for your understanding, persistent encouragement to pursue this degree, moral and material support which has made me reach where I am today am indebted to my University supervisors, Prof. Waweru and Dr. Charles Wambu for giving me valuable ideas, suggestions and guiding me throughout.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AGRA	Alliance for Green Revolution in Africa
FGDs	Focused Group Discussions
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GoK	Government Of Kenya
ILO	International Labor Organization
KII	Key Informant Interviews
KIPPRA	Kenya Institute for Public Policy Research and Analysis.
NACOSTI	National Commission or Science Technology and Innovation
NEPAD	New Partners for Africa's Development
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
UNRISD	United Nations Research Institute for Social Development

OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

Agricultural Cooperatives	According to the definition of the International Labor Organization Recommendation on the Development of Cooperatives (No. 193), 2002, a cooperative is an association of people who work together willingly to realize their economic, social and cultural interests through cooperation. Owning and managing the organization Needs and desires. According to this study, agricultural cooperatives refer a group of farmers who pool their resources in specific working areas to promote good production through efficient use.
Post-Covid-19 Recovery	Is the phase of economic activity that follows the economic crisis and is characterized by continued economic development (Francescon,2021)
Women's Participation	Women's participation refers to the processes and results of women taking part in in politics and the business world through appropriate participation in bureaucracies and representation in decision-making institutions and organizations. (UN, 2023). According to this study it refers women involvement in cooperative activities such as membership, leadership, decision making and supply of agricultural produce
Institutional Culture	It is a set of values, ideas, understandings and standards shared by memberships of an association and taught to be corrected by new members (Daft and Bodla, 2010).

ABSTRACT

The study focused on strategies to address the barriers for women participation in cooperative societies. The study specifically focused on organizational policy, financial, informational and organizational culture strategies to address barriers to women participation. objectives were to analyze the strategies employed by agricultural cooperatives to address organizational policy barriers to women participation in the post-covid-19 recovery period in Kiambu County, to analyze the strategies employed by agricultural cooperatives to address financial barriers to women participation in the post-covid-19 recovery period in Kiambu County, to evaluate the strategies taken by agricultural cooperatives to address informational barriers to women participation in the post-covid-19 recovery period in Kiambu County and to evaluate the strategies employed by agricultural cooperatives to address institutional culture barriers to women participation in the post-covid-19 recovery period in Kiambu County. The research was anchored on people-centered development theory and social capital theory. The study employed mixed method research design. It targeted 45 registered agricultural cooperative societies in Kiambu County with 114,267 members. A two-stage sampling technique was employed in the study. In the first stage purposive sampling was used to select agricultural cooperative societies and in the second stage simple random sampling was used to select the membership from the cooperative societies selected in the first stage. A sample size of 398 female agricultural cooperative society members was selected for the study. Data was collected through focus group discussions, questionnaires and Key informant interviews. Questionnaires were administered by the researcher to a selection of cooperative members while KII was administered to board of management, supervisory committee members and FGDs was administered to cooperative CEO, Chair board of management and chair supervisory committee. A pilot study was conducted to improve the reliability of the data collection instrument. Cronbach alpha of 0.769 was obtained signifying that the instrument was reliable. Supervisors and departmental experts assisted in checking content validity of the instruments. Data was analyzed using descriptive statistics. Qualitative data was analyzed by thematic analysis The study found that organizational policies strategies had a positive correlation ($p=0.000$, $r=0.331$) therefore rejecting null hypothesis. Informational policies strategies had positive significant relationship ($p=0.000$, $r=0.226$) rejecting null hypothesis and organizational culture had a positive correlation ($p=0.000$, $r=0.309$). However, financial strategies had a negative insignificant relationship with women participation, ($p=0.305$, $r=-0.061$) leading to accepting null hypothesis. Study findings will be beneficial to Agricultural Co-operative societies, researchers and academicians, government and policy makers. The study's finding suggests that education levels, there is need for members to access audited accounts also to advertise in vernacular at the same time at social gathering. Women should be encouraged to participate in leadership roles and unfavorable institutional culture are key factors that limit the participation of women. The study recommended adequate training for women, provision of appropriate environment and prompt provision of information to members by use bulk short messages option and provision of adequate notice for meetings.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview

In this chapter a description of introduction is outlined. The main highlights are on background to the study, statement of the problem, research objective, research questions, and justification of the study, scope of the study, limitations of the study and assumptions of the study.

1.2 Background to the study

Agriculture plays a significant role in economic growth hence attracting the attention of growth economists for many years (McArthur and McCord, 2017). Agriculture is the main engine of economic growth (Aker, 2011) and is considered an important instrument for food security, especially in developing countries (Awokuse et al, 2015). Developing this work is one of the most powerful means to ending poverty, share prosperity, and feed a global population of more than 9.7 billion by 2050 (World Bank, 2020). McArthur and McCord (2017) state that the significance and roles of agriculture are reflected in its impact to long-standing development and reducing poverty. The World Bank report (2017) recommends special attention to women as they are effective agents of human capital. Quisumbing and Pandolfelli (2010), stated that female farmers face many gender-based obstacles in accessing the market. They cannot pay the high price of obtaining a license to sell their products, and the time limit prevents them from finding a better price and competing with male farmers for products grown well by women.

The role of women in development is to actively participate in project preparation, decision-making and implementation. Wildlife restoration programs, women's centers health projects, conflict resolution, education and water projects are some of the projects in which women are involved. Women work in self-help groups supported by the government, NGOs, donors and corporate agencies. According to a research report by the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD, 2016), other important factors affecting women's participation in development include the socio-cultural dictates of the community, low levels of education, family roles and responsibilities, limited capital resources and the ability of entrepreneurial skills. According to a study by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF, 2020), women make up half of the world's population, but hold one-third of productive jobs and earn one-tenth of global earnings, and only a very small proportion of them have access to work. Globally, women are more active in the agricultural sector than men (AGRA, 2018). The proportion of women employed in these fields exceeds 50% in Africa and Asia. Agricultural segment accounts for approximately one-third of global gross domestic product (GDP) (World Bank, 2020a;

World Economic Forum, 2020). It employs more than one billion people, equivalent to one in three workers (Food and Agriculture Organization, 2020). According to the World Bank (2020), 65% of working adults in poverty worked in this sector in 2016 (World Bank, 2020).

Global policy and legal frameworks for gender equality and women's empowerment, namely the Beijing Platform for Action and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), place great emphasis on the equal participation of women in decision-making (Hannan, 2019). Both frameworks show a clear emphasis on the need to increase women involvement in influencing policy-makers' programs, processes and outcomes in terms of gender equality. Many countries around the globe have adopted gender mainstreaming policies to achieve equality in terms of women engagement in development activities. Mainstreaming provides a pluralistic approach that values the diversity of both women and men (Booth, C and Bennett, 2012). Gender equality is the cornerstone of efforts to achieve gender equality and equal participation of women in all government organizations and institutions that equally carry out and benefit from development activities. Therefore, rural growth cannot be reflected without the active input of women.

In India, women participate actively in development projects such as Joint Forest Management (JFM) in All India Mountain Women's Committees and cottage industries (Mudini, 2012). Rural forests are under the jurisdiction of the Forest Protection Committee. Every month, six women form groups of six and go on a trip to the forest to determine the scale of the outbreak and the extent of the damage. They take proper measures, including reporting major deforestation incidents to property authorities. Agriculture is the main economic activity in Africa accounting for 30-40% of GDP (World Bank, 2020c). Nevertheless, according to New Africa Development Partners (NEPAD, 2013), the continent's agricultural production is not keeping pace with population growth. This sector employs 65–75% of the continent's workforce (FAO, 2020; World Bank, 2020c). According to the World Bank (2020b), around two-thirds of income in rural areas is generated from agricultural activities.

In Africa, women have a long tradition of being involved in production, savings, and marketing and mutual aid organizations. Many women in rural rely on cooperatives and organizations as a way of pooling resources, reducing workload, and optimizing limited income. Results from microcredit programs show that women repay loans more quickly and reliably and use their increased incomes primarily on children, which improves nutrition, health, and educational opportunities (Eva, 2010).

Women are professed as deficient of knowledge and self-esteem to take up leadership (Manfre and Rubin, 2012). They are regularly portrayed as ‘housewives’ who cannot speak for themselves in public, and are more likely to be represented in public by their spouses. In some situations, the mobility of married women may be limited (Manfre & Rubin 2012). In Mozambique, married women tend to have fewer opportunities to engage in activities outside the home and, in many cases, are unable to join groups without their husbands' permission (Gotschi et al., 2009). According to FAO (2010), partners can provide a variety of financial and social services to rural women. This includes ideas and products, as well as access to monetary services such as credit and insurance. By joining cooperatives, women increase their negotiating power and income while reducing transaction costs. Partners also play a significant role in creation of jobs by encouraging self-employment and creating additional opportunities for employment.

Women in rural areas devote a substantial proportion of their time on reproductive and domestic undertakings, resulting in more daily working hours than their male counterparts. Time use studies in many countries approximation shows women spend 85–90% of overall family time on caring for children, collecting water, firewood and food, cooking and care undertakings (FAO 2011; FAO 2015). Moreover, childbirth and breastfeeding tasks occupy their time (Tanveer & Safdar, 2013). Consequently, rural women's workload surpasses that of males, a substantial portion consists of unpaid domestic duties associated with cooking, firewood and water collection. These different roles reduce the time women can spend participating in agricultural cooperatives. As a result, women members of cooperatives may not be present in meetings or relevant training or extension occasions simply because of lack of time (Tanwir and Safdar, 2013). The proportion of time allocated to various responsibilities varies by region and household type, but on average, most women are estimated to work about 16 hours a day (Tanwir and Safdar, 2013). Thus, chances to take part in agricultural cooperatives are inadequate, and in such circumstances, membership increases the burden.

Kenya's 2010 Constitution supports gender equality, which is also expressed in Kenya's Vision 2030 development plan. Gender equality is considered a prerequisite for the inclusion of citizens in all aspects of development under the three main pillars of development: economic, social and political. Comply with the Constitution, especially with regard to Articles 10, Chapters 4, 11, 12 and Schedule 4, and in particular with regard to the guarantees of equality of treatment and liberty from discrimination contained in Article 27. Encourage collaboration

and integrated strategies to ensure a deeper understanding of gender equality standards across all departments, boards, committees and industry. Similarly, the National Gender Equality Commission Act of 2011 endorses gender equality and eliminate discrimination in accordance with Article 27 of the Constitution. He also monitors, supports and advises on how to integrate these principles into all nationwide and local laws, guidelines and administrative guidelines of all public and private institutions. Sociocultural factors, such as personal factors, hinder women from participating in community projects, mainly the women's own negative attitudes, fear of criticism, low self-esteem and nonexistence of self-confidence (Grabe, 2015; Ngoma-Moono, 2018) .

Many cooperatives have been established around the world for the benefit of their members, comprising consumer, production, worker and service cooperatives. National commercial Bank of Africa, NCBA (2005) noted that in the United States, around 48,000 cooperatives serve 120 million individuals, while globally, approximately 750,000 cooperatives serve 730 million members (Ortmann and King, 2007). Different types of cooperatives provide a diversity of products and services to their members, comprising monetary services, tools and agricultural supply, agricultural marketing, consumer goods, utilities (e.g. electricity, telephone), housing, and other services such as insurance. Even though cooperatives are common worldwide, the most widespread and successful use of cooperatives over the past century has been in North America and Europe (Barton, 2010).

In Africa, there is growing interest in backup of the growth of agricultural cooperatives and co-operatives as platforms for weak smallholder planters to secure sustainable livings (Thomas et al, 2013). Agricultural cooperatives have unlimited prospective to improve the livelihoods and personal capabilities of economically vulnerable farmers, both women and men (World Bank, 2009). According to Msimango & Oladele, 2013, Agricultural cooperatives, farmers pool resources in mutual procurement of agricultural inputs such as seeds and farm machinery, moral and financial support for members during cultivation, and finding marketing networks for agricultural yields to safeguard better and fairer prices. The purpose of establishing a cooperative is to create a safe environment in terms of food security and improve the living standards of community members. Agricultural cooperatives play a significant part in the growth of agriculture in industrialized countries as agricultural equipment suppliers, agricultural marketing companies, and agricultural product suppliers.

The Government of Kenya recognizes that concrete policy actions must be taken to address stark gender cracks in access to and control over resources, economic chances and making decisions

in the Vision 2030 economic framework. Enabling women to access labor markets, fruitful resources, training and educating to realize their prospective is one aspect of this focus. Achievement of this will be possible through well-regulated cooperative initiatives. The government trusts that Mwananchi-owned and operated organizations, such as cooperative enterprises, are serving to revitalize the country's agricultural, financial segments and rural economy (ICA, 2018). The low participation rate of women in Kenya's cooperative sector raises issues of gender imbalance. Despite the significant contribution women make to the agricultural segment and therefore the Kenyan economy, the proportion of female members in agricultural cooperative management is lower than that of men.

1.3 Statement of the problem

During the Covid-19 period, families with low economic levels experienced significant economic demands, making the role of a mother crucial in alleviating the burden and promoting the family's prosperity. Through the Agricultural Cooperative, it is anticipated that women will gain more empowerment, expand their business opportunities, and receive financial support, access training facilities, and other beneficial resources that can enhance their overall well-being (Devanty, 2017). Agricultural cooperatives should support different goals and support women by collaborating and creating group organizations with different goals. The existence of networks and organizations

is a common factor that supports the development of women's leadership and cultural leadership (Shintasari & Hidayatulloh, 2020). About 80% of Kenya's population is employed in small-holder agriculture, which is the main driver of the country's economy. Through collective negotiating power, farmer organizations are essential in maximizing the potential of economically disadvantaged farmers. Women farmers are essential to the supply of agricultural labor, ensuring food and nutritional security as well as the economic growth of their communities and homes. In addition, a sizable percentage of cooperative members are female farmers. Nevertheless, a number of sociocultural barriers impede their ability to contribute to and benefit from agriculture as well as farmer organizations. Because of their inability to perform the duties involved, women frequently have limited opportunity to engage in cooperative governance and management. To address this issue in the agricultural sector, development advocates have gradually undertaken a variety of initiatives, such as capacity building. The study's goal is to identify institutional measures for removing obstacles that prevent women from joining agricultural cooperatives.

Previous research has been done on women's participation in various aspects of society. Aregawi et al (2013) found that women possess qualities of effective leadership, including intelligence, courage, initiative and confidence. Okioga (2013) notes that there has been only insignificant advancement in representation of women in administration organizations. For example, women make up 23% of board members (Board Diversity Report, KIM). This shows that the proportion of female managers is quite little. Nevertheless, it is important to note that women are also struggling to take leadership seats in parastatal organizations. A recent study found that very few female managers set new standards for achievement and essentially serve as role models for other female managers (Chawla and Pandit, 2018). Felix et al. (2016), notes the absence of appropriate professional and conceptual skills regarding social roles has had a significant impact in undermining the aspirations of women leaders. For example, it is noteworthy that only 25% of ministerial leadership (Job-P-U group) are women (Roudine, 2011).

Despite women's low participation due to organizational policy, financial informational and institutional culture barriers, agricultural cooperatives have started to embrace mechanisms of dealing with low women's involvement in activities such as membership, attendance at meetings, supply of agricultural produce, and leadership participation among others. This study intended to determine whether the strategies being implemented by agricultural cooperatives are effective in bridging the gap in women's participation in agricultural cooperatives since several interventions are being implemented.

1.4 Objectives of the study

1.4.1 General objective

The general objective of the study was to analyze the effectiveness of strategies by agricultural cooperatives in Kiambu County to address institutional barriers to women's participation in the post-COVID- 19 recovery period.

1.4.2 Specific objectives

The specific objectives were:

- i. To analyze the strategies employed by agricultural cooperatives to address organizational policy barriers to women participation in the post-covid-19 recovery period in Kiambu County.
- ii. To analyze the strategies employed by agricultural cooperatives to address financial barriers to women participation in the post-covid-19 recovery period in Kiambu County.

- iii. To evaluate the strategies taken by agricultural cooperatives to address informational barriers to women participation in the post-covid-19 recovery period in Kiambu County.
- iv. To evaluate the strategies employed by agricultural cooperatives to address institutional culture barriers to women participation in the post-covid-19 recovery period in Kiambu County.

1.5 Research hypothesis

- i. H0₁: There is no significant influence of organizational policies strategies employed by agricultural cooperatives on organizational barriers to women participation in the postcovid-19 recovery period in Kiambu County.
- ii. H0₂: There is no significant influence of financial strategies employed by agricultural cooperatives on financial barriers to women participation in the postcovid-19 recovery period in Kiambu County.
- iii. H0₃: There is no significant influence of informational strategies employed by agricultural cooperatives on informational barriers to women participation in the postcovid-19 recovery period in Kiambu County
- iv. H0₄: There is no significant influence of institutional cultural strategies employed by agricultural cooperatives on institutional cultural barriers to women participation in the postcovid-19 recovery period in Kiambu County

1.6 Justification of the study

The research findings will aid in providing insights into determinants of women participation in post-covid-19 recovery through agricultural cooperatives in Kenya. The study findings will be used to further increase engagement and empower women to engage in agriculture for sustainable development

The study findings will be valuable to the national and county government since it will guide them in decision-making process especially in formulating Policies and regulations that enhance gender equality and equity in management of agricultural cooperatives

The findings of this study findings will be beneficial by giving insights that may help in streamlining the agricultural cooperatives. The study will also help in Integration of gender issues in planning thereby contributing to achievement of Kenya's Vision 2030.

1.7 Scope of the study

This study focused on existing organizational policies, changes in policies, awareness creation, providing incentives and payment through mobile as possible interventions adopted to enhance

women participation. Participation focused on attendance of meetings, membership, involvement in leadership, decision making in agricultural cooperatives. The study confined itself to dairy cooperatives and coffee cooperatives in Kiambu County.

1.8 Limitations and delimitation of the study

The study being on issues of participation of women the respondents may be unwilling to provide the information for fear of their cooperative being labeled as gender insensitive. The researcher however, assured the respondents of their privacy and confidentiality. Further, the researcher sought a research permit from the National Commission of Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI), besides seeking approval from the school and ethical clearance and used informed consent to get the participants confidence. The study was done in the month of June 2024.

The study was confined to a Kiambu county thus it may be difficult to generalize the findings. The researcher recommended that generalization of the study findings should be done with utmost caution.

1.9 Assumptions of the study

The research made the following assumptions

The researcher assumed that the respondents are knowledgeable on issues affecting women participation in agricultural cooperatives

This study assumed that the researcher obtained all necessary cooperation from all participants who choose to participate and that the participants are honest and willing to provide accurate and valid information

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Overview

This chapter focused on empirical review, theoretical review, conceptual framework, research gaps and summary of literature review.

2.2 Empirical review

Literature will be reviewed as follows:

2.2.1 Organizational policies strategies and Women Participation in Agricultural Cooperatives

In a systematic review, Lowry et al. (2014) examined effectiveness of land tenure interventions and found that, in most cases, existing land rights are determined through informal and customary systems and that the formalization of rights has little impact on land tenure. I discovered that this may not be the case. Rural productivity. However, where formal institutions did not previously exist, the formalization of land rights can have a significant impact on agricultural productivity. The researchers also examined the differences between sole and joint ownership in terms of agricultural productivity and women's bargaining power. For example, Newman et al. (2015), using a fixed-effects approach on Vietnamese panel data, show that land ownership leads to higher productivity for both individual and communal ownership and that communal property rights are potentially important tools for development. Kousar, (2016) noted that land ownership has a significant impact on women's empowerment and agricultural productivity in rural Pakistan, and found that government programs and development policies can enhance women's productive roles in addition to their reproductive roles by strengthening their ownership. It was recommended that we should focus on Rights of poor rural women. There is evidence that land reform has had an impact on women's rights. For example, in Rwanda, Uwayezu and Mugiraneza (2011) noted that the enactment of new land policies and related regulations had a positive impact on the protection, protection, and enforcement of the land rights of female widows and orphans. However, there is no research linking women's land rights to women's participation in agricultural cooperatives in Kenya, especially in Kiambu County.

The land tenure system in rural Tanzania denied women the opportunity to own such potentially productive assets. While employment insecurity affects millions of people around the world, women face additional risks and challenges, and in many parts of Africa, especially

South Asia, women are unable to access, own, control or inherit land and other basic property. They are being systematically denied their human rights (Benshop, 2004). Because empowerment refers to “the process by which powerless people gain greater control over their life situations” (Sen and Batliwala 2000). Any process aimed at increasing women's access to and control over land resources will go a long way in empowering women to participate actively in the production process. The land use planning process, which ends with women's access, ownership and control of land, provides women with the opportunity to benefit from the different types of employment that can be created in sectors of the land economy.

Charles, (2015) believes that gender empowerment should be implemented in all departments of the organization through specific steps, processes and procedures. That's why Kenya's 2030 Vision and Sustainable Development Goals include women's empowerment. In Kenya, women are encouraged to aspire to leadership because women and men have equal rights, including equal rights in politics, finance, culture and relationships. Additionally, the state must not discriminate against individuals, directly or indirectly, for any reason, including gender, pregnancy, marital status, religion, culture, dress, etc. (Constitution of Kenya, 2010). Oseni et al (2015) found that women produce less than men in observable factors of production and generally have access to less productive resources than men, and Mishra and Sam (2016) found that land ownership ultimately affects society. Economic development and women's empowerment, she added, in regions where agriculture is central to the economy and women's livelihoods, policies that strengthen land rights equality are crucial for women's empowerment and other beneficial contributions to their well-being.

2.2.2 Financial strategies and Women Participation in Agricultural Cooperatives

Around the world, agriculture is a significant foundation of income for people living in rural areas. Agricultural development can reduce rural poverty faster and more effectively than other sectors. (Christiansen et al., 2011). As discussed in GFDR 2014, one of the levers of economic growth is the availability of funds. Credit is a tool whose efficiency depends on economic and financial policies.

Finley, S. (2009) believes that credit refers to the ability to manage capital in exchange for the promise of payment in the future. Access to credit is important for agricultural businesses, especially in the world's underdeveloped countries. Access to credit (formal or informal) means that a person can borrow money from certain sources. A person's access to credit is measured

by their credit limit. Therefore, a person with a good credit limit is considered to have access and vice versa. Creditworthiness refers to the ease of obtaining loans from lenders to improve operations. Simkovic, Michael (2016). Farmers' investment and production decisions are closely influenced by their access to financial products. If appropriate risk mitigation products are not available or available financial instruments do not meet farmers' needs, farmers may be prevented from adopting better technologies, purchasing agricultural inputs, or making other decisions that could improve business performance. Improving access to finance can expand farmers' investment choices and provide better tools for risk management (Karlan *et al.* 2016). The banking sector in developing countries lends a much smaller portion of its loan portfolio to agriculture compared to agriculture's share of GDP. This limits investment in agriculture by both farmers and agricultural companies. This also shows that lending barriers are not caused by lack of liquidity in the banking sector, but by a lack of will to expand agricultural lending. Even when available, most agricultural finance tends to be informal and short-term, making long-term investments impossible. This informal financing only partially meets the financial needs of farmers and small agricultural enterprises and is typically expensive. Additionally, government policies are often ineffective and may actually create barriers to the provision of financial services to the agricultural sector. Policies such as concessional lending practices, interest rate caps, and loan forgiveness programs create barriers to private sector lending while also creating problems for government agricultural lending.

2.2.3 Informational strategies and Women Participation in Agricultural Cooperatives

Cooperation is seen as an organization aimed at promoting the economic interests of the participants, but it is not limited to economic aspects. It also seeps into the social aspect. It aims to establish a new democratic social order based on freedom and equality where people live in harmony, care and share with each other like family, unity of spirit and common economic ties (Karunakran, 2004; Warman and Kennedy, 1998).

Cooperatives have a role to play in mitigating a variety of shocks and paving the way for a socially and economically sound and sustainable recovery. Participation can create a safe environment where women can develop self-confidence, identify their own problems, make decisions and manage risks. Therefore, women are empowered to become good change agents, entrepreneurs and social change agents who can improve their lives and the lives of those in society. Majurin (2012) showed that cooperatives are also an effective entry point for addressing broader gender equality issues such as unpaid work, job sharing, and gender-based

violence. Women have less access to information than men because they have lower literacy and education levels. In many countries, rural women are also indigenous and therefore less likely than men to know their own language, which is often used to convey information materials.

When knowledge is shared through organizations, the underrepresentation of women in these groups limits access to knowledge (Njobe and Kaaria, 2015). Women's low literacy levels make it difficult for them to obtain information about support services that can help them grow their companies and earn a decent income (Opata et al., 2014). A study by Geeta (1993) found that 57.7% of women in cooperatives took a leading role in organizing cultural programs in their communities, while only 10.7% of women in the unorganized sector took the lead. Cooperatives have been successful not only in increasing women's social participation, but also in developing their aspirations, planning and leadership skills. However, to date, women's active participation and leadership in agricultural cooperatives are still very low (USAID, 2005).

In Pakistan, Manzoor, (2015) showed that women do not lack the necessary professional skills and abilities. According to this study, female leaders face hidden social barriers that overwhelm gender discrimination in the workplace. Although women occupy leadership positions at least equally as men, there is still inequality in the distribution of top paid positions. According to the study, there are actually several obstacles that delay the progress of the most successful women. A study on eight mid-sized and large-scale female leaders' Ethiopian organizations have reported a significant increase in women's leadership positions (Bahiru and Mengistu, 2018). The study found that they participated in obtaining formal education.

Additionally, a study by O'Connor (2015) found that job descriptions have a significant impact on appointing organizational leaders in today's work environment. The study found that these qualities are typical statements for discussing the essential components of a leader. Additionally, a Fijian study examining public perceptions of female leaders found significant leadership qualities. Research has shown that 80% of respondents are of the opinion that women's leadership outcomes can be improved by focusing on leadership competency characteristics (International Organization for the Development of Women, 2014).

2.2.4 Institutional culture strategies and Women Participation in Agricultural Cooperatives

According to a study conducted by Hofstede, Geert, Geert and Minkov (2010), culture is

defined as a set of abstract social concepts and psychological rules that distinguish a community from others. The effects of culture are often reflected in actual practice patterns. The culture of an organization; It is seen as values, attitudes, expectations, experiences, thoughts, beliefs, inner workings, attitudes, religion and culture (Onifade, 2014).

Schmiedel, Brock, Vohm, and Recker's (2014) study found that despite change, shared goals among cultural group members remain based on shared beliefs. These shared beliefs influence people's performance in a given situation. As a result, Gochhayat, Giri, and Sugar (2017) showed that culture should be widely reciprocated and practiced. Research shows that this ensures the collective and united growth of people. Kenya Vision 2030 recognizes the need for greater stakeholder engagement and stronger mechanisms for setting effective priorities for action. According to Ayman and Corabit (2010), organizational culture tends to be gender-based. This study showed that ideas about leadership are a male characteristic. The authors exclaim that such cultural views influence the opinions, actions, and practices of leaders. The authors seem to agree that culture plays an important role in organizations and provides members with a sense of identity. Considering the various organizational cultural barriers in an organization, people face numerous challenges in the work environment. These experiences clearly impact women's leadership ambitions and career prospects. A study by Ibarra, Erminia, Ely, and Kolb (2013) pointed out the importance of understanding whether individual decisiveness matches that of the organization. This can improve a person's career advancement opportunities. In their study, organizational culture is a good moderator of performance because it examines the informal culture of an organization in terms of subtle behaviors, behaviors, and values that may disadvantage women (Catalyst, 2012). This can be done by identifying, changing, and adopting best practices from organizations that support women's professional careers. Against the background of this knowledge gap, this study seeks to determine the impact of institutional culture on women's participation in agricultural cooperatives.

2.3 Theoretical Framework

The study was anchored on the theory of people centered development theory and social capital theory

2.3.1 People-centered development theory

This theory was proposed by Korten (1984). It defines the theory as a process that enhances the individual and institutional capacity of members of society to mobilize and manage

resources for a sustainable and equitable distribution of quality of life in accordance with their aspirations. The core notion of this description is that persons should benefit and drive for their own progress and should have the apparatuses and awareness needed to shape their own societies. According to Davids et al. (2005), people-centered development is defined as the process of increasing the individual and institutional capacity of members of society to assemble and manage assets for a viable and equitable distribution of worth of life.

This approach is based on human involvement, sustainability, social learning and empowerment. Participation is a complex and ongoing process in which people have the opportunity to exercise varying levels of influence over development activities that affect their lives. Bottom-up approaches emphasize that community members at the grassroots level should make decisions about development, unlike top-down approaches where development strategies are initiated and imposed from above (Isidiho & Sabran, 2016: 268). It is a means of promoting a people-centred approach to development. This is because most cooperatives are started by community members, a bottom-up approach. Satisfying the needs of members is the main goal (Zeuli & Radel, 2005:47). The study also showed that through cooperatives, individuals have the chance to participate in solving problems that impact their lives, have control, and independently find resolutions. This helps them understand that they can rely on themselves and their ability to work together collectively to solve socioeconomic problems.

2.3.2 Social capital theory

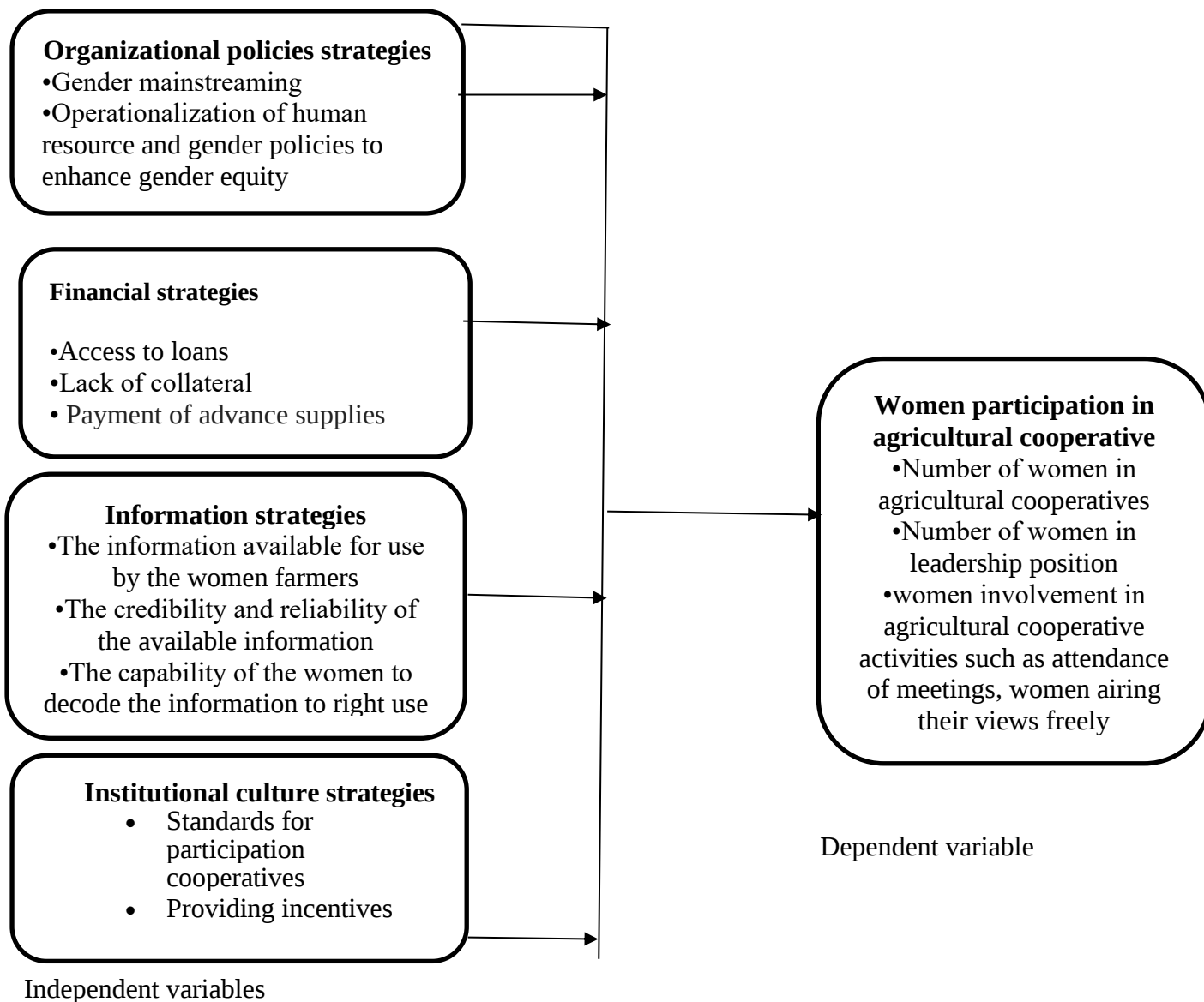
Development and inclusion of social capital theory in academic debates dates back to the work of Bourdieu (1986) and Coleman (1988). Putman (1993) actively popularized this theory, attracting the attention of both researchers and policy makers (Bhandari & Yasunobu, 2009:9). French philosopher Pierre Bourdieu defined social capital as the sum of actual or potential resources associated with the possession of a strong network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition (Bourdieu, 2012: 174). This definition highlights how important social networks are in terms of maximizing opportunities and benefits that would not otherwise be available to members of such groups. Similarly, based on Bourdieu's definition, Bhandari and Yasunobu (2009:10) identify three characteristics of social capital: social networks that allow members to receive resources from the group through social connections; The amount of these resources is determined not only by their standard quality but also by the overall relationship between participants and the quality of these resources. James Coleman (1990) argues that social capital unites various entities with two common characteristics; a feature of social structure and it endorses definite behaviors of people within

that structure (Coleman, 1990:302). This means that social capital exists primarily in the structure of relationships and between the participants in those relationships.

According to Coleman (1990:302), social capital has three components: expectations, obligations, and norms. In this case, he argues that participants must trust the structure of the social network to carry out their responsibilities, ensure the exchange of information between them, and enforce norms through consensus (Coleman, 1990:303). According to Zeuli and Radel (2005:49), social capital is a resource that individuals and the community as a whole can use to strengthen the organization. Tirmizi (2005:23) agrees that social capital has a role in promoting community development with the primary goal of benefiting all residents. In this regard, Valentinov (2004:5) emphasizes that cooperatives can play an important role in mobilizing social capital by promoting more meaningful interactions within the community and thereby strengthening the organization. Moreover, Tirmidhi (2005:23-24) argues that social capital should be considered an input to make community development programs beneficial. More broadly, cooperatives can also be used to create and develop communities. In this case, social capital as an input can firstly reduce uncertainty among community members. Second, it can ensure that community members are provided with resources to share the risks associated with development activities. Third, social capital mitigates the consequences of failure by promoting faster responses to corrective actions (Tirmizi, 2005:24). The study also found that social capital, which is a result of community development, provides opportunities to develop expectations of reciprocity.

2.4 Conceptual framework

According to Rogers (2003), conceptual design is an inexplicit representation of the goals of the research project that guides the collection and analysis of data.



Source: author, 2024

Figure2. 1 Conceptual framework

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter focused on research philosophy adopted, a description of the study research design, population of study, sample population and sampling procedure, data collection methods, and data processing and analysis strategies and ethical considerations.

3.2 Research design

The study employed study employed a mixed method approach whereby both qualitative and quantitative data were used synergistically. The research design involves interviewing a sample or distributing surveys to collect data and research works with factual, precise, and in-depth situational description (Saunders, 2009). The research comprises well organized descriptions of occurrences, it is more specific and accurate and allows the researcher to generalize the findings to a larger population. The researcher determined that the research design was appropriate in carrying out this study since Bukirwa and Kising'u, (2017) employed descriptive survey to carry out a related investigation

3.3 Study area

Kiambu county is one of the 47 counties in the Republic of Kenya, with a density of 990/km²(KNBS,2019) with an estimated population of 2,417,735(1,187,146 men,1,230,454 women and 135 intersex) and 796,241 households which are predominantly made up of Kikuyu ethnic group. It comprises 12 sub-counties and it's positioned between longitudes 36 ° 31'and 37 ° 15'East, and latitudes 0 ° 25'and 1 ° 20'south of the equator (County Government of Kiambu,2019). The largest sub-county is Lari with an area of 432.3 km², and the smallest county is Kabete with an area of 60.7 km²

Kiambu County borders Nairobi and Kajiado Counties to the South, Machakos to the East, Murang'a to the North and North East, Nyandarua to the North West, and Nakuru to the West and has a population of 2,417,735 (Kiambu county government,2022).The County exhibits diverse topography with varying climates. Lower regions have a warm and dry climate, while higher altitudes areas are cooler.

The County experiences well-distributed rainfall with short rains from October through December and heavy rains from March through May, averaging 120 millimeters yearly. Lari constituency houses the upper highland zone (1800-2,550 meters), known for tea and dairy farming, while the lower highland zone (1,500-1,800 meter) includes Limuru, parts of Gatundu North and South, Githunguri and Kabete with similar agricultural activities. The upper midland

zone (130-1500 meters) encompasses and Juja other constituencies. The lower midland zone (1200-1,360meters) covers Thika town, Limuru and Kikuyu constituencies. The choice of Kiambu is as the study are is due to its significance and growth in the dairy and coffee sector growth and gender dynamics affecting women participation in the activities of the two value chains.

3.4 Target Population

According to Kothari and Garg (2014), the research population is the totality of all individuals considered by the researcher. The research targeted female members from coffee and dairy cooperatives in Kiambu County. There are a total of 45 registered dairy and coffee cooperative in Kiambu County as shown in table 3.1 below. The respondents were drawn from co-operative society members.

Table3. 1Registered Co-operative societies in Kiambu County

Cooperative society	Groups	Membership	Percent
Coffee	21	51,087	44.7%
Dairy	24	63,180	55.3%
Total	45	114,267	100%

3.5 Sampling design

A two-stage sampling technique was employed. In the first stage purposive sampling technique was used to select the dairy cooperative societies and coffee cooperative societies. In the second stage simple random sampling was used to select the female members from the cooperative societies.

3.5.1 Sample size and determination

The sample was drawn from the two types of cooperative societies which include coffee cooperative society and dairy cooperative societies. According to Lukman (2015), a representative sample can be achieved using the formula below

$$n = N / (1 + Ne^2)$$

Where; n=Representative sample N=population size

e=Significance level 0.05 at 95% confidence interval

$$= 114,267 / (1 + 114,267 * 0.05^2) = 398$$

3.5.2 Sample selection

According to demographic factors, 398 cooperative members were selected as the research sample, and the target group was divided into two classes: coffee cooperatives and dairy cooperatives. The sample size of each group depended on the proportion of members in each group.

Table3. 2 sample size

Cooperative society	Groups	Membership	Percent	Sample Size
Coffee	21	51,087	44.7%	178
Dairy	24	63,180	55.3%	220
Total	45	114,267	100%	398

3.6 Data collection methods

The study collected both quantitative and qualitative data.

3.6.1 Questionnaires

Quantitative data was collected using questionnaires that were administered through drop and pick after two days. The questions were closed ended

3.6.2 Key Informant Interviews and Focus Group Discussions

Key Informant Interview Schedule (KIIs) in this study was administered to cooperatives CEOs, chairpersons of board and supervisory committee from which the participants were drawn in order to give them an opportunity to elaborate on some issues concerning how agricultural cooperatives in Kiambu County have improved women's engagement in the post- COVID-19 recovery phase. A total of 6 KIIs were used 3 from each category The key informant interview schedule had open ended items so as to solicit in-depth information. According to Creswell, Hanson, Plano and Morales (2007), KII are able to collect in-depth information from participants who are familiar with the topic under investigation

3.6.3. Focus Group Discussions

Four Focus Group Discussions were held with purposively selected cooperative member's leaders from selected strata to ensure fair representation of all groups of cooperatives. In each session, there were 8-10 participants. The objectives of the FGDs were to obtain views about agricultural cooperatives in Kiambu County whether they have improved engagement of

women in the post- COVID-19 recovery phase. The study adopted FGDs spread as follows; board of management =2 supervisory committee members =2. Total number of FGDs to be conducted totaling to 4.

3.7 Pilot test

To determine and improve the validity and reliability of the data collection instrument, a pilot study was carried out from a representative sample. Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) suggested that the sample size should be between 1% and 10%, depending on the sample size.

The sample for the pilot study was drawn from coffee and dairy cooperatives but from (Githunguri and Lari sub-counties) that were not sampled to participate in the study. The pilot study for this study used 5% of the sample which translated to 20 respondents. Kothari (2004) defines pilot testing as a replication and replication of the main research that determines the reliability and validity of the instrument

3.7.1 Validity of research instruments

To achieve validity, the researcher sought input from supervisors to help improve the validity of the instrument. To ensure the validity of the instrument, data collected from senior managers, supervisors, and employees were also cross-validated with research assistants.

3.7.2 Reliability of research instruments

In this research, reliability was verified through pilot testing and Cronbach's alpha calculation. According to Sekaran and Boogie (2008), pilot testing is necessary to test the reliability of an instrument, and feedback from the pilot study was used to improve the questionnaire to ensure that it is reliable during the study. A Cronbach's alpha of 0.769 was obtained. A composite reliability coefficient (Cronbach's alpha) of 0.7 was considered sufficient for all constructs (Noble & Smith 2015). This shows that the instrument was reliable.

3.8 Data collection procedures

This study sought approval and permission from the Cooperative University of Kenya (Council of Postgraduate Education). The researcher essentially relied on primary data. An interview guide and survey were used. The target was on a total of 398 respondents.

3.8.1 Operationalization and Measurement of Variables

S/N	Variable	Indicator	Type of data	Measure
1	Organizational policies strategies (Indepen	Operationalization of human resource and gender policies to enhance gender equity.	Nominal Ordinal	Likert scale

	dent variable)				
2	Financial strategies (Independent variable)	• Taken as strategies to enhance access to loans, collateral and Payment of advance supplies	Nominal	Likert scale	
3	Information strategies (independent variable)	• Taken as information available for use by the women farmers • The credibility and reliability of the available information • The capability of the women to decode the information to right use	Nominal	Likert scale	
4	Organizational culture strategies (independent variable)	• Taken as Standards for participation cooperatives • Providing incentives	Nominal	Likert scale	
4	Women participation (dependent variable)	• Number of women in agricultural cooperatives • Number of women in leadership position • women involvement in agricultural cooperative activities such as attendance of meetings, women airing their views freely	Nominal	Likert scale	

3.8.2 Data processing and analysis

The collected data were analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) to calculate and tabulate responses to the questionnaire and analyze those using percentages, frequencies and weighted averages. Quantitative analysis took the form of descriptive data analysis tables containing percentages and measures of dispersion such as calculations of mean, variance, or standard deviation. For qualitative data analysis, thematic analysis was used to explore the perspectives of the respondents. NVivo was employed for organizing, coding and analyzing qualitative data. Field notes from Key Informant (KII) and Focus Group Discussion (FGD) were transcribed and uploaded into NVivo for systematic coding. The coding process involved two phases, open coding to identify key concepts, terms and repeated themes, followed by axial coding, to group similar codes into broader themes and explore relationships between

categories. The thematic findings were the integrated with quantitative results, presenting key quotes alongside statistical findings.

Multiple regression analysis was expressed as,

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1X_1 + \beta_2X_2 + \beta_3X_3 + \beta_4X_4 + \varepsilon$$

Where:

Y – Women participation.

X₁ – Organizational policies strategies

X₂ – coefficient of financial strategies

X₃ – coefficient of Informational strategies.

X₄ – coefficient of Organizational cultural strategies

3.9 Ethical considerations in the research

Prior to data collection, approval permission was obtained from the National Science, Technology and Innovation Commission. The researcher obtained consent from the respondents to use the data for research purposes only. The researcher assured the respondents of the confidentiality of the information sought. Study respondents read and signed the consent form. Voluntary participation was observed, and members were able to take part in the research at their own discretion. Respondent confidentiality was guaranteed. Pseudonyms were used to secure anonymity. A copy of the final draft was made available in the University Library for academic reference.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS, FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents analysis of the data obtained from the field and the discussions thereof. Contained in this section is the response rate, demographic characteristics of the respondents, description of the data obtained, diagnostic tests, correlation analysis and regression analysis.

4.2 Response rate

Out of 398 questionnaires distributed to the respondents, only 285 were correctly filled and returned. This was a 71.6 per cent return rate. According to Mugenda, (2008), response rate above 70% is adequate for analysis, therefore the researcher concluded that the questionnaires were adequate for analysis.

Table 4. 1 response rate

	Frequency	Percentage
Response	285	71.6
Non-response	113	28.4
Total	398	100

4.3 Pilot test results

4.2.1 Reliability test

Reliability and validity tests of the research instrument were carried out. The questionnaires used had 5-point Likert scale items that were responded to. The study involved questionnaires from 20 respondents, who were randomly selected to participate in the pilot study. From these results overall constructs had a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.769 which was more than 0.7 indicating that their measures were reliable

Table 4. 2 Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.769	20

4.2.2 Validity of Research Instrument

From the pre-test results, the research tool was found to cover all the constructs in the main

study. The questions represented all the study items as expected. The questions were a good measure of the variables provided in the main study. The suggestions from 2 research experts were used to improve the research instrument, particularly regarding framing of the variable statements. In the end the research instrument was valid to be a data gathering tool for this study.

4.3 Descriptive statistics

Table 4. 3 Demographic statistics

Characteristic	Pooled (n=285)	Duration of Membership			χ^2 Statistic	P-value (< 0.050)
		1-2 (n=46)	years 3-4 (n=17)	Over 4 years(n=222)		
<i>Education level</i>						
Certificate	86 (30.2)	0 (0.0)	5 (29.4)	81(36.4)	35.462	.000
College diploma	113 (39.6)	21 (46.7)	7 (23.5)	85(38.3)		
Undergraduate	77 (27.0)	25 (54.3)	5 (29.4)	47(21.2)		
Postgraduate	9 (3.2)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	9(4.1)		
<i>Age</i>						
21-30 years	11 (3.9)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	11(5.0)	31.174	.000
31-40 years	72 (25.3)	21(45.7)	5 (29.4)	46(20.7)		
41-50 years	124 (43.5)	25 (54.3)	9 (52.9)	90(40.5)		
Above 50 years	78(27.3)	0 (0.0)	3 (17.6)	75(33.8)		

4.3.1 Age of respondent

Age is considered to have an influence on the productivity of human capital. Table 4.3 shows the age of the respondents, which has been categorized into three groups. Age of respondents was represented by the bar chart in the figure 4.1 below

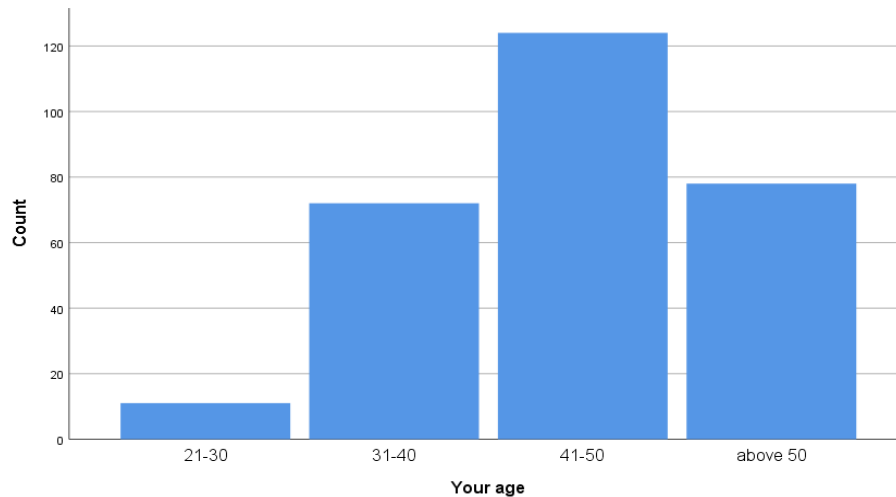


Figure 4. 1 Age of respondents

Majority of the respondents were aged between 41 and 50 years, comprising of 43.5%, 27.4% were aged above 50 years whereas only 3.9% had between 21-30 years and those between 31-40 comprised 25.3%. The results also show that the age of women and their participation in agricultural cooperatives is significant at 5% level of significance, with a p-value of (0.000). Age therefore greatly influences women's participation in agricultural cooperatives since women who were mature in age participated more than women who were young in age. This was mainly because the mature women had more responsibilities and were more knowledgeable.

The members' age has impact on their participation in agricultural cooperatives; this finding is confirmed by the present study.

4.3.2 Level of education

The education level of women was divided into four categories, which included certificate, college diploma, undergraduate and postgraduate.

The results show that most of the women interviewed were educated up to college diploma level and certificate level comprising of 39.6%. Those who were educated up to certificate comprised of 30.2% while those up to undergraduate level were 27.0% and 3.2% had post graduate qualification.

The result further showed that education level and women participation in agricultural cooperatives are associated at 1% level of significance and a p-value statistics of ($p=0.00$). This implies that education of women has an influence in their participation in agricultural cooperatives if a woman was empowered and educated, she was in position to acquire the skills and knowledge to enable her competes favorably in the formal sector. The Government should

therefore put more emphasis on the education of the girl child.

4.3.3 Duration of respondents in co-operative society

The respondents' length of membership period is shown in figure 4.3. Accordingly, 46 (16.1%) of female respondents reported that their membership was between 1 and 2 years, and 17 (6.0%) replied that their cooperative membership was between 3 and 4 years. The remaining which was the majority 222(77.9%) respondents responded that their membership in the farmers' cooperative was over 4 years.

The result further showed that the duration one has been in the cooperative and women participation are associated at 1% level of significance and a p-value statistics of ($p=0.00$). This implies that the period women have been in cooperative has influence in their participation because if a woman was in a cooperative for a longer period, she acquires experience and becomes familiar with operations. The chi square results of the study showed that there is a significant relationship between the two variables of membership duration in cooperatives and participation level. These results are consistent with the research findings of Khodashahri (2009).

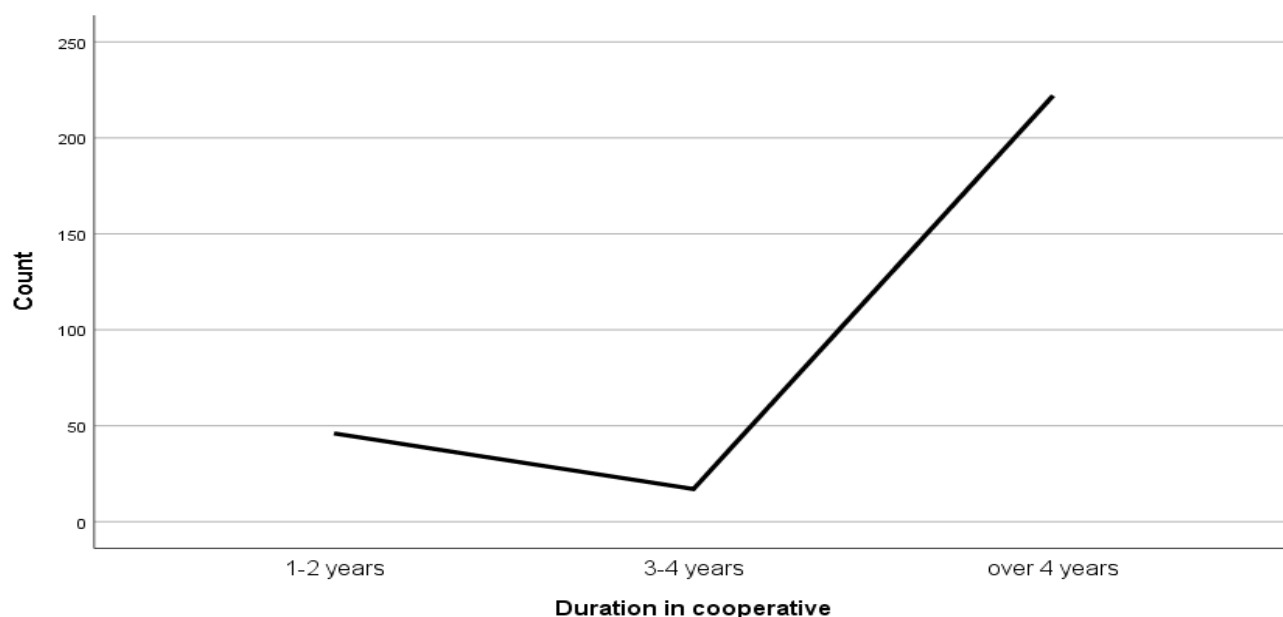


Figure 4. 2 Membership duration in the co-operative society

Number of year's women's stay in cooperative membership was found to be correlated positively and significantly at 5% probability level. This result supported by the finding of Maysoon (2015) which stated that as women farmers advance in years of farming experience, their participation in the adaptation of soil and water conservation practices also increase. The

results of the study are also in line with the findings of Derib and Nega (2014) who found that there is a positive and significant relationship existing between duration of membership and women participation since people who stayed a long period have developed more experience and was more aware of the cooperatives than those who joined the cooperative at recent year. Women's use of information was found to be correlated positively and significantly at 5% probability level.

4.3.4 Organization policies strategies and women participation

Table 4.7 shows responses where respondents were inquired on the organizational policies strategies to address issues of women participation in cooperative societies. Encouragement of women to participate in leadership positions by vying was one of the strategies put in place. Most respondents agreed that that has been put in place with a mean of 3.8175, standard deviation of 0.893. This shows that a majority of the respondents agreed that their organization had an effective team network that support organizational operations. It was also found out gender mainstreaming programs were conducted regularly in most cooperative societies with a mean of 4.178, standard deviation of 0.5687. Gender mainstreaming programs are conducted regularly in our cooperative society. However, most respondents were undecided on then statement that there is inclusivity in decision making process as represented by a mean of 3.2491 and a standard deviation of 1.41336. On the statement that there is operationalization of human resource and gender policies to enhance gender equity in our cooperative society, majority agreed with a mean of 3.6035 and standard deviation of 0.8684

One of the key informants noted that there were that restricted women participation. One manager responded *"We do no limit anyone from joining even the youth and women can join as long as they have coffee production activities"*. However, despite having these strategies to help women participate in cooperatives decision making organ, it was noted that women were not ready to take up leadership positions in the cooperatives thereby reducing women participation in decision making process. The respondents were asked on what can be done to increase the number of women participations in leadership and one of the respondents from a coffee growers cooperatives answered *"Going forward in terms of gender we will focus on developing gender responsive policies that promote equity, increase the trainings for members and staff on gender sensitivity and encourage women to actively participate in the decision-making process not only in the co-operative but also in their homes"*. Another key informant had this to say *Co-operatives that need to make changes can start by having gender transformative approaches that mainstream and integrate women into the organizational*

procedures. We have an effective team network to support our overall operations since we must all co-operate in order to meet our goals and ensure that we all benefit from these operations, (KII, coffee cooperative society, Kiambu County)

Table 4. 4 Organizational policies strategies and women participation

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Women are encouraged to vie for leadership positions in our cooperatives	285	3.8175	.89307
Gender mainstreaming programs are conducted regularly in our cooperative society	285	4.1789	.56877
Our cooperative society enhances building of social networks	285	3.5404	.95088
There is operationalization of human resource and gender policies to enhance gender equity in our cooperative society	285	3.6035	.86845
Inclusivity in decision making is a key	285	3.2491	1.41336
Valid N (listwise)	285		

Correlation analysis was also conducted on organizational policies and women participation. The results unconcealed that, organizational policy strategies significantly affect women participation in agricultural cooperatives at $p=0.000$ and $r=0.331$ as shown in the table below.

Table 4. 5 correlation between Organizational policies strategies and women participation

		Organizational policies strategies	Women participation
Organizational policies strategies	Pearson Correlation	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)		
	N	285	
Women participation	Pearson Correlation	.331**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	285	285

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

Regression analysis was conducted on the variables. The results revealed that a unit change in organizational policies strategies could cause women participation by a factor of 0.372.

Table 4. 6 Regression analysis of organization policies and women participation

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.157	.235		4.934	.000
	Organizational policies strategies	.372	.063	.331	5.897	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Women participation

4.3.5 Financial strategies and women participation

The research showed that women are facing challenges such as lack collateral to access loans at the same time financial literacy is lacking. One of the respondents in the focused group discussion said, “*Women face challenges such as limited access to collateral, lower financial literacy, and a lack of financial independence, which hinders their ability to access loans and other financial services (FGD, dairy cooperative society, Kiambu County).*” The research sought to understand which financial strategies put in place to solve this problem of financial barriers. The respondents were asked to indicate the level of agreement on the statement that they were provided with food stuffs at the cooperative level and the expense is deducted from the produce supplied, the majority of respondents did not agree as indicated by the mean of

2.8175 and the standard deviation of 1.550.

The research further showed that most respondents were undecided on the statement that cooperative societies had enabled and linked them to access loans to carry out agricultural activities as indicated by the mean of 3.3158 and the standard deviation of 1.505. However, the respondents were in agreement with statements that they always get salary advance whenever you need it from the cooperative as indicated by the mean of 3.9333 and the standard deviation of 1.26398. It was also established that organizations use social collateral which enables more members to access credit as shown by a mean standard of 3.9333. Some of the respondents which was the majority agreed that their organizations use social collateral which enables more members to access credit with the mean of 4.0316 and a standard deviation of 1.185. Equally respondents were in agreement that they had been signed up for mobile banking to reduce constraints of opening bank account and traveling long distance to make a transaction as shown by a mean of 3.6035 and standard deviation of 0.8684

Table 4. 7 Financial strategies and women participation

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
You have been signed up for mobile banking to reduce constraints of opening bank account and traveling long distance to make a transaction	285	3.6035	.86845
You are provided with food stuffs at the cooperative level and the expense is deducted from the produce supplied	285	2.8175	1.55023
Organizations use social collateral which enables more members to access credit	285	4.0316	1.18488

You always get salary advance whenever you need it form the cooperative.	285	3.9333	1.26398
Our cooperative enables and links us to access loans to carry out agricultural activities	285	3.3158	1.50536
Cooperatives have simplified loan process thus saving time	285	3.7298	1.08802
Valid N (listwise)	285		

The study conducted correlation analysis and the results showed that there was a negative weak insignificant correlation between financial strategies and women participation in agricultural cooperatives in Kiambu county shown by $p=0.305$ and $r=-.061$.

Table 4. 8 correlation analysis between financial strategies and women participation

		Women participation	Financial strategies
Women participation	Pearson Correlation	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)		
	N	285	
Financial strategies	Pearson Correlation	-.061	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.305	
	N	285	285

The study further conducted regression analysis between financial strategies and women participation in agricultural cooperatives. The results showed that a unit change in financial strategies led to a decrease in women participation by a factor of 0.054 though insignificant

Table 4. 9 Regression analysis between financial strategies and women participation.

		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.719	.191		14.248	.000
	Financial strategies	-.054	.053	-.061	-1.028	.305

a. Dependent Variable: Women participation

4.3.6 Informational strategies and women participation

The study showed that women lack of fundamental information about access to finance, management of funds leadership skills and market trends.in the focused discussion groups, respondents said *“women need training in financial literacy, leadership skills, market trends, and coffee production techniques. These trainings will empower them to make informed decisions and contribute more effectively to the co-operative.* The study sought to explore the informational strategies that have been put in place to address the informational barriers.

Table 4.8 below shows the results on the level of agreement of respondents on questions on informational strategies. On the statement that cooperative societies scheduling of meetings when the time is convenient for the membership, the respondents were undecided with a mean of 3.0175 and standard deviation of 1.254. Majority of respondents agreed their Cooperatives send bulk short messages to members whenever passing information as indicated by the mean of 3.512 and a standard deviation of 0.9736. But they were undecided on the statement of cooperative society using local vernacular radio stations to create awareness as shown by the mean of 3.3439 and a standard deviation of 0.84816. On the statement that cooperative societies provide adequate time for attendance by giving notices earlier similarly they were in agreement that the level of education determines the level of income.

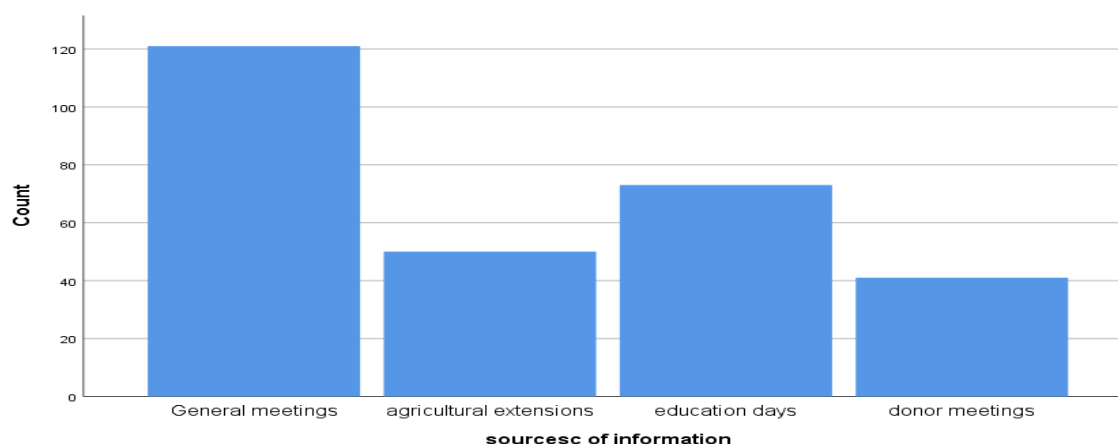
Despite the fact that there were trainings being conducted in the cooperatives, one of the respondents during KII said *“...I am still of the idea that having special session to sensitize women are essential and needed because more than half of our members are women and they will need sessions that covers financial literacy, leadership skills and the market trends. The results will be empowered women who can contribute more actively into the development of the co-operative (KII, Coffee cooperative society, Kiambu County).”*

Table 4. 10 Informational Strategies and women participation

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Cooperatives sending bulk short messages to members whenever passing information	285	3.5123	.97361
Advertising in churches day and time meetings will be held	285	3.2105	1.16185

scheduling of meetings when the time is convenient for the membership	285	3.0175	1.25445
providing adequate time for attendance by giving notices earlier	285	4.0807	1.11195
using local vernacular radio stations to create awareness	285	3.3439	.84816
Valid N (listwise)	285		

The study sought to know how cooperative society's members acquired information. The graph below shows that majority the respondents got information through general meetings which is represented by 121 respondents, the minority of the respondents received information from donors who were 41 members.



Correlation analysis was also conducted between informational strategies and women participation, the results showed a weak positive significant correlation between informational strategies and women participation ($p= 0.000$, $r= 0.226$)

Table 4. 11 correlation analysis between informational strategies and women participation

		Women participation	Informational strategies
Women participation	Pearson Correlation	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)		
	N	285	
Informational strategies	Pearson Correlation	.226**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	285	285

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

Similarly, regression analysis was done between informational barriers and women participation where it was shown that a unit change in informational barriers caused a change in women participation by 0.240.

Table 4. 12 Regression analysis between informational strategies and women participation.

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.703	.213		7.978	.000
	Informational strategies	.240	.061	.226	3.908	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Women participation

4.3.7 Institutional culture strategies and women participation

The study showed that there were some institutional barriers to women participation which included resistance to change from some men.

One of the respondents from KII said “... *cultural barriers include traditional gender roles, resistance to change from some male members, and lingering perceptions that leadership is a male domain.*” However, it was noted that women have started participating in leadership in recent past as noted by the respondents. “*We are getting there and we have tried to change our leadership structure to include women by encouraging them to compete for the leadership roles. My dream would be for us to have equal representation into the board and management in the coming years. (FGD, Dairy cooperative society, Kiambu County)*” The study went

further to explore the strategies the cooperative societies are putting in place to address the institutional culture barriers.

The results in table 4.9 below shows that majority of the respondents were in disagreement that standards for participation cooperatives are provided for example dormant members do not vote as indicated by the mean of 1.5193 and the standard deviation of 0.50051. The respondents however were indifferent on the statements that members were able and allowed to interrogate audited accounts during annual general meetings and ensuring leaders are accountable by providing audited accounts to members as shown by a mean of 3.072 and 3.207 respectively. Similarly, they were undecided on the statement that providing incentives such as fare or food during meetings as shown by a mean of 3.2912 and standard deviation of 1.11145.

Table 4. 13 Institutional cultural strategies and women participation

<i>Descriptive Statistics</i>			
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
providing incentives such as fare or food during meetings	285	3.2912	1.11145
ensuring leaders are accountable by providing audited accounts to members	285	3.2070	.99433
members are able and allowed to interrogate audited accounts during annual general meetings	285	3.0772	1.11378
standards for participation cooperatives are provided for example dormant members do not vote	285	1.5193	.50051
Valid N (listwise)	285		

Correlation analysis was conducted between institutional cultural strategies and women participation in agricultural cooperatives. The findings unconcealed a weak positive correlation with women participation as shown by $r = 0.209$, statistically vital $P = 0.000$.

Table 4. 14 correlation analysis between institutional culture strategies and women participation

		Women Participation	Institutional culture strategies
Women participation	Pearson Correlation	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)		
	N	285	
Institutional culture strategies	Pearson Correlation	.209**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	285	285

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

Regression analysis was conducted and results showed that a unit change in institutional barriers causes a change in women participation by a factor of 0.232

Table 4. 15 Regression analysis between institutional cultural strategies and women participation.

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.881	.183		10.291	.000
	Institutional cultural strategies	.232	.065	.209	3.592	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Women participation

4.3.8 Women participation

Democratic member control is cooperatives are democratic organizations controlled by their members, who actively participate in setting their policies and making decisions. Men and women serving as elected representatives are accountable to the membership.

In the study, equal voting rights participation of 1 women are observed, as most of respondents agreed with the mean of 3.986 and a standard deviation of 0.92299 as it is shown in below table 4.10

The majority of participants are stated as their cooperatives applied equal voting rights of women members with men in cooperatives and but only minimal of respondents had been complain equal voting rights did not take part in their cooperatives. The research implies that cooperatives have promoted equal voting rights of women with men members of cooperatives

and in any case of business there were small number of members complain their firms or entrepreneurship in negative side for the next improvement. Therefore, it is the best strategies to the members of cooperatives to bearing change in future rely on its weakness and threat consequently noticeable.

The respondents were also asked whether women had equal control of the economic capitals with other members. As a result, has shown in the table below, majority of the respondents revealed as they equally control their economic capitals in the cooperatives evidenced by a mean of 4.1053 and a standard deviation of 0.64142. To promote the members economic participation principles of cooperatives, all head of agricultural cooperatives societies should be encouraging equal involvement of rural women with men members in cooperatives because the result of respondents which approached to the result of equal participation is against that poor equal participation of women in economic participation.

Similarly, majority of the respondents agreed that women are included in leadership of their co-operative societies with a mean of 4.4877 and a standard deviation of 0.91391

Table 4. 16 Women participation

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
To what extent does financial strategies affect influence participation in agricultural cooperatives	285	3.4877	.91391
To what extent does informational strategies influence women participation in agricultural cooperatives	285	2.1053	.64142
To what extent do institutional cultural barriers affect women participation in agricultural cooperatives	285	1.9860	.92299

4.4 Regression analysis

To analyze the ordinal data derived from Likert-type questions in the study, a critical transformation was necessary to align the data with the assumptions of regression analysis. Specifically, ordinal responses were converted to continuous variables using a common approach of assigning numeric scores to each Likert category, allowing the data to be treated as interval data. This transformation enables the application of Multiple Regression Analysis (MRA) while preserving the inherent order of responses, thus maintaining their ordinal nature (Kemper et al.,2020)

Table 4. 17 Regression analysis between strategies to address barriers and women participation.

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1					
(Constant)	1.269	.278		4.566	.000
Organizational policies strategies	.399	.074	.354	5.418	.000
Financial strategies	-.190	.053	-.215	-3.592	.000
Informational strategies	.111	.080	.105	1.380	.169
Institutional culture strategies	.033	.091	.029	.358	.721

a. Dependent Variable: participation

The results in table 4.17 show that, holding organizational policies strategies, financial strategies, informational strategies and institutional culture strategies constant at zero, women participation was at 1.269. The researcher found out that a unit change in organizational policies strategies would cause a change in women participation by a factor of 0.399, unit variation in financial strategies would contribute to variation in women participation in agricultural cooperatives in Kiambu county by a factor of -0.190, unit variation in institutional culture strategies would contribute to variation in women participation in agricultural cooperatives in Kiambu county by a factor of 0.111. From regression analysis results, the following multiple regression model was obtained

$$Y = 1.269 + 0.399 X_1 - 0.190 X_2 + 0.111 X_3 + 0.033 X_4 + \varepsilon$$

Where:

Y – Women participation

X_1 – Organizational policies strategies

X_2 – Financial strategies.

X_3 – Informational strategies

X_4 – Institutional culture strategies

ε – Error term

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents discussion of the major findings based on the main research of the study. The chapter also draws conclusions arising from the summary of the results and contribution of knowledge, recommendations and suggestions for further study. The purpose of this study was to establish the strategies employed by agricultural cooperatives in solving the barriers to women participation in agricultural cooperative societies in Kiambu County.

5.2 Discussions

5.2.1 Socio- demographic factors

In terms of education levels, the mean value for respondents' educational attainment is high. The higher mean values of participants under high participation category imply that women's participation increases along with the progress in education level. Education level of the respondents was found to be correlated positively and significantly at less than 1% probability level. This result consistent with the findings of Coleman and Mwangi (2012) which found that, education (measured by years of schooling) significantly affects women's participation in producer organizations. This result also agrees with the finding of (Birtukan and Yishak, 2017) which stated that, women's participation in cooperatives was positively associated with education level at 1% significance level.

Number of year's women's stay in cooperative membership was found to be correlated positively and significantly at 5% probability level. This result supported by the finding of Maysoon (2015) which stated that as women farmers advance in years of farming experience, their participation in the adaptation of soil and water conservation practices also increase. The results of the study are also in line with the findings of Derib and Nega (2014) who found that there is a positive and significant relationship existing between duration of membership and women participation since people who stayed a long period have developed more experience and was more aware of the cooperatives than those who joined the cooperative at recent year.

5.2.2 Organizational policy strategies and women participation

This study revealed that most respondents regarded the organizational policies in agricultural cooperatives in Kiambu County as a solution barrier to women participation. This was moderately significant ($p=0.000$, $r=0.331$). Women are encouraged to vie for leadership positions in our cooperatives which encouraged them to join since they can participate in decision making. This made them feel that they interest would be taken into account. Gender

mainstreaming programs were conducted regularly in the cooperative societies. The findings from the study concurs Uwayezu and Mugiraneza (2011) which noted that the enactment of new land policies and related regulations had a positive impact on the protection and enforcement of the land rights of female widows and orphans.

One of the respondents of KII said that Co-operatives that need to make changes can start by having gender transformative approaches that mainstream and integrate women into the organizational procedures. We have an effective team network to support our overall operations since we must all co-operate in order to meet our goals and ensure that we all benefit from these operations (Male, KII, Coffee cooperative society, Kiambu County)

“We do not limit anyone from joining even the youth and women can join as long as they have coffee production activities. We have also operationalized human resources and gender policies to enhance gender equity in our cooperative society”. (Female, FGD, Dairy cooperative society, Kiambu County)

Similarly, the study findings concur with Mishra and Sam (2016) which found out that land ownership policies ultimately affect society. Studies undertaken by Safari Shali (2010) and Flick (2009) showed that the managerial factors have direct impact on the level of participation of the agricultural cooperatives' members; this finding is consistent with the findings of the present study on organizational policies.

Therefore, H₀₁ of the study is supported which states that there is no significance influence of organizational policy strategies on organizational strategies barriers to women participation in agricultural cooperative societies in Kiambu County; hence we reject the null hypothesis.

5.2.3 Financial strategies and women participation

The study findings show a negative insignificant relationship between financial strategies and women participation. The relationship was insignificant since loans were based on productivity. The findings contradict Vahidzadeh (2004) which showed that the members' economical features have direct impact on their participation in agricultural cooperatives; this finding contradicts the present study which shows that financial strategies have negative correlation with participation.

The further contradicts the findings of Finley, (2009) which found a significant effect of access to credit on women participation in cooperatives. On the same note, the current study contradicts Simkovic, Michael (2016) which found out that farmers investment and production decisions are closely influenced by their access to financial products. The study findings further concurs with Karlan *et al.*(2017) which found out that access to finance increases farmers

investment choices leading to more participation.

“Women face challenges such as limited access to collateral, lower financial literacy, and a lack of financial independence, which hinders their ability to access loans and other financial services. However, we have adapted strategies such as paying members through mobile phones as a result the constraints of opening bank accounts to get payments are mitigated (Female, FGD, dairy cooperative society, Kiambu County).”

The results of regression analysis revealed that there was insignificant positive relationship ($\beta = 0.105$, $p < 0.169$) between financial strategies and women participation therefore H_{02} of the study is not supported which states that there is no significance influence of financial strategies on barriers to women participation in cooperative societies in kiambu county hence we accept the null hypothesis.

5.2.4 Informational strategies and women participation

The correlation coefficient results showed that there is a significant relationship between the two variables of informational strategies and level of women participation in agricultural cooperatives' members. This finding is consistent with findings of the studies conducted by some researchers as Aghajani (2008) and Scrimgeour *et al.* (2006). The research findings further showed that there is a significant relationship between the two variables of communicational-informational factors and the level of participation of agricultural cooperatives' members. This finding is consistent with findings of the studies conducted by Flick (2009). The findings further concur with Opata *et al.*, (2014) which showed that women's low literacy levels make it difficult for them to obtain information about support services that can help them grow their companies and earn a decent income.

“Women need training in financial literacy, leadership skills, market trends, and coffee production techniques. These trainings will empower them to make informed decisions and contribute more effectively to the co-operative. (Male, FGD, coffee cooperative society, Kiambu County)

The study also indicated that members are given enough notice to attend the meeting at the same time they get notification via bulk small messages from their cooperatives, this has motivated women to participate this contradicts with Recker's (2014) study of women found out that despite change, shared goals among cultural group members remain based on shared beliefs. These shared beliefs influence people's performance in a given situation. On the same note the findings were in agreement with Gochhayat, Giri, and Sugar (2017) which showed that culture should be widely reciprocated and practiced. Research shows that this ensures the

collective and united growth of people.

I am still of the idea that having special session to sensitize women are essential and needed because more than half of our members are women and they will need sessions that covers financial literacy, leadership skills and the market trends. The results will be empowered women who can contribute more actively into the development of the co-operative (Male, KII, Coffee cooperative society, Kiambu County)."

Therefore, H0₃ of the study is supported which states that There is no significant influence of information strategies employed by agricultural cooperatives on information barriers to women participation hence we reject the null hypothesis

5.2.5 Institutional culture strategies and women participation

The correlation coefficient results showed that there is a weak significant relationship between the two variables of institutional culture strategies and level of women participation in agricultural co-operatives. The findings are consistent with Schmiedel, Brock, Vohm, and Recker's (2014) study of women which established that despite change, shared goals among cultural group members remain based on shared beliefs. These shared beliefs influence people's performance in a given situation. The study findings concurred with Ayman and Corabit (2010), which showed that organizational culture favors men in leadership which hinders women participation. Similarly, the findings agree with Kolb (2013) which pointed out the importance of understanding whether individual decisiveness matches that of the organization. This can improve a person's career advancement opportunities. The study showed that organizational culture is a good moderator of performance because it examines the informal culture of an organization in terms of subtle behaviors, behaviors, and values that may disadvantage women.

"We are getting there and we have tried to change our leadership structure to include women by encouraging them to compete for the leadership roles. My dream would be for us to have equal representation into the board and management in the coming years. (FGD, Dairy cooperative society, Kiambu County)"

Therefore, H0₄ of the study is supported which states that There is no significant influence of institutional cultural strategies employed by agricultural cooperatives on institutional cultural barriers to women participation hence we reject the null hypothesis

5.3 Conclusion

Having agricultural land and being a farmer were the most essential criteria to become a member of an agricultural cooperative society. Developing and enforcing gender-responsive policies, ensuring transparent and fair election processes, and continuously educating all members on the importance of gender equity can help achieve this goal

Women members needed better positions like the management board and administrative committee in the cooperative, which is relevant to women's standing in the cooperative's administration and control. This may it is clear that there are institutional and cultural barriers that limit women's access to leadership positions in the cooperative societies. However, promoting women's participation in bureaucracy is crucial for achieving gender equality, good governance, and inclusive decision-making. When women are represented in decision-making roles, there is a greater diversity of perspectives and experiences, leading to more inclusive policies and improved governance. Additionally, increasing women's participation in the public sector can lead to greater economic empowerment for women, contributing to overall economic development.

5.4 Recommendations

Based on the study's significant findings, the following recommendations can be made to enhance the participation of women in cooperative societies.

5.4.1 Organizational policy strategies and women participation

The study recommends that the cooperative societies to have routine policies in place to ensure to make it easier for women to participate in decision making. Women should be encouraged to vie for more leadership roles most of them have expressed no confidence in leadership something the cooperatives should put more emphasis on. Similarly, there is need to improve social networks as majority were not sure whether this is happening in their organizations.

Co-operative societies should address equality issues and make a firm commitment in their policies to correct imbalances that exist.

5.4.2 Financial strategies and women participation

The study findings showed that cooperatives do not play significant role in supplying agricultural produce. The study therefore recommends that the cooperative societies to review networks to ensure that their members access the supply of such commodities. They should identify steady suppliers at a cheaper price. The cooperatives should also review their lending

policy to extend the repayment periods to allow members ample time to repay their loans. This will go a long way to ease the burden thus making more women to participate lending policies to accommodate more women. Most women also lack collateral to secure for loans, the study recommends that the cooperative societies to consider social collateral where members guarantee each other. It was also found out that the cooperatives do not have a link for its members to access loans to carry out agricultural activities and therefore the study recommends contracting suppliers who can supply inputs on credit to members.

Social collateral was found out to be working for members, the study recommends strengthening of the same to accommodate all the members. There is need to educate members on how social collateral works.

5.4.3 Informational strategies and women participation

The study findings revealed that cooperative meetings are scheduled but they coincide with personal schedules therefore there is also need to consult members which time is appropriate for them to attend meetings. Information did not reach many members through social gatherings and therefore the study recommends use of churches, schools and social media to advertise.

It also recommends use of vernacular language stations as they are used in remote areas. There is need to increase the use of bulk short messages (SMS) to make easier to pass information at the same time. It was noted that few instances this mode has been used.

5.4.4 Institutional culture strategies and women participation

The study showed that there were no standards for participation cooperatives are provided for example dormant members are allowed vote in some cooperatives. The study recommends adherence to such rules. It also recommends that audited books of accounts to be accessible to members for scrutiny, this will ensure there is transparency. Therefore, the study recommends regular updates of policies and additional of more policies to guide the operations such as lunch policy.

5.5 Recommendations for further studies

The study sought to establish the aspects of strategies for addressing barriers to women participation in agricultural cooperatives in Kiambu County. This study, therefore, narrowed down on agricultural cooperatives only. Thus, further studies could consider other industries for the purpose of making a comparison of the findings with those of the current study.

Besides, the study was conducted in Kiambu County and thus extensive research could be carried out in the neighboring counties to establish a relational and comparison in performance of counties in Kenya.

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APPENDICES
APPENDIX I: LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

BITANGE MORAA TERESA,
MCDC01/6520/2021
THE CO-OPERATIVE UNIVERSITY OF KENYA

Dear Sir/ Madam,

RE: REQUEST FOR PARTICIPATION IN ACADEMIC RESEARCH STUDY

I am an MCD student at The Cooperative University of Kenya. My area of specialization is Community Development. You are part of a carefully selected group to participate in this research study on “strategies for addressing institutional barriers to women’s participation in agricultural cooperatives in the post-covid-19 recovery period in Kiambu county, Kenya.”

I am requesting that you spare a few minutes from your busy schedule and complete the enclosed questionnaire. All information provided will be used purely for academic purposes and will be treated with utmost confidentiality.

Should you have any difficulties in responding to any area, kindly contact me on +254743067066

Thank you for your participation.

Yours Sincerely,



Bitange Teresa.

MCD student, The Cooperative University of Kenya.

APPENDIX II: RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE

This study aims at analyzing effectiveness Strategies for addressing barriers to women's participation in agricultural cooperatives in the post-covid-19 recovery period in Kiambu County. The questionnaire is designed to collect data on the study variables. All responses will be treated in strict confidence and will not be used for any other purpose apart from that stated. Please answer all the questions in the sections as indicated by either ticking in the blank space provided.

SECTION A: BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Indicate the type of your Cooperative Society. Dairy ☐ Coffee ☐

Indicate your position

Indicate you gender: Male ☐ Female ☐

Please indicate your age

21-30 years ☐ 31-40 years ☐ 41-50 years ☐ Above 50 years ☐

Indicate your highest level of education

Certificate ☐ College diploma ☐ Undergraduate ☐
Postgraduate ☐

How long have you been a member with this Cooperative Society? 1- 2 years ☐ 2 – 4 years ☐
Over 4 years ☐

SECTION B: ORGANIZATIONAL POLICIES AND WOMEN PARTICIPATION IN AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVES

You are required to select the response that best describes your level of concurrence regarding each item statement about organizational policies and women participation in Agricultural cooperatives. Put a tick ☒ where applicable. Strongly Agree (SA) =, Agree (A) =, Neutral (N) = and Strongly Disagree (SD) = SD.

S/N	STATEMENT	SA	A	N	D	SD
1.	In my organization we have an effective team network that Supports organizational operations.					

2.	There is inclusivity in my organization as all members believe that their capabilities can create a positive impact to the Organization in their work.				
3.	Work in my organization is organized such that each person can see the relationship between their work and other Departments to ensure empowerment.				
4.	Routine policies in place give meaning and purpose in all aspects of work operations to enhance capability development.				
5.	Inclusivity in decision making is a key aspect in my organization in all levels of operations				

SECTION C: FINANCIAL BARRIERS AND WOMEN PARTICIPATION IN AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVES

You are required to select the response that best describes your level of concurrence regarding each item statement about financial barriers and womens' participation in Agricultural cooperatives. Put a tick [✓] where applicable. Strongly Agree (SA) = 1, Agree (A) = 2, Neutral (N) = 3, Disagree (D) = 4 and Strongly Disagree (SD) = 5.

S/N	STATEMENT	SA	A	N	D	SD
1.	Cooperative have special products for women that are tailored to their needs					
2.	Our payment is done through mobile to reduce constraints of opening bank account					
3.	There is provision of food stuffs at the cooperative level					
4.	There is payment of advance from milk or coffee supplied					
5.	Women lack moral support from developed firms and lending institutions					
6.	Loan process is tedious					

SECTION D: INFORMATIONAL BARRIERS AND WOMEN PARTICIPATION IN AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVES

You are required to select the response that best describes your level of concurrence regarding each item statement about informational barriers and womens' participation in Agricultural cooperatives. Put a tick [✓] where applicable. Strongly Agree (SA) = 1, Agree (A) = 2, Neutral (N) = 3, Disagree (D) = 4 and Strongly Disagree (SD) = 5

S/N	STATEMENT	1	2	3	4	5
1.	Advertisements are done in churches day and time meetings will be held					
2.	Adequate time is provided for attendance by giving notices earlier					
3.	The cooperative holds education days per zone.					
4.	meetings are done at convenient place where all members can access					
5.	Our cooperative uses local vernacular at radio stations to create awareness					

INSTITUTIONAL CULTURE BARRIERS AND WOMEN PARTICIPATION IN AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVES

You are required to select the response that best describes your level of concurrence regarding each item statement about institutional culture barriers and womens' participation in Agricultural cooperatives. Put a tick [✓] where applicable. Strongly Agree (SA) = 1, Agree (A) = 2, Neutral (N)= 3, Disagree (D) =4 and Strongly Disagree (SD) = 5

S/N	STATEMENT	1	2	3	4	5
1.	The cooperative provides incentives such as fare or food during meetings					
2.	sticking to scheduled meeting agendas					
3.	We strictly keep time					
4.	Leaders are held accountable by providing audited accounts to members					
5.	Members are able and allowed to interrogate audited accounts during annual general meetings					

Thank you for your cooperation

APPENDIX 111.FOCUSED GROUP DISCUSSION FGD GUIDE

Date of FDG.....

Type of the agricultural cooperative

Instructions

Facilitator Note 1: Welcome and introduction

Welcome participants to session by greeting them (Good morning/afternoon/evening) and welcome to our session.

Thank participants for offering to participate in the study and availing themselves for the session in which Collective Action and Access to finance will be the focus of discussion.

Inform them who you are (your name as facilitator), and assistant.

Inform participants the goal of the study and what you will be talking with them about.

Inform participant the focus of FGD (We are seeking their experiences, thoughts, and ideas to help us understand Collective action and access to finance– Use the provided information sheet). Be sure that each participant understands why the FGD is organized and that each wants to participate voluntarily.

Facilitator Note 2: Consent process

Take participants through signing of consent form or record the verbal consent if that is preferred.

Facilitator Note 3: About the focus group

Enquire if participants have participated in an FGD before.

Inform participants how the FGD will proceed (Inform that we will seek to learn from you positive and negative aspects).

Point out that views of each participant are valid and valued (that we appreciate that each participant has important knowledge and experiences, needs, or perspectives that we will want to learn more about through the FGD).

Inform participants that in the discussion we are not trying to get everyone to agree or achieve consensus, rather, we are gathering information so they should air their views freely.

Inform participants that it is okay if a participant has different opinions and ideas from those of other participants in the group.

Facilitator Note 4: Logistics and ground rules

Inform participants the duration the FGD will take (This group discussion will last approximately 90 minutes)

Inform the group on ground rules (Everyone to participate, only one person talks at a time, pay attention to each other's ideas and opinion; no judging a member's contribution to a question as right or wrong, that each contribution is valid; and that the discussion will be audio recorded to help us capture all that is said compared to handwritten notes that will be taken by investigators, and it will allow us to double check our data for accuracy.

Ask participants to kindly not have side conversations and speak clearly and audibly to increase recording quality.

Ask them to switch their mobile phones or have them on silent mode to minimize interruptions. Ask if there are any issues that require clarification or if they are ready to get started.

Facilitator Note 5: Starting of the discussion

If participants do not have questions and indicate readiness to get started with discussion, turn on recorder and begin the discussion. Ask your questions clearly and do not rush participants in their answers.

OBJECTIVES GUIDING THE DISCUSSION

ORGANIZATIONAL POLICY BARRIERS AND WOMEN PARTICIPATION IN AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVES

Does gender-blind policies, practices and services exist within the Co-operative? How should they be addressed?

Does your cooperative society have effective team network that supports organizational operations?

If yes, explain

FINANCIAL BARRIERS AND WOMEN PARTICIPATION IN AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVES

In your own view, does membership in cooperative enhance access to finance?

If yes, does it bridge the access to finance gap

How are payments produce supplied done

What financial benefits do you obtain by being a member in cooperative

INFORMATIONAL BARRIERS AND WOMEN PARTICIPATION IN AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVES

Are there special sessions to sensitize women in your Cooperative Society?

If yes, explain what kind of training/sessions

How are meetings conducted in your Cooperative Society

How have these sessions impacted women in cooperatives?

INSTITUTIONAL CULTURE BARRIERS AND WOMEN PARTICIPATION IN AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVES

Is there flexible and easy to change culture in your organization?

If yes, explain how these impacts you as a member in a cooperative

Thank you for your cooperation

APPENDIX IV.KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS

KII GUIDE

Name of Interviewer_____

Date_____

Name of Interviewee_____

Type of the agricultural cooperative _____

Notes for the Interviewer

Note 1: For interviewer: Interview starts by salutations/ greetings and self-introduction.

Note 2: Interviewer provides information about the study, its purpose and the focus on the three sectors and assures confidentiality following the approved information sheet provided.

Note 3: Interviewer seeks consent of the interviewee to participate in the interview.

Note 4: Questions will structure the interview. The interviewer will have to probe for information, while focusing the discussion to the theme and focus of questions

Note 5: In interviewing, the relevant sector of focus for the particular sub-county should be clearly indicated in the questions

OBJECTIVES GUIDING THE INTERVIEW

ORGANIZATIONAL POLICIES AND WOMEN PARTICIPATION IN AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVES

What can be done to integrate more women into Co-operatives?

Does gender-blind policies, practices and services exist within the Co-operative? How should they be addressed?

FINANCIAL BARRIERS AND WOMEN PARTICIPATION IN AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVES

In your own view, does membership in cooperative enhance access to finance?

If yes, does it bridge the access to finance gap

What financial benefits do you obtain by being a member in cooperative

INFORMATIONAL BARRIERS AND WOMEN PARTICIPATION IN AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVES

Are there empowerment and training programmes in your organization?

How often are they carried out?

What financial benefits do you obtain from these programs?

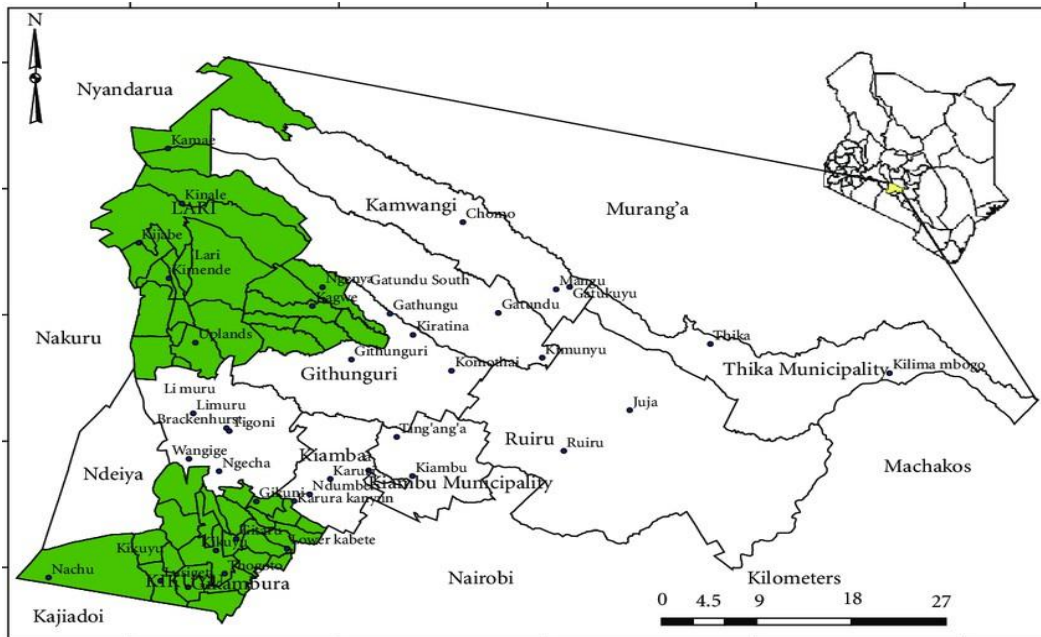
INSTITUTIONAL CULTURE BARRIERS AND WOMEN PARTICIPATION IN AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVES

How are leaders held accountable in your organization

What are the standards for participation in cooperatives

Thank you for your cooperation.

APPENDIX V. STUDY SITE



APPENDIX VI. LIST OF COOPERATIVE SOCIETIES

S/N NAME OF CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETY

1.	Gacharage farmers cooperative society
2.	Gatamaiyu dairy farmers cooperative society
3.	Gatanga farmers cooperative society
4.	Gikambura dairy farmers cooperative society
5.	Githunguri Dairy farmers cooperative society
6.	Gititu farmers co-operative society
7.	Gitutu coffee growers cooperative society limited
8.	Irera farmers cooperative society
9.	Kabete coffee farmers farmers cooperative society
10.	Kabete dairy farmers cooperative society
11.	Kagunduini farmers cooperative society
12.	Kandara farmers cooperative society
13.	Kandara farmers cooperative society
14.	Kariara farmers cooperative society
15.	Kiambaa dairy farmers cooperative society
16.	Kiambu coffee growers cooperative society
17.	Kiamwangi farmers cooperative society
18.	Kikuyu coffee farmers farmers cooperative society
19.	Kikuyu dairy farmers cooperative society
20.	Kiriita dairy farmers cooperative society
21.	Komothai coffee growers cooperative society limited
22.	Lari dairy farmers cooperative society
23.	Limuru coffee farmers cooperative society
24.	Limuru dairy farmers cooperative society
25.	Manyoni farmers cooperative society
26.	Marigi farmers cooperative society
27.	Mikari coffee cooperative society
28.	Muguga dairy farmers cooperative society

29.	Ndumberi coffee cooperative society limited
30.	Ndumberi coffee growers cooperative society
31.	Ndumberi dairy farmers cooperative society
32.	Sigona dairy farmers cooperative society
33.	Tiganga farmers cooperative society
34.	Uplands dairy farmers cooperative society
35.	Multi farm dairy cooperative society
36.	Buchana coffee growers cooperative society limited
37.	New Gatukuyu coffee farmers cooperative society
38.	Kimaratia coffee farmers cooperative society
39.	Gitwe coffee farmers society
40.	Ndarugu dairy cooperative society limited
41.	G's coffee growers cooperative society limited
42.	Mangu Progressive Cooperative
43.	Sigona dairy farmers cooperative society
44.	Irera dairy farmers cooperative society
45.	Uplands growers cooperative society

APPEDIX VII :RESEARCH PERMIT

 REPUBLIC OF KENYA	 NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION
Ref No: 585490	Date of Issue: 23/May/2024
RESEARCH LICENSE	
	
This is to Certify that Ms. Bitange Moraa Teresa 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 Kiambu on the topic: STRATEGIES FOR ADDRESSING BARRIERS TO WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVES IN THE POST-COVID-19 RECOVERY PERIOD IN KIAMBU COUNTY for the period ending : 23/May/2025.	
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