

# Factors Influencing Participation of Men in Self- Help Groups in Kenya

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## Abstract

**Purpose:** Evidence indicates that men in Kenya have in the past been less likely than women to engage in self-help groups. Many poverty alleviation strategies targeting the very poor and the vulnerable in Kenya are designed around Self-Help Groups (SHGs). Nevertheless, the numbers of men are considerably lower than expected, given the levels of poverty in Kenya and in the slums. Studies indicate that all available social institutions and processes are used as avenue for demonstrating femininities and masculinities, affirming existing gender stereotypes and affirming power relations as handed down by patriarchy. Behaviour and attitudes towards SHGs are also linked to wider social – cultural influences which largely constitute of processes, identities, experiences and role expectations in the society. This study sought to investigate the role that patriarchy, masculinity, socio-culture and gender stereotyping play in participation of men in SHGs. The symbolic interaction theory that analyses society by addressing the subjective meanings that people enforce on objects, events, and behaviours will be adopted as the theoretical framework. **Methodology:** A mixed research design was adopted. The study location, Kawangware slums, was chosen because of the many SHGs in existence that are actively being used as a vehicle for poverty reduction among low income male and females and also because it is not extensively studied as compared to other slums. Purposive sampling was used to determine male respondents who were drawn up from members of existing SHGs, non-members of SHGs and officials of SHG service providers. The sample size was determined by the principle of theoretical saturation. Open and closed ended questionnaires, interviews, observation and focus group discussions were used to collect data from the respondents. Data was analysed using quantitative and qualitative methods. Qualitative data was analysed using thematic, content and discourse methods and SPSS was used to analyse quantitative data. **Results:** The results obtained were useful in revealing the reasons for low male subscription in SHGs. Policy makers, Non-Governmental Organizations and financial organizations working with SHGs will all benefit from the results of this study.

**Keywords:** Chama, Gender, Masculinity, Patriarchy, Poverty, Self-help groups

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background to the study

Sub-Saharan Africa is not only poor, but also the region with the highest share of its population living in chronic poverty. Estimates indicate that half of the Chronically Deprived Countries in the world are found in Africa, with about one-quarter of the world's chronically poor living in Sub-Saharan Africa (Chronic Poverty Research Centre, 2009). Just as it is in other developing countries, poverty is a problem that continues to challenge every development effort in Kenya. It is a challenge for all sectors in the country mainly because of the fact that it seeps into all other development problems such as health care, food security, education, HIV and AIDS. Poverty takes most of the national resources becoming a root cause of all the other problems observed in the country. Poverty is a multidimensional social phenomenon that can be analytically divided into two main dimensions: income poverty, which is the lack of income necessary to satisfy basic needs; and human poverty which is the lack of human capabilities for example poor life expectancy, poor maternal health, illiteracy, poor nutritional levels, poor access to safe drinking water and perceptions of well-being (UNDP, 2003).

Poverty in Kenya is caused by factors such as high degree of inequality of income and production resources, inequality in the access to economic and social goods and services and in the participation in social and political process. Other causal factors include lack of education, lack of job opportunities, unfavourable climatic conditions, large family sizes, poor government planning and interventions, lack of good governance and weak democratic institutions and practices. Mismanagement of the anti-poverty programmes and projects and corruption are also cited in literature as important determinants of poverty. (Kulundu, Mwangi, & Mwabu, 2000). In its early years of independence, Kenya was the most prosperous country in East Africa, its GDP per capita rising by 38 per cent between 1960 and 1980. The following two decades to 2000, however, it recorded a zero increase in per capita GDP, and per capita income in 2003, at US\$360, was lower than in 1990. Poverty incidence rose from 49 per cent in 1990 to 56 per cent in 2005 (GoK, 2005)

The Kenya's poor constitute more than half of the total population. Kenya's inter-censal population growth rate declined from 3.9% per annum during 1969-79 to 2.5% during 1989-2000. The country's population is characterized by high mortality rates, low and declining life expectancy, increasing fertility rates (from 4.7

children per woman in 1995-1998 to 4.8 in 2000-2003), high infant mortality and death rates, and declining population growth rates which could be attributed to the HIV/AIDS pandemic. The population in absolute poverty was estimated at 56% in 2000. (Ministry of Planning and National Development, 2005). It is therefore apparent that to achieve sustainable poverty alleviation and development there is need for holistic and all inclusive approaches to dealing with the concerns of the poor in Kenya.

Restoration of adequate economic growth and improvement of people's welfare is a primary objective of the Kenyan government. The commitment of Kenya Government to eradicate poverty is apparent in its current development strategies, as demonstrated with the efforts towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, especially No. 1, on the eradication of poverty to less than 30% of the Kenyans by 2015 and the Kenya Vision 2030. Kenya's Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) describes the country's macroeconomic, structural, and social policies in support of growth and poverty reduction. The principles guiding the PRSP process in Kenya include giving a voice to the poor, Participation and ownership, Transparency, openness and accountability and equitable distribution of national resources and development initiatives

Kenya Vision 2030: First Medium Term Plan (MTP) 2008-2012 outlines the consensus on policies, reform measures, projects and programmes that the Kenyan Government is committed to implement during 2008-2012. This plan constitutes the first phase in the implementation of Kenya Vision 2030, whose aim is to transform the country into a modern, globally competitive, middle income country, offering a high quality of life for all citizens by the year 2030. One major leading projects that the government has prioritised for implementation is wealth creation to reduce income disparities; it is geared towards reducing inequality occasioned by lack of access and affordability of public services and to create income-earning opportunities across gender, social status and regions. A key strategy to attaining this goal is to target more wealth creating opportunities for disadvantaged groups and regions through increased infrastructure spending in the sub-sectors of roads, water, sewerage, communications, electricity targeting poor communities and regions; and availability of affordable and accessible credit and savings programmes.

The government in the last five years has disbursed funds to be accessed by vulnerable or disadvantaged groups; most of this affordable and accessible credit has been disbursed through self-help groups and hence SHG become of paramount importance to poverty alleviation. Some of the funds that groups have benefitted from are - The Ambassador's Self-Help Fund (SSHF) from the US embassy in Kenya that provides small grants to registered self-help groups, youth groups, community based organizations, and specific types of educational institutions and medical facilities, Youth Enterprise Development Fund- run by the state with a goal to reduce unemployment in Kenya, Women Enterprise Fund among others. An interesting phenomenon however is that men- even those at low income class who could be classified as poor and vulnerable, have not participated or been involved in these groups compared to women.

Questions about men are inevitable..... because gender is a living system of social interactions, not a stack of watertight boxes. What affects the social position of women and girls must also affect the social position of men and boys. (Clark Lecture, 2000). Men constitute 48% of the Kenyan population (Census 1999) and although studies and documentation do not place men among the vulnerable compared to other groups such as women, children and the youth, they are an important part of the population that can challenge poverty eradication efforts. Their contribution is important as much as others for attainment of goals and targets set in the MTP and the MDG's, in fact Kenya's PRSP calls for involvement and participation of all.

For far too long, men have been secondary, even coincidental, subjects of analysis in gender-based studies. By and large they had been studied as contributors to or directly responsible for the challenges faced by women, or as the means to the well- being of women and children. Recent studies are gradually transforming the thesis and research methodology, with the result that men are being viewed as an important subject of analysis in their own right. (Gayle, 2004)

In the urban areas, the poverty prevalence is 30 per cent for male-headed households compared to 46.2 per cent for female-headed households (Ministry of State for Planning, National Development and Vision 2030, 2008). Though the poverty in female-headed households is higher we cannot disregard the poverty that is in male-headed households. These statistics show that men experience poverty, and although not at the same level with women, its poverty nevertheless. Mwabu, *et al.* (2000) using the cost of basic needs (CBN) and food energy intake (FEI) approaches in computing poverty rates for Kenya, found that poverty rates were just marginally higher in female-headed households (41 percent) than in male-headed households (38 percent) where husband and wife live together (Mwabu, 2000)

The self-help group (SHG) approach is a model into the field of development whose objectives are to increase the well-being of the poor people, provide access to resources and credit, increase self-confidence, self-esteem and increase their creditability in all aspects of lives. Self-help group is a voluntary and self-managed group of people, belonging to similar socio-economic characteristics, who come together to address a felt need amongst themselves.

Whereas numerous studies demonstrate that investing in women has high returns at both the level of the individual enterprise as well as at the macro level in terms of poverty reduction and development there is a high possibility that lack of involvement of men can have disastrous effects in the future which could lead to loss of gains that would have been made in poverty alleviation and women empowerment. It is important that policies and external forces that impact on the lives of women and men differently are examined. This means acknowledging that policies, plans, programmes and projects need to take into account the differing needs and conditions of men as they do of other groups so that development is truly participatory

For the removal of poverty, a direct anti-poverty structure is required so that it can combat with all those factors which tend to increase the forces of poverty in the both rural and urban areas. It is important to appreciate that the process of poverty alleviation can be more sustainable when all the members of the society are involved. Riruta Location is in Riruta division of the newly created Dagoretti District. There is no conclusive data on the population of Dagoretti district but from the 2009 census, the population of Riruta location is 99,334 people, 49985 men and 49349 females.

## **1.2 Statement of the problem**

The challenge of poverty in Kenya as well as its ambitious Vision 2030 calls for full involvement and participation of all its citizens among other strategies. According to the Government of Kenya, First Medium Term Plan, 2008 – 2012, the challenges that continue to face stimulation of economic growth and Economic Recovery Strategy include the challenge of; the large number of Kenyans still living in poverty; high inequality in income distribution; inequity in gender; considerable disparities in development among the different regions of the country; low savings and investment rates among other reasons.

SHG have proven to be an instrument that can address some of these challenges especially the challenges regarding unemployment, poverty, inequity in gender and in a very big way the challenge of low savings and investment rates. A lot of money aimed at empowering the poor is disbursed through SHG and also of importance is the amount of money that these groups are able to save and empowerment they offer to their members which can be a humongous stimulant to the economy and poverty alleviation. In financial SHG for instance, the shares or the money that members of SGH contribute act as collateral to access credit from financial institutions hence these groups are a lifeline for poor people or low income classes who may not have access to collateral or alternative sources of income

Regardless of the sector they belong to or the types of self-help they represent – whether financial, agricultural or housing, self-help groups are powerful vehicles of social inclusion and economic empowerment of their members. It is recognised that self- help groups represent vital links to programme, both governmental and external development partnerships, which have also been established to support population and address poverty (Ireru, 2010). Yet, despite these glaring facts about the benefits of SHG to the individuals and to efforts towards poverty alleviation men tend to shun them. Statistics indicate that men's participation in poverty alleviation self-help groups in Kenya is much lower compared to women. A study done by Mary Kay Gugerty and Michael Kremer in Kenya indicated that 80 per cent of members of SHG are women and with men taking up 20%. According to the Microcredit Summit Campaign Report, 70% of microfinance clients are women (Harris, 2003). USAID's annual Microenterprise Results Report for 2000 indicated that approximately 70 per cent of USAID-supported Micro Finance Institutions' clients are women.

A 2001 survey by the Special Unit on Microfinance of the United Nations Capital Development Fund (SUM/UNCDF) of 29 microfinance institutions revealed that approximately 60 per cent of these institutions' clients were women. Six of the 29 focused entirely on women. Among the remaining 23 mixed-sex programs, 52 per cent of clients were women meaning that the average representation of men was at 41% (Deshpanda, 2001). The Kenya Vision 2030 Medium Term Plan (MTP) aims at increasing real GDP growth from an estimated 7 per cent in 2007 to 10 per cent by 2012. Savings and investment levels are targeted to increase at a high rate in order to support the high economic growth and employment creation envisaged under the Plan. (Ministry of State for Planning, National Development and Vision 2030, 2008). This will not be achievable without a multi-participatory approach which includes men who comprise a massive 48% of Kenyans.

Though it is a fact that women are more vulnerable than men and deserve to be empowered, it is a fact that some specific groups of men are vulnerable and given that vision 2030 has a goal of empowering the most vulnerable, in some settings men should be beneficiaries of SHG through which resources and capacity building are channelled. It is concerning that because men (even at very low income classes) disdain participation in SHG they do not benefit from all that comes with participation- economic empowerment, social inclusion and capacity building. For example some banks in Kenya have now introduced *chama* accounts to attract bulk deposits from the informal investment groups such as SHG which earn a premium above average deposit rates, banks and MFI's offer business trainings to SHG that are banking with them- in this case men who are not participating lack these skills that are very necessary in revitalising the economy. This study therefore sought to investigate the factors that influence men's absence in self- help groups

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

This study was compelled by the fact that poverty alleviation has been a difficult pursuit for Kenya and Africa. It is therefore paramount that choice and consequent successful implementation of poverty alleviation interventions is influenced by implementation capabilities and awareness of what does and does not work. This study therefore aimed at giving men a chance to tell their side of the story as to why they behave the way they do and hence make it possible for programme designers and other stakeholders to comprehend the dynamics that hinder men participation in financial poverty alleviation groups (and other SHG) and consequently unveil a different bearing of potential challenges of poverty alleviation and gender equality and equity.

The study will further contribute to understanding the silence and mystery that surround the subject and practices of men in the policy and development field. It will also contribute to the on-going gender debate especially the aspect of harmonious co-existence between men and women. Finally, the study will contribute to the MTP's flagship project -conducting a Comprehensive Study and Analysis of Poverty Reduction Initiatives- by provision of insight on how to plan poverty alleviation interventions that are all inclusive; specifically bringing men on board and consequently inform designing and implementation of poverty alleviation interventions and policies

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

Given the situation described above, this study aims at determining;

- (1) How patriarchy influences men's participation in self-help groups
- (2) How masculinity influences men's participation in self-help groups
- (3) How socio-culture influences men's participation in self-help groups
- (4) How gender stereotyping influences men's participation in self-help groups

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

As Kenya seeks to achieve vision 2030 and mostly important eradicate poverty – as articulated in economic and social pillars- it is crucial that participation of all its citizens is harnessed and organised. All categories of citizens –women, men, youth and children- are significant in their different and inimitable ways. Although women, children and the youth have been seen to be and actually are more vulnerable and hence need more attention, it may be counterproductive if these groups are continuously viewed in isolation or given consideration without equitably looking at the men's needs. Conditions related to poverty as they relate to men must be examined as well as analyse how policies and programming impact on the lives of men differently from women, children and the youth. This way it will be possible to acknowledge and design policies, plans, programmes and projects that take into account the differing needs and conditions of men that would encourage their participation in development leading to just holistic poverty eradication.

### **1.6 Significance of the study**

Tackling poverty has been a daunting task for Kenya just as it has been for many other developing countries. Poverty has continued to challenge development specialists with various poverty alleviation and empowerment interventions and approaches proving to be unreliable and sometimes counterproductive from time to time. Courses on poverty studies, chronic poverty and other related courses have been introduced at various levels to try to understand poverty and come up with ingenious ways to assuage it corroborating how complex it has become. It is therefore goes without saying that it's vital that studies aimed at understanding various dynamics of poverty are done and that all possible underlying and sometimes non-obvious structural factors that cause or exacerbate poverty are reconnoitred to inform poverty alleviation project designs.

Study of male participation/non-participation of men in SHG will inform project designers, development specialists and other stakeholders who are investing in SGH as approach to wealth creation and empowerment – it will to an extent explain why men repulse SHG despite the values, including equality and equity, solidarity, social responsibility, and caring for others, upon which they are based and principles that they exemplify – voluntary and open membership, democratic member control, member economic participation, member education, and concern for the community which ideally should be attractive.

The very mandate of SHG places them in a unique position to ensure and promote gender equality and hence without having men on board who are key stakeholders in pursuit for gender equality and equity sustainable attainment of this objective will remain a mirage. It is wise that options are explored to bring men on board or barriers of male participation dealt with for sustainable achievement of poverty eradication.

### **1.7 Definition of key terms**

- Poverty:** Lack of basic human needs, which commonly includes clean and fresh water, nutrition, health care, education, clothing and shelter
- Patriarchy:** A social system in which the male acts as the primary authority figure central to society,

community or family  
**Masculinity:** Possessing qualities or characteristics considered typical of or appropriate to a man  
**Self-concept:** the image we have of who and what we are  
**Gender:** Range of characteristics of femininity or masculinity  
**Self-Help:** Self-guided improvement  
**Chama:** Chama is a Kiswahili word for association or cooperative. It is a name commonly given to financial self- help groups in Kenya

## 2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 *Urban Poverty and Men*

Between a third and half of Kenya's urban population live in poverty. The urban population is 22% of total population with urbanization at 4.2% annual rate of change (2010-15 est.) (Central Intelligence Agency, 2010). The country is urbanising at such a speed that it is projected to be 50 per cent urban by 2020, and half of all Kenya's poor will be living in urban areas (Oxfam, 2009). In this respect there can be no doubt that poverty itself is rapidly urbanising in Kenya. Moreover, the percentage of the urban population in the poorest categories of all (the 'food poor1' and 'hardcore poor2') is on the increase, and the gap between rich and poor is rapidly widening. While some urban dwellers have seen their position improve due to impressive levels of economic growth in recent years, poverty has been deepening for the majority of the urban poor who have become trapped in downward spirals of deprivation and vulnerability. (Oxfam, 2009)

Poverty in households headed by women differs from male headed households, but the difference between the two subgroups is not substantial. Poverty rates among polygamous households headed by men are as high as in polygamous households headed by women. Poverty rates are also high among the unskilled workers in both the private and public sector. According to Sweetman (Sweetman, ND) Men in poverty are clearly excluded from participating equally in decision-making at international and national levels, and this has a profound impact on how they live now and their chances of escaping poverty in the future.

In recent years the concept of poverty has broadened to encompass multiple dimensions ranging from empowerment, voice and inclusion to accountability of institutions and lack of security. Gender however has stubbornly remained a one-sided topic group. Men are seen as the guilty party, lurking ominously in the background. Little effort has been devote to understanding men's possible motivations let alone their own gendered conditions (Bannon & Correia, 2006)

Amuyunzu –Nyamongo and Francis (2006) in a World Bank publication have defined empowerment as a social action that promotes the participation of people, organisations and communities in gaining control over their lives. They also noted that Kenyan men have experienced the reverse of empowerment in the last two decades. Disempowerment is understood as a process that has decreased their abilities to overcome barriers to self-actualisation (Bannon & Correia, 2006). Given that many women already interact with men on a daily basis in their households and public lives, involving men can make interventions more relevant and workable (Chant & Guttman, 2000). Male inclusion increases men's responsibility for change.

#### *Male Participation in development*

James in a presentation during a gender equality expert group meeting brought out an interesting dynamic into the male participation debate. He articulated areas in which men's involvement may be ratified- working with men as decision makers and service providers; integrating men into the development process with a 'gendered lens'; and targeting groups of men and boys when and where they are vulnerable (for example in relation to issues of poverty or sexuality). (James, 2003). The third class fits in very well with what this study is aiming at finding .Men have been targeted mostly as decision makers and service providers ignoring the vulnerable aspect. (Flood, 2004), in his article in the Development Bulletin, questions whether men should be included in programming and policy related to gender. He further questions how male inclusion can be made most beneficial. It therefore becomes clear that the question of male involvement is slowly creeping into the agenda in gender and development work, as it is in such fields as sexual and reproductive health but again there lacks clarity on how best to fit it in

#### *Self Help groups and poverty alleviation*

Self Help groups approach is well studied with most literature advocating for community organisations and SHG's as a good approach for poverty alleviation and have to a great extent proven that they play an important part in empowerment (especially of women). Community organisations are valued for their potential contribution to the development of social capital and a vibrant civil society. Moreover, indigenous organizations of the poor and disadvantaged are often seen as a form of collective action that promotes justice and equality (Edwards, 2000)

However it is noted that despite the fact that SHG are valued for their potential contribution to

development, the focus of the government and development agencies on women and girls and the empowerment and emancipation of women and affirmative action have largely side-lined men (Bannon & Correia, 2006) just by the way development is designed and organised.

The history of SHG can to some extent explain the modern organisation of SHG. In Victorian Europe, the need for self-help group formation was generated by failing social structures especially in the area of health, which led to increased poverty, disease and death among the vulnerable population. Groups were then formed to deal with the health crisis. In America the foundation of modern self-help was laid in the nineteenth century. The motivation for forming these groups was immigration to the New World where people were thrust into a strange environment without services to support them. They hence formed groups to help them survive. The main activity of these groups was social services such as burial and funeral rites as well as borrowing and lending money.

In Asia, the Gandhian philosophy of self-reliance provided a background for the development of self-help groups in India. In India, the primary emphasis of these groups was poverty alleviation. These groups then developed into full-grown economically oriented co-operatives with clear schemes of saving and credit provision which specifically targeted women. It is estimated that in the 1990s around 85 per cent of the groups in India were women.

In Kenya, the self-help group concept began in rural area as a women's initiative for availing ready cash for emergencies as well as support for occasions such as weddings and funerals. In Kenya, the self-help group concept started out in the rural areas primarily as a women's initiative with the specific aim of social and economic empowerment. Membership of these groups was generally based on residential proximity or family relatedness. Later models have based their membership also on economic or developmental activities. The initial self-help groups were women's groups whose main activity was saving and lending money - the popularly-called 'merry-go round'. Older groups, which are more cohesive, tend to move on to development activities such as the purchase of household utensils, items of clothing (khangas and sweaters), iron roofing sheets and water tanks, as well as the construction of latrines and bathrooms. Other than these activities, the self-help group provides the single most important forum for education among women at the grass roots. This is due to its social organisation and cohesion, important considerations for peer influence and healthy competition among members. (Mutugi, 2006)

The approach of Self-help Groups (SHGs) towards poverty alleviation is that it should be self-help. The logic is that individual effort is too inadequate to improve their fate. This brings about the necessity for organizing in a group by which they get the benefit of collective perception, collective decision making and collective implementation of programmes for common benefit (Karmakar, 1999). These groups participate in agriculture and other income-generating projects, such as fish farming, beekeeping, or handicraft production. Most groups also engage in financial activities and labour exchange. In particular, most groups provide insurance in the form of emergency assistance to members in the face of adverse financial shocks. In the case of illness or death, groups often take up collections and visit members' homes to provide extra labour. Most of the groups also run rotating savings and credit associations, known in Kenya as merry-go-rounds. (Kremer, 2002). Historically, SHG membership in Kenya and all over Africa has been predominantly women with their roots in a long tradition of community self-help groups, such as funeral and rotating labour clubs.

(Chant & Guttman, 2000), have however brought out another dimension to the whole debate of participation showing the need for involving men in activities meant to empower women. Leaving men out of efforts towards gender equality can provoke male hostility and retaliation, arising out of both exclusion and more general anxieties among men, as some development projects have found. Focusing only on women, in relation to such issues as economic participation, credit, or sexual and reproductive health for example, can leave women with yet more work to do and thus intensify gender inequalities. Women-only projects can mean that women still have to deal with unsympathetic men and patriarchal power relations, and can leave women with sole responsibility for sexual health, family nutrition, and so on (Chant & Guttman, 2000). Men may also feel that as men they have been seen as 'all the same', and may resent approaches that are tactless or overly negative. Overall, as Chant and Guttman conclude (2000:23) including men will be critical to the successful creation of gender equality.

### ***Review of literature according to the study variables***

#### **Patriarchy**

The Encyclopedia of Sex and Gender defines patriarchy as "an old general term for the disproportionate holding of power and authority by males. Patriarchy is a set of social relationships which provide for the collective domination of men over women. Fundamentally, patriarchy is "the manifestation and institutionalization of male dominance over women and children in the family and the extension of male dominance over women in society in general. Traditionally, even though production systems were underpinned by women's productive and domestic labour, as in cash crop production, male dominance was secured through patriarchal land tenure

systems and customary norms controlling the disposal of cash income. (Francis, 2005).

FAO studies confirm that while women are the mainstay of small-scale agriculture, the farm labour force and day-to-day family subsistence, they have more difficulties than men in gaining access to resources such as land, credit and productivity-enhancing inputs and services (Women in Development Service, ND). This is mainly because patriarchy offers resources to men. Since SHG ethos are based on democracy and equal membership, then the correlation between non-participation and patriarchy becomes apparent; understanding patriarchy gives an important insight into why men would not want to be in SHG, where one has to be vulnerable and where one needs all members to succeed.

The institutions and processes that compose patriarchal system are conceptualized as webs of gendered relations which sustain and reproduce male social power such as within various cultural sites that is, language, religion, media and popular culture, and education (Kilonzo, 2011). Patriarchy operates on a system of male hierarchical relations and male solidarity- a social and ideological construct which considers men (who are the patriarchs) as superior to women. Marginalized men seek to challenge the position of powerful men but not patriarchy, as they themselves want to occupy the position of patriarch. Powerful and marginalized men in this sense hold on to the past with the intention of maintaining patriarchal values, symbols and status – a past which is obsolete. Men therefore believe in their right to dominate, and those unable to dominate are deemed to be failed individuals. (Gayle, 2004)

Kenyan culture is predominantly patriarchal. Patriarchy in the Kenyan society is an organized social structure whereby men as a group hold more power than women – men are given power and authority over women. Power is traditionally believed to be the province of men while women are seen as exercising power primarily at home (Kassily & Onkware, 2010). Gender inequality in ownership and access to productive assets is thus prevalent. Women only enjoy user rights, which are granted by men, to land and livestock especially cattle, goats and sheep. Poultry is the only asset which women have ownership and control rights. Men own and control the other assets

When women's profile within the communities' are raised, it may lead to mistrust by men who again influences their relationships and associations with other groups. Men also tend to feel threatened by the perceived influence wielded by women. (Nokia Research Africa and Institute for Development Studies, University of Nairobi, ND). In every essence SHG are meant to raise the profiles of all the members and hence men may feel a bit uncomfortable in groups where they and women are at the same level to an extent of needing women guarantors to access credit- this challenges their position as handed by patriarchy.

### **Masculinity**

There is an increasing popular and scholarly interest in men's issues and the concept of masculinity (Bannon & Correia, 2006). Masculinity, like gender and patriarchy, is a socially defined construct influenced by innumerable forces including history, culture, religion and economics. Male identities are partially created in the process of individuation that young males go through in an effort to define themselves as separate from their mothers. Strict gender roles are internalized, and boys learn to divorce themselves from qualities they identify as feminine – passivity, weakness, illness, dependence and sensitivity (Male Participation in Sexual and Reproductive Health: New Paradigms Symposium, 1998). It is worthwhile noting that SHG involvement is all about dependence on one another, win-win approach(not competitive) and sensitivity yet dominance, confidence, strength, competition and rationality are seen as masculine, while submission, nurturing, caring, sensitivity and emotionality are seen as feminine- these 'feminine' attributes make SHG work.

Males or male-defined traits include assertiveness, aggressiveness, ruggedness, toughness, decisiveness, inventiveness, risk-taking, confrontation, conquest seeking, ruthlessness and having a killer instinct. Men's own health and wellbeing are limited by contemporary constructions of manhood (Kaufman, 2003).

Where masculinity is associated with the capacity to provide and fend for families and households, men and boys are increasingly suffering an identity crisis. Many of them cope by resorting to risky and violent activities which revalidate them as males. To understand the rapid emergence of violent and self-destructive masculinities among poor men in Africa, one must therefore recognise the unmaning and victimising implications of poverty in the face of the unremitting construction of manliness in terms of power and the ability to provide for and defend ones' family. African men require help in myriad fronts. The most critical help to offer to African men is to support them to clearly realise and accept that they are victims of cultural norms and need help. Currently, no or few programs exist in the continent to directly help men to understand how their gendered behaviours are at the heart of the harms they suffer. Helping men to know themselves and be able to engage with and peel through their own behaviours in the light of gendered cultural constructions is a logical complement to women's health and children's health, and an essential component of building a complete and inclusive health care system, achieving optimal overall health in the continent, and getting men to be true allies in the global struggle for gender equality (Izugbara, 2009)

The belief that it is more masculine and therefore better to be entirely independent and invulnerable

(never disabled, never sick, never vulnerable) leads to a collective failure to provide social services such as health care, unemployment insurance, welfare benefits, and other benefits that help everyone, including men and boys (Ashley, 2011). This then justifies why men would not want to be involved in SHG since to be a member one has to be vulnerable and rely on others to succeed

One dominant discourse is hegemonic masculinity which, (Connell, 2000) points out; men internalize and act out in day to day practices as they construct and reconstruct what it means to be a man. In the context of organizations, such practices may help to align the norms of hegemonic masculinity with the performance of their work and the 'gender work' undertaken by men in this study may well support this view. However, as Kaufman (1994) (Kaufman M. , 1994) suggest, few men meet the hegemonic standard so that for the majority, manhood is 'chronically insecure' and a source of anxiety. This anxiety is particularly acute for men in non-traditional occupations whose relationship to this dominant form is made precarious by their association with femininity

Current efforts to get men to sincerely support women's empowerment are guided by distrustful, if not wrong-headed suppositions, about men being less gendered than women, about practices of masculinity universally benefiting all men and harming women and children, and about the 'dividends of patriarchy' being bestowed equally and universally on all men. The idea of men as gendered people, who occupy differential positions in the structures of benefits which masculinity marshals, has yet to truly inform programmatic efforts. The focus of interventions has been on shielding women and children from, and empowering them against, the perceived excesses and harmful activities of men – irresponsible risk-taking, drunkenness, devil-may-care attitude, sexual irresponsibility and promiscuity, poor fathering practices, and masculine violence, in contexts ranging from the home to bureaucratic organisations, and even war. The glaring rarity across most of Africa of policies to directly help men to deal with the impact of social constructions of manhood, and of agencies dedicated to men's welfare, championing the cause of men, or specifically working to help men recognise the implications of culture in their lives, has its bridgehead in the lack of understanding of men as gendered people (Izugbara, 2009)

### **Socio-culture**

Culture... is... the whole complex of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features that characterize a society or a social group. It includes not only arts and letters, but also modes of life, the fundamental rights of the human being, value systems, traditions and beliefs. (UNESCO, 2001). The male is socialized within the culture to think of himself as powerful figure that does not need others (especially women) to succeed. Boys are socialized to prove that they are powerful and in charge and above all to make sure that others acknowledge this. This often develops a sense of insecurity in the male as he has to continuously try to prove himself as a strong person who does not need others for help, he should be a provider of help. Men are culturally supposed to provide leadership in decision making

African culture perpetuates culturally sanctioned biases against women and provides excuses for men. Cultural biases operate at all levels ranging from national institutional level, government policy, community level, household and individual levels (Kiriti, 2003b). Socio-cultural arena in a subtle way maintains an illusion of male independence and female dependence. We can't deny that masculinity and femininity are often underestimations of male dominance and female subordination. Hence the disappointment that a man feels when he cannot live up to societal expectations is often quite strong. His attempt to gain power and respect can also be extreme and increases with the level of perceived threat to his masculinity. In this case joining a SHG would be a threat to a man who may be exposed if he cannot pay a loan in time or needs a loan and has to get women to be his guarantors.

Throughout Africa, as in many parts of the globe, men die younger than women and usually from preventable causes. Many deaths among men result from 'doing gender', or doing what is culturally considered to be 'men's things' for example, fighting in wars, street fighting, social drinking, smoking, speeding, refusing to show pain or appear vulnerable etc. The desire to redeem one's identity as a true male has been, for years, a key driver of criminal and other anti-social acts including cult and gang membership, robbery, drug trafficking, and murder among African men and boys. African men's proverbial reluctance to seek health care, financial help and professional counselling is also largely culturally-inspired. Rather than go through seemingly unmanly, nay humiliating medical procedures, several African men prefer to die in silence (Izugbara, 2009).

The cultural belief that men are independent, and that their lives are not linked to women's, allows many men to remain in development which harm them enormously. A culture that fetishizes dominance rather than cooperation and partnership cannot imagine other models for living and is not supportive of cooperation approach to anything.

### **Gender Stereotypes**

The concept of gender stereotypes is crucial in understanding why men would not want to participate in what



would be referred to as 'feminine' institutions. Gender stereotypes are sets of attributes ascribed to the groups of men and women by the virtue of their sex. Stereotyping is a cognitive mechanism to simplify and organise the complex world. Stereotyping is very difficult to change. Gender stereotypes lead to faulty reasoning and actions in the advantage or disadvantage of others (Yordanova, 2006). Gender stereotypes are assumptions, false ideas or beliefs certain people tend to have about others, especially to members of opposite sex in regard to ascribed cultural roles (Zalo & Akong'a, 2007)

Whether we like to admit it or not, we all use stereotypes as information shortcuts in everyday life. Because we cannot have full information about everything, we often rely on conventional and oversimplified conceptions (Aalberg & Jenssen, 2007). A stereotype that may influence targeting of women for SHG and for empowerment as opposed to men is that women are more caring than men. Women are more likely than men to identify their own interests with those of their dependents, an attitude which is essential to the welfare of children and other household members (Jiggins, 1989). In this case it becomes clearer why many empowerment programmes would want to focus on women; simply because the gain will trickle down to others which is a stereotype because there is a likelihood of finding a man or a woman falling into either caring or uncaring. Stereotypical gender roles have probably existed as long as human culture and are such a natural part of our lives that we barely take notice of them. Nevertheless, images of what we perceive as typically masculine and feminine in appearance and behaviour depend on the individual's perception. Within each gender one can find different stereotypes. A commonly assumed idea is that men are hard and tough, while women are soft and vulnerable. (Bauer & Jahlmar, nd) .

A stereotype can be described as a form of thought process created in our own mind. It is an oversimplification, or categorization, of a certain group's traits and behaviour. This oversimplification is based on previous experiences with people belonging to the same group. When meeting a new person, it is easy to perceive him/her as belonging to an earlier created category, instead of seeing a unique individual with diverse characteristics. Stereotypes are not merely images in a single person's mind; through language they are shared and maintained by many. Because language is culturally shared, "it provides an ideal means of collectively defining and preserving stereotypic beliefs" (194). (Luciano & Maas, 1996)

Gender stereotyping also supposes that men cannot be trusted and investing in them would lead to loss of resources. Evidence in (Khandker, 2003) suggests that lending to women yields greater social and economic impacts relative to lending to men with fear is that if aid is given to men, they might sell food stamps and misspend resources, possibly wasting money on gambling, tobacco, and alcohol. The superiority of women as hardworking, reliable, trustworthy, socially responsible, caring and cooperative is often asserted; whilst men on the other hand are frequently portrayed as lazy, violent, promiscuous and irresponsible drunkards (Clever, 2000).

Gender stereotypes are one of the most persistent causes of gender inequality. They are rooted in every aspect of life and we encounter them at every stage of life. If not dealt with, gender stereotypes on the 'proper' roles of women and men become easily imprinted in people's thoughts and minds and are (re)produced from generation to generation (Gortnar, 2008) and largely determine how we relate with others. Stereotypes can lead development workers or people responsible for empowering to actually end up discriminating against them.

### ***Knowledge gaps***

Though a few writers are seeing the need of involvement of men there is no documentation on why men do not participate in SHG which makes it difficult to address the real root causes that challenge their involvement and participation. There is also little knowledge on the barriers of male participation in SHG as vehicles of poverty alleviation and strategies of dealing with these barriers for an 'all inclusive' approach to development. There also lacks information on the relationship between existing poverty alleviation policies on empowerment and men involvement in SHG and general poverty alleviation and lack of knowledge on the perceptions of SHG that men in Kenya and Africa have.

Although the gender and development approach has provoked thinking on addressing the attitudes and practices of men, whether as clients of development agencies or as policy-makers and practitioners evidence is showing that more is being done focusing on men as policy makers and practitioners ignoring the aspect of men as clients of development. There also lacks knowledge on alternative poverty alleviation methodologies and interventions that men are keen on participating. Little has been said on what happens to the men who are in the vulnerable group as classified in group 3 by James. The study will determine the reasons for low male participation in Self Help Groups despite their established success in poverty eradication and financial empowerment among women and the few men who are engaged and determine perceptions that men from Kawangware have about participating in SHGs

### ***Summary of the literature reviewed***

This chapter explicated on the literature review related to urban poverty, male participation and SHG as well as

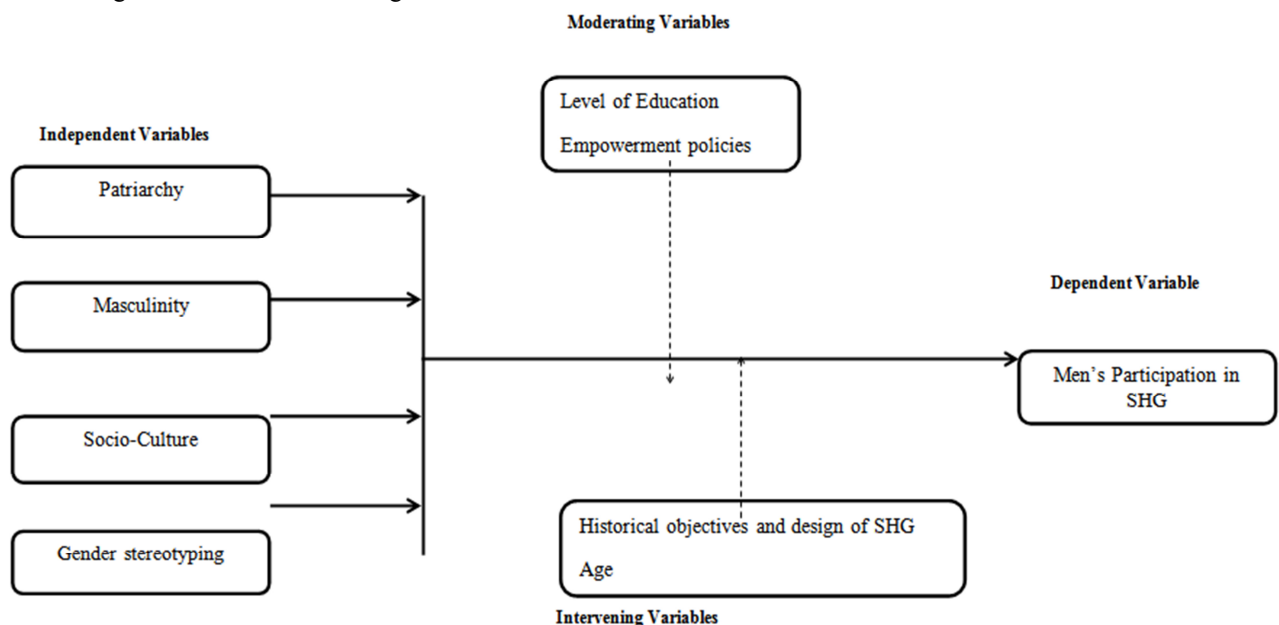
literature related to identified variables: Patriarchy, masculinity, socio-cultural expectations and gender stereotyping. Basically, all the literatures simply show that empowerment of women is the primary attempt of the formulation of SHG and this could explain the absence of men. As the women are oppressed in all spheres of life, they need to be empowered in all respect of life. Women empowerment is one of the targets of the MDG however it is important to acknowledge that trying to change the situation of women without looking at how the men in their lives might be affected made an ineffective strategy (Akerkar, 2001)

Reviewed literatures indicate that lack of male participation in SHG is a gender relations issue. Explicitly addressing men can increase men’s belief that they too will gain from gender equality and can engage men directly in the renegotiation of gender relations. Male inclusion can speak to many men’s sense of anxiety and fear as ‘traditional’ masculinities are undermined. Men’s suffering (such as men’s growing burden of illness or social and economic marginalisation among young, poor men) is worth addressing in its own right, and in terms of its potential impact on women (Chant & Guttman, 2000)

The benefits of SHG and other community organisations are well documented. The need for creativity and involvement of all citizens to eradicate poverty is advocated for; for removal of poverty, a direct anti-poverty scheme is required so that it can combat with all those factors which tend to increase the forces of poverty in the both rural and urban areas. (Sumitra & Dukhabandhu, ND). There is clear argument that the process of poverty alleviation can be more sustainable when all the members of the family are involved. Gender stereotyping, masculinity and patriarchy through the literatures are shown to play important roles in men’s behaviours and attitudes. Overall, the literature indicates that the endorsement of traditional patriarchy ideology, conformity to masculine norms, and gender role conflict are all associated with men’s behaviours and attitudes. However, there are very few studies that have directly compared the impact of various masculinity and patriarchy measures on men’s behaviours and attitudes.

**Conceptual frame work**

The conceptual framework illustrated below, shows the relationships that exist between the dependent and independent variables under the study. The dependent variable is men’s participation in SHG as a vehicle for poverty alleviation. The independent variables that will be investigated to establish their level of influence on the dependent variable are: Patriarchy, masculinity, socio-culture and gender stereotyping. Also presented are the moderating variables and intervening variables.



**Theoretical Framework**

To understand men’s behaviour in regard to shunning participation in SHG the Symbolic Interaction Theory is applied. Symbolic interaction theory analyses society by addressing the subjective meanings that people enforce on objects, events, and behaviours. Biased meanings are given ascendancy because it is believed that people behave based on what they believe and not just on what is objectively factual. Accordingly, society is thought to be socially constructed through human construal. People interpret and give meaning to one another’s behaviour and these interpretations form the social bond dictating the behaviour of the society or community. For the purpose of this study, the basis of using this theory is that there are meanings that men have accorded to SHGs through their interactions with one another and with the society that could be biased and informed by the

variables that have been identified thus; Patriarchy, masculinity, socio-cultural influences and gender stereotyping. This theory also fits within the study because all the four variables are socially constructed and are reinforced through human analysis.

Herbert Blumer (1900–1987), who instigated the symbolic interaction theory, stated that people do not respond directly to the world around them, but to the meaning they bring to it, Blumer observed that every time social interaction occurs, people creatively construct their own understanding of it - whether “real” or not - and behave accordingly. Society, its institutions, and its social structure exist - that is, social reality is given - only through human interaction (Blumer, 1969). In this case therefore there is a meaning that men do not just shun SHGs but there is a meaning that they bring to it which makes them feel that they do not belong in them.

Herbert argued that the human society consists of people engaging in symbolic interaction; people become particularly human through their interaction with others and are conscious and self-reflective beings who actively shape their own behaviour. Reality is what members agree to be reality. And in the case of men participation, men will behave according to what the society refer to as manly and shun what is viewed as womanly. People interact according to how they perceive a situation.

Symbolic interactionists contend that concepts used to collectively categorize people in classes such as ethnicity and gender do not exist objectively but develop through a socially constructed process. Individuals are not born with a sense of self but develop self-concepts through social interaction. An interesting aspect of this theory is the argument that self - concept is shaped by the reactions of significant others and by our perceptions of their reactions. In the case of this study then it shows that there is a likelihood that men may be shunning SHG because of the reactions that they have had from others in regard to these groups and also the perceptions and importance they put on those reactions. This confirms that development or empowerment cannot happen in a vacuum; attitudes of other people can affect the group that you are trying to work with and this shows that there is a high possibility that the societal expectations of men and the stereotypes they put on SHG could be behind the low participation of men in SHG

The Symbolic Interaction Theory maintains that self- concept, once developed, provides an important motive for behaviour and that to understand human behaviour we must understand how people define the things - objects, events, individuals, groups, structures—they encounter in their environment. In this case, this calls for understanding of the self-concept that men have and also what they view as a would be reaction of significant other who would in this case be their peers or the society in general if they participated in SHG. It is also paramount that we understand how men define the SHG to get to the root cause of their behaviour of non-participation.

Symbolic interaction theory takes into account that social interaction is a process governed by norms that are largely grounded on culture. Cultural norms offer general rules for role behaviour, however symbolic interactionists assert that people have freedom in the way they act out roles. The context of the interaction is usually a key determinant of role performance. This aspect of the Symbolic Interaction Theory then gives a foundation for exploring the underlying cultural norms and expectations that could be attributed to lack of male participation in SHG. This would to a large extent also inform lack of participation in other areas such as reproductive health and adult literacy where statistics are as disturbing as they are in SHG participation.

It therefore becomes apparent that we need to find out the symbolic value that men give to SHG through interaction with others and hence understand the low level of participation and also inform future design of empowerment projects targeting men.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### ***Research Design***

A research design is a plan for addressing the research objectives or hypotheses. Research design is the conceptual structure within which research would be conducted. This study adopted mixed methods research design. A mixed research design is a procedure for collecting, analysing, and “mixing” both quantitative and qualitative research and methods in a single study to understand a research problem. (Creswell, 2012). The combination of elements of qualitative and quantitative approaches such as use of qualitative and quantitative viewpoints, data collection, data analysis and inference techniques provided breadth and depth of understanding and corroboration of information. Mixed research design is used when both quantitative and qualitative data, together, provide a better understanding of a research problem than either type by itself, when one type of research (qualitative or quantitative) is not enough to address the research problem or answer the research questions and for pragmatism – practicality; multiple view points; biased and unbiased; subjective and objective (Abraham Fischler School of Education, ND).

There are four major rationales for mixing quantitative and qualitative approaches: participant enrichment (i.e., the mixing of quantitative and qualitative techniques for the rationale of optimizing the sample; such as increasing the number of participants), instrument fidelity (i.e., maximizing the appropriateness and/or utility of the instruments used in the study, whether quantitative or qualitative; for e.g., via a pilot study),

treatment integrity (i.e., mixing quantitative and qualitative techniques in order to assess the fidelity of interventions, treatments, or programs), and significance enhancement (i.e., mixing quantitative and qualitative techniques in order to maximize researchers' interpretations of data). (Collins, Onwuegbuzie, & Sutton, 2006). The mixed research design was selected for this study to enable the researcher use multiple methods to research a process or a problem from all sides. The design was adopted because the use of different approaches would help in focusing on a single process and confirming the data accuracy. This design also ensured that result from qualitative analysis complements result quantitative analysis.

### **Research Paradigm**

This study used methodologies aligning with post positivist research paradigm. In this belief, it is argued that although reality is there to be studied, captured and understood; it can never be fully apprehended; only approximated. It also relies on multiple methods as a way of capturing as much of reality as possible while placing emphasis on the discovery and verification of theories (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). The post-positivism emphasizes the importance of multiple measures and observations, each of which may possess different types of error, and the need to use triangulation across these multiple sources to try to get a better drop on what's happening in reality.

### **Ethical considerations**

Ethical considerations based on Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) will be strictly adhered to in the process of gathering data for the study. The following actions will be taken by the researcher to ensure that the study complies with the accepted ethical guidelines: Detailed instructions in the instruments assuring the participants confidentiality and anonymity; Letters written by the researcher to participants to request their participation and emphasising their own discretion in responding to the interview; and All contact details of the researcher given on the letter accompanying the instruments

### **Target population**

The study targeted male members of SHGs and low income males who are not members of any SHG in Kawangware slums of Riruta location, Dagorretti District. Management of institutions and organisations working with SHG and government officials responsible for registering SHG will also be targeted.

### **Sampling**

A sample is a subset from a larger population. Sampling, is the process of selecting "a portion, piece, or segment that is representative of a whole" (The American Heritage College Dictionary, 1993). Purposive sampling technique was predominantly used to determine the sample. A purposive sample is one in which a surveyor tries to create a representative sample without sampling at random. A purposive sample is one where participants are selected that meet particular criteria in order to achieve a particular purpose. They may have specific knowledge (e.g., engineers), a particular perspective (e.g., CEO), experienced a specific event (e.g., downsizing) or a combination of characteristics (Latham, 2010-2012).

One of the commonest uses of purposive sampling is in selecting a group to represent a larger group. Homogeneous sampling is a purposive sampling technique that aims to achieve a homogeneous sample; that is, a sample whose units (e.g. people, cases, etc.) share the same (or very similar) characteristics or traits (e.g. a group of people that are similar in terms of age, gender, background, occupation, etc.). (Lund Research Ltd, 2010). Criteria used to determine participant eligibility include; Gender: All participants will be male except for officers of institutions working with SHG, SHG: Participating or not participating in SHG, A representative of an institution or organisation working with SHG.

Adequacy of the sample size is determined by the principle of theoretical saturation. Theoretical saturation refers to the point at which no new concepts emerge from the review of successive data from a sample that is diverse in pertinent characteristics and experiences. Although it is not possible to define the number of participants in advance, a range of 20 to 30 interviews or 4 to 6 focus groups may achieve saturation. (Nembhard, Bradley, & Curry, 2009).

Following the widely accepted guidelines above 50 men who are not members of SHG will be interviewed. A focused group discussion will be conducted in 5 SHG, two of which will be a men's only group. The men to be targeted as low income earners will be earning less than or equal the minimum wage to fit within the poverty levels index and representatives of institutions that work with SHG. A government official responsible for SHG in the division will also be interviewed.

### **Data collection methods and procedures**

The study used mixed methods of data collection. Mixed methods involve collection and analysis of qualitative and quantitative data in ways that are rigorous and framed epistemologically/theoretically. The methods used included interviews, questionnaires, focused group discussion and observation. An interview is a conversation with a purpose, designed to help the researcher gather information about peoples' assumptions/perceptions of activities. They are useful when looking for in-depth information on a particular topic. In-depth interviews are known to be optimal for collecting data on individuals' personal histories, perspectives, and experiences, particularly when sensitive topics are being explored and hence were used for this research. Semi-structured

interviews were used to enable the researcher get specific information which was then be compared and contrasted with information gained in other interviews. The same questions were asked in each interview but the researcher remained flexible so that other important information can still arise. An interview schedule will be provided for this purpose with a list of specific questions and topics which guided the interview but at the same time allowing for exploration.

The focus group is a data collection methodology used to gather the opinions/ ideas from a small, targeted group of citizens. The intention of focus groups is perhaps more to build a synergy of thoughts and ideas. Focus groups discussions also referred to as group interviews will also be used to interview men in SHG as well as those who are not in SHG. Focus group discussions are effective in eliciting data on the cultural norms of a group and in generating broad overviews of issues of concern to the cultural groups or subgroups represented and in this case men. The discussion was led by the researcher or her assistants who introduced the study topic and ask specific questions and at the same time controlling digression, apathy and domination. The Focus group discussions were tape-recorded.

A questionnaire is a tool designed with pre-determined questions that helps a researcher to capture information from a respondent through self-administered or researcher administered means. Questionnaires that were used in the study provided both quantitative and qualitative information that was also be quantified and subjected to statistical analysis. The questionnaire had a series of closed questions, with boxes to tick or scales to rank, and also have a section of open questions for more detailed response.

Observation is a method of data collection where researcher records pre-determined behaviour from a group of respondents. Observation was used especially in focus group discussions where the researcher observed the dynamics in SHG especially in groups with both men and women. Through careful observation, the researcher hoped to gain a deeper understanding into the behaviour, motivation and attitudes of men in SHG

#### ***Instruments Validity and Reliability***

Establishing validity and reliability in a mixed research which has a component of qualitative research can be less precise (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). General agreement seems to have been reached that quality concepts developed for quantitative research such as generalizability, validity, reliability and replicability cannot be applied to a design that has a qualitative bearing and in that case it is more appropriate to look at credibility/trustworthiness in place of internal validity, fittingness in place of external validity and auditability in place of reliability. This study therefore when talking of validity and reliability will addressing issues to do with trustworthiness, fittingness and auditability.

#### **Validity**

Triangulation was mainly used to ensure the validity of the data. Triangulation methods use multiple forms of data collection, such as focus groups, observation and in-depth interviews to investigate the evaluation objectives. Utilising multiple data collection methods leads to an acceptance of reliability and validity when the data from the various sources are comparable and consistent. (Barbour, 2001)

#### **Reliability**

Reliability procedures that was used are in line with what has been suggested by Gibbs in his discussion on ensuring reliability in a design with a qualitative bearing. Checking transcripts for mistakes, checking the persistence meaning of the codes, coordinating communication among coders and cross-checking codes from the interviewees helps in ensuring reliability (Gibbs, 2007).

#### ***Methods of data analysis and justification***

Since this was a mixed research there was need for both qualitative and quantities data analysis approaches

#### **Qualitative Data Analysis**

The general inductive approach to qualitative data analysis was used for qualitative data. The inductive approach is a systematic procedure for analysing qualitative data where the analysis is guided by specific objectives. The primary purpose of the inductive approach is to allow research findings to emerge from the frequent, dominant or significant themes inherent in raw data, without the restraints imposed by structured methodologies. (Thomas, 2003).

The purposes for using an inductive approach are to condense extensive and varied raw text into a brief, summary format; to establish clear links between the research objectives and the summary findings derived from the raw data and; to develop a model or theory about the underlying structure of experiences or processes which are evident in the raw data. The underlying assumption is that data analysis is determined by both the research objectives (deductive) and multiple readings and interpretations of the raw data (inductive). Thus the findings are derived from both the research objectives outlined by the researcher(s) and findings arising directly from the analysis of the raw data . (Thomas, 2003)

#### **Data analysis techniques**

Coding technique was used which to break down the data for further analysis using the three methods of analysis identified. Coding is categorizing the data collected during a study to assign meanings to them. Coding makes it easier to search the data, make comparisons and identify patterns that require further investigation. This

technique was also be used to extract quantitative data from qualitative data through the quasi-statistics which basically looks at the number of times something category comes up. Codes will be based on themes, topics, ideas, concepts, terms, phrases or key words found in the data gathered during the study.

#### **Thematic analysis**

This was analysis of data according to the emerging themes. Since this type of analysis is highly inductive, the themes emerged from the data rather than the researcher. In this type of analysis, the data collection and analysis took place simultaneously.

#### **Content analysis**

This was done at the end to deal with the code related to content. Using this method the researcher systematically worked through each transcript assigning codes, which may be numbers or words, to specific characteristics within the text. The researcher read through each transcript and audio recording of interviews and focused group discussions and let the categories emerge from the data. This type of analysis was used for open-ended questions in questionnaires, for interviews and focused group discussions. It also helped the researcher quantify the answers.

#### **Discourse analysis**

This analysis was very fundamental especially in the mixed gender SHG focused group discussions and observation. This type of analysis also referred to as conversational analysis will be looking at patterns of speech, such as how people talk SHG, what metaphors they use, how they take turns in conversation especially in the mixed sex groups, and so on. Much of this analysis was intuitive and reflective, but it also involved some form of counting, such as counting instances of turn-taking and their influence on the conversation and the way in which people speak to others

#### **Quantitative Data Analysis**

Participatory discussions with a number of focus groups could give rise to a wealth of qualitative information. But the complex nature of inter-relationships between factors such as the marketability of the products, distance from the road, access to markets, percent of income derived from sales, level of women participation, etc., requires some degree of quantification of the data and a subsequent analysis by quantitative methods. Once such quantifiable components of the data are separated, attention can be focused on characteristics that are of a more individualistic qualitative nature. Quantitative analytical approaches also allow the reporting of summary results in numerical terms to be given with a specified degree of confidence. (Abeyasekera, ND).

Quantitative data analysis was used for some parts of the questionnaire. To make this easy and doable the researcher was careful to construct and word the questionnaire properly and ensure through vigorous training of research assistants, that there are no variations in the way the forms are administered and that there is no missing or ambiguous information. Multivariate analysis was used in exploring the connections among more than two variables such as whether older men tend to subscribe more to SHG as compared to younger men. Interval scales were used to analyse precisely defined intervals such as the age of interviewees, number of children and level of income.

#### **Summary**

This chapter has expounded on the following areas: research design, target population, sample size and sampling procedure, methods of data collection, instruments validity and reliability, operationalization of variables and methods of data analysis.

**Operationalization of variables**

Objectives	Variables	Indicators	Measure	Measurement Scale	Study Design	Type of Analysis	Tools of Analysis
To determine to what extent patriarchy influences men's participation in self-help groups	Patriarchy	Leadership in mixed groups  Patriarchal Resource allocation  Decision making patterns in mixed groups  Belief on how social structures should be organized  Level of trust between men and women	Numbers of men in comparison to women  Amounts of resources from patriarchal sources  Perception on whose decision is more important  Attitudes on which gender should lead  Level	Nominal Ratio Ordinal	Mixed design	Qualitative Quantitative	SPSS Content Thematic Discourse
To determine how masculinity influences men's participation in self-help groups	Masculinity	'Self-sufficiency' - attitude among men  Resistance towards what is perceived as 'feminine'  Belief that SHG are feminine  Construct on what it means to be a man-roughness, confidence etc. in comparison to being a woman  Dread of women domination in SHG	Confirmation that men are self-sufficient  Referral of SHGs as feminine Negative attitude towards SHGs because they are feminine  Perceptions of what it is to be a man  Attitudes towards women	Nominal Ordinal	Mixed design	Qualitative Quantitative	SPSS Content Thematic Discourse

To determine how socio-culture influences men's participation in self-help groups	Socio-Culture	Resistance of men towards seeking help  Unwillingness of men to pursue women's assistance  Societal perceptions of self-help groups  Expectation that men are all powerful with no need for help  Perception that men are independent	Confirmation that men do not need help  Attitudes of men towards women's help  Negative societal perceptions of SHGs  Perceptions of the society that men should be strong  Attitudes of men about needing others	Nominal Ordinal	Mixed design	Qualitative Quantitative	SPSS Content Thematic Discourse
To determine the extent to which gender stereotyping influences men's participation in self-help groups	Gender Stereotyping	Policies  Group rules  Societal perceptions about gender roles  Gender relations in mixed groups  Belief that SHG are fit for women	Number of policies that aim at empowering both genders Confirmation that group rules are gender insensitive  Confirmation that women roles are different from men's  Level of mutual respect between men and women in groups  Attitudes towards women and SHGs	Ratio Nominal Ordinal	Mixed design	Qualitative Quantitative	SPSS Content Thematic Discourse

Table 1: Operationalization of variables

## DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION

### Introduction

The study utilized a combination of both quantitative and qualitative techniques in the collection of data. The study targeted male members of SHGs and low income males who are not in any SHG in Kawangware slums of Riruta location, Dagoretti District. Out of the 80 questionnaires sent out, 68 questionnaires were returned completed, a 85% response rate. The data was analyzed by employing descriptive statistics such as percentages, frequencies and tables. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to aid in analysis. The researcher preferred SPSS because of its ability to cover a wide range of the most common statistical and graphical data analysis and is very systematic. Computation of frequencies in tables, charts and bar graphs was used in data presentation. The information is presented and discussed as per the objectives and research questions of the study.



**Demographic information**

This section presents findings pertaining to demographic information of the respondents.

**4.1.1 Men in Self Help Groups**

The respondents were asked whether they are members of SHG or not. Their responses are presented in figure 4.1 below.

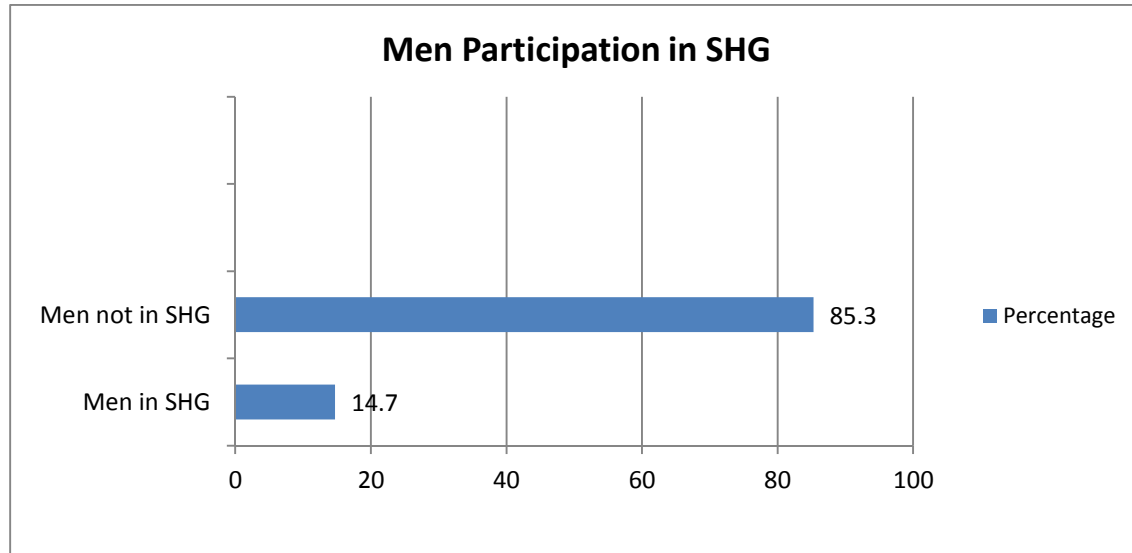


Figure 4.1: Men’s Participation in SHGs

The findings indicate that men who are not in self help groups were 85.3% while those in self help groups were 14.7%. This shows that just as previous studies have shown majority of men tend to shun self-help groups which can imply that men are not comfortable seeking for help

**Age Distribution**

Respondents were asked to give their age; responses are summarized and presented in figure 4.1 below

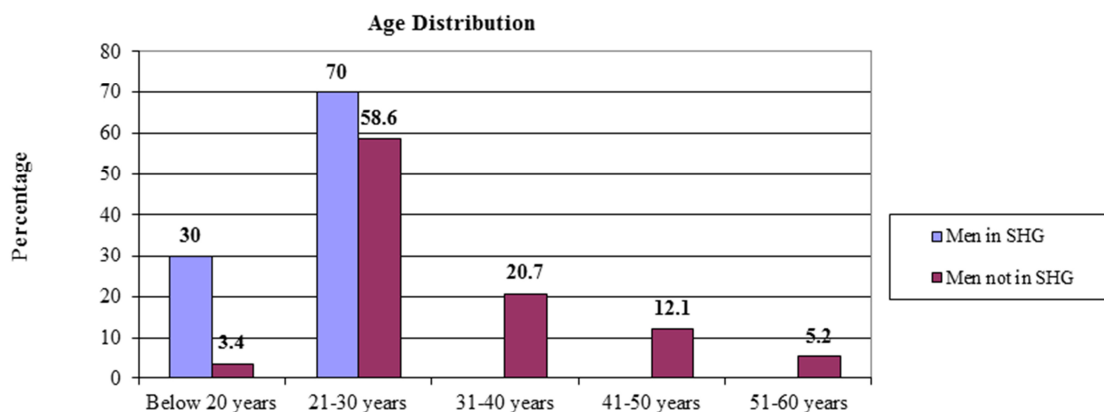
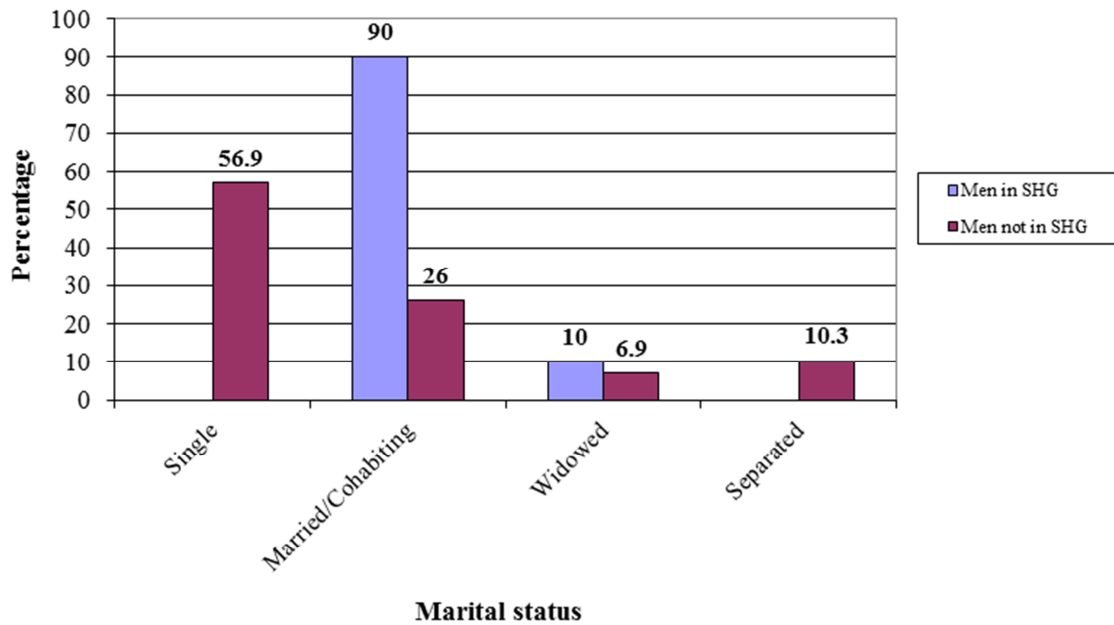


Figure 4.2: Age Distribution

Findings in figure 4.2 above show that majority of the respondents in Self Help Group (70%) are aged between 21-30 years and (30%) of the respondents in Self Help Group are below 20 years. Majority of the respondents who are not in Self Help Group (58.6%) are aged between 21-30 years, (20.7%) of the respondents who are not in Self Help Group are aged between 23-40 years, (12.1%) of the respondents who are not in Self Help Group are aged between 41-50 years and (5.2%) of the respondents who are not in Self Help Group are aged between 51-60 years. This therefore indicates that older men tend to shun self- help groups more as compared to younger men. It also shows that men in the age-group of 21-30 years are more likely to join self- help groups more as compared to any other age group. This henceforth implies that age has an intervening effect on men’s participation in self-help group or men’s help seeking behavior

**Marital status**

Respondents were asked to give their marital status; responses are summarized and presented in figure 4.3 below

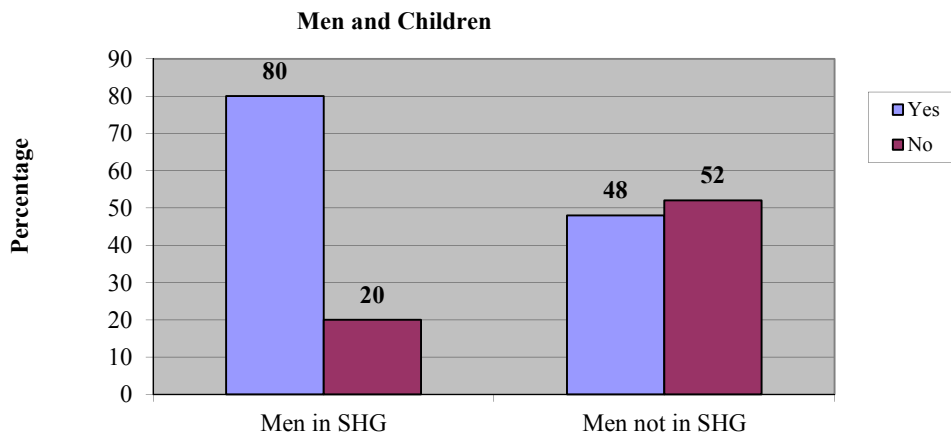


**Figure 4.3: Marital status**

Findings in figure 4.3 above show that (90%) of the respondents in Self Help Group are Married/Cohabiting with (10%) being widowed. Majority of the respondents not in Self Help Group (56.9%) are single, (26%) of the respondents not in Self Help Group are Married, (6.9%) of the respondents not in Self Help Group are widowed with another (10.3%) being separated or divorced. From this data it is apparent that men who are in a family situation are more likely to join SHG as compared to those who are not. This then implies that increased responsibilities and expectations at the family level have a potential of influencing men to join a self-help group.

**Children**

Respondents were asked whether they have children, responses are summarized and presented in figure 4.4 below

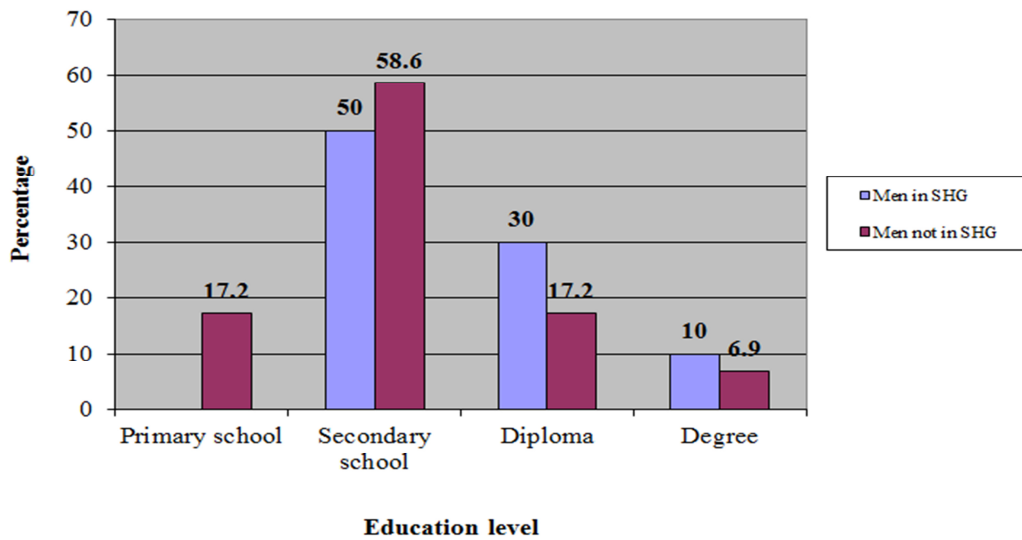


**Figure 4.4: Children**

Findings in figure 4.4 above show that majority of the respondents in Self Help Group (80%) have children and (20%) of the respondents in Self Help Group do not have children. Majority of the respondents not in Self Help Group (52%) do not have children and (48%) of the respondents not in Self Help Group have children. This then shows just as in the marital status figure that increased responsibilities and expectations that come with having a family and children tend to influence men to join a SHG.

### Education Level

Respondents were asked their highest educational level; responses are summarized and presented in figure 4.5 below.

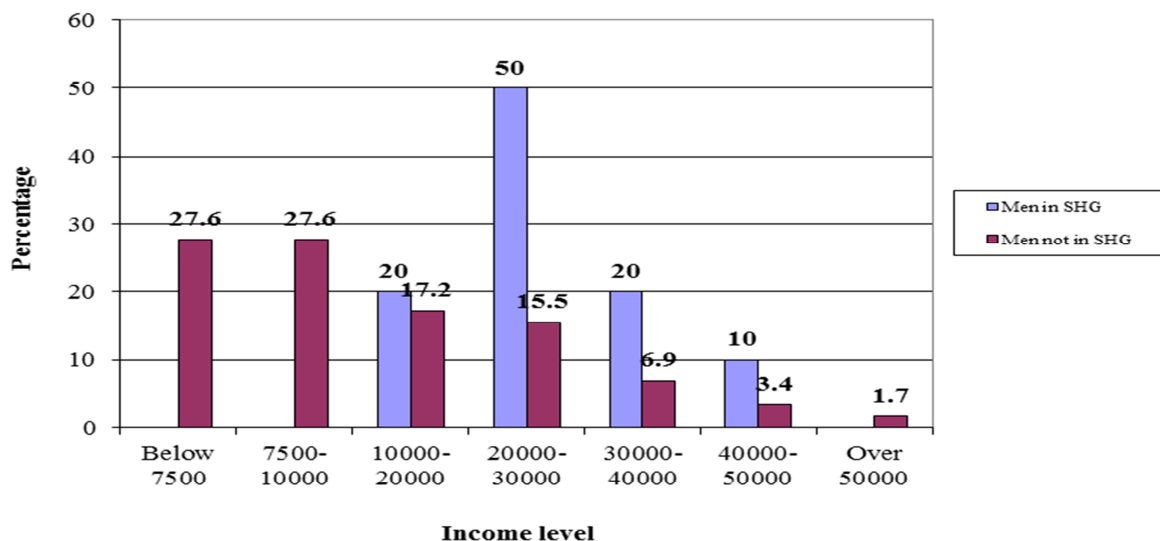


**Figure 4.5: Education level**

Findings in figure 4.5 above show that majority of the respondents in Self Help Group (50%) have attained Secondary school education, (30%) of the respondents in Self Help Group have attained Diplomas, (10%) of the respondents in Self Help Group have attained Degrees and (10%) of the respondents in Self Help Group have attained Primary school education. Majority of the respondents not in Self Help Group (58.6%) have attained Secondary school education, (17.2%) of the respondents not in Self Help Group have attained Primary school education, (17.2%) of the respondents not in Self Help Group have attained Diplomas and (6.9%) of the respondents not in Self Help Group have attained Degrees. This then shows an increase in level of education comes with an increase in likelihood of men to join a self-help group or to be more comfortable seeking help. A higher percentage of men with diplomas have joined SHGs compared to men with the same qualifications who have not. Similarly, a higher percentage of men with degrees have joined a SHG as compared to those with the same level of education who have not

### Income Level

Respondents were asked to provide their income levels; responses are summarized and presented in figure 4.6 below



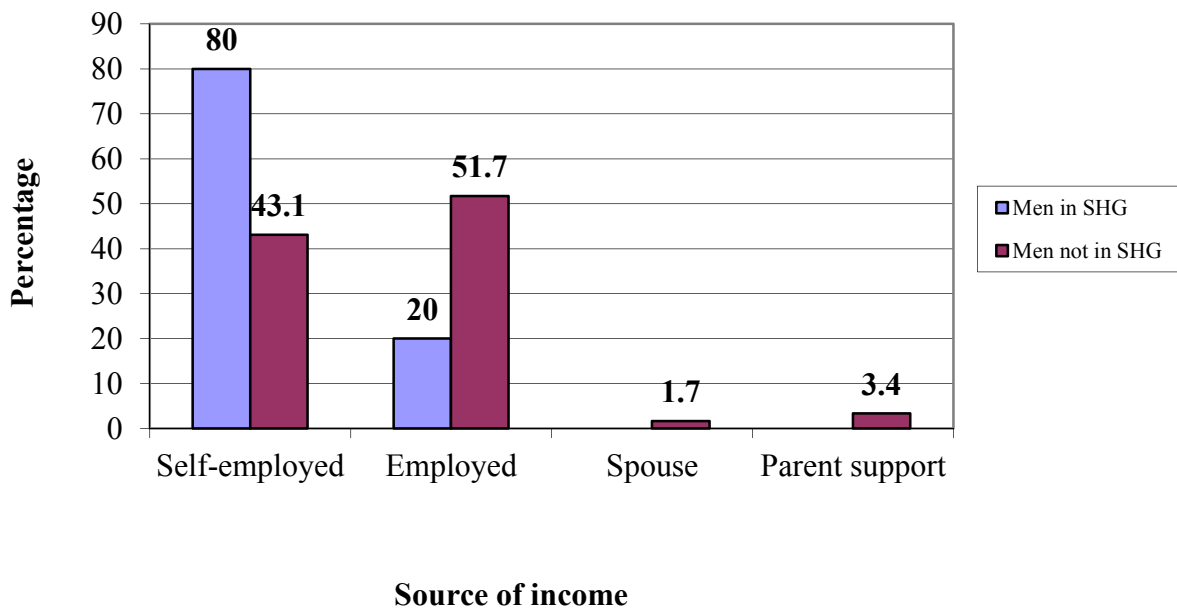
**Figure 4.6: Income level**

Findings in figure 4.6 above show that majority of the respondents in Self Help Group (50%) earn between Ksh.

20,000-30,000, (20%) of the respondents in Self Help Group earn between Ksh. 10,000-20,000, (20%) of the respondents in Self Help Group earn between 30,000-40,000 Kshs and (10%) of the respondents in Self Help Group earn between 40,000-50,000 Kshs. Majority of the respondents not in Self Help Group (27.6%) earn less than 7500 Kshs, (27.6%) of the respondents not in Self Help Group earn between 7,500-10,000 Kshs, (17.2%) of the respondents not in Self Help Group earn between 10,000-20,000 Kshs, (15.5%) of the respondents not in Self Help Group earn between 20,000-30,000 Kshs, (6.9%) of the respondents not in Self Help Group earn between 30,000-40,000 Kshs, (3.4%) of the respondents not in Self Help Group earn between 40,000-50,000 Kshs and (1.7%) of the respondents not in Self Help Group earn over 50,000. This implies that men who have low incomes despite the fact that they would benefit from SHGs do not join groups and similarly men who would be considered to be earning better in Kenyan Standards (over 50,000) do not join SHGs. This can also indicate that men who earn less than Ksh.10,000 may be lacking confidence to join SHGs since their low income or need would be exposed and that those who are earning better may be feeling that they do not need others since they are self sufficient.

**Source of income**

Respondents were asked to provide their sources of income; the responses are summarized and presented in figure 4.7 below



**Figure 4.7: Source of income**

Findings in figure 4.7 above show that majority of respondents in Self Help Group (80%) are self employed and (20%) of the respondents Self Help Group are employed. Majority of respondents not in Self Help Group (51.7%) are employed, (43.1%) of the respondents not in Self Help Group are self employed, (3.4%) of the respondents not in Self Help Group are supported by their parents and (1.7%) of the respondents not in Self Help Group are supported by their spouse. This denotes that men who are self-employed and in the case of Kawangware doing small scale businesses are more likely to join SHGs and that men who are employed are least likely to join SHGs. This shows that men who are employed may be comfortable since they are assured of an income unlike of men who are doing small scale businesses.

**Factors influencing participation of men in anti-poverty self-help groups**

This section presents findings pertaining to the objectives of the study

**How patriarchy influences men’s participation in self-help groups**

In order to determine how patriarchal system influence’s men’s participation in self-help groups, various questions were asked. This section presents the findings.

**Key leaders in SHG**

Respondents in SHG were asked which gender comprises the key leaders in their groups; responses are summarized and presented in table 4.1 below

**Table 4.1: Key leaders in SHG**

Key leaders in SHG	Frequency	Percentage	Mean	Std. Deviation
Women	-	-	2.20	0.422
Men	8	80		
Both	2	20		
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>100</b>		

Findings in table 4.1 above show that majority of the respondents (80%) indicated that the leaders are men and (20%) of the respondents indicated that the leaders are both men and women. This is a clear indication that the patriarchy system has also infiltrated groups and that just as the patriarchy system dictates, leadership is still with men.

**Opinions about leadership in SHG**

Respondents in SHGs were asked whether they would prefer to have men instead of women in key leadership positions within SHG, responses are summarized and presented in table 4.2 below.

**Table 4.2: Gender preference in SHG leadership**

Responses	Frequency	Percentage	Mean	Std. Deviation
Yes	7	70	1.22	0.441
No	2	20		
No response	1	10		
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>100</b>		

Responses in table 4.2 above show that majority of the respondents (70%) would prefer men instead of women and (20%) prefer women leaders. When the respondents were asked why they prefer male leaders, (60%) of the respondents said men are better leaders, (10%) of the respondents said women cannot make good leaders, (10%) of the respondents said men are fast in decision making and (10%) of the respondents who preferred women said women tend to be more committed on group issues and hence would make good leaders. This also shows that the influence of the patriarchy system is high with a majority 70% of respondents preferring a man leader and hence would be uncomfortable being in a group where all or some leaders are women. The reasons given also denote deep influence of patriarchy system where people believe that men are the best leaders and that women cannot make good leaders. Also the feeling that women are not fast in decision making indicates an influence of the patriarchy system but also to some extent gender stereotyping.

**4.3.1.3 Perception on gender that naturally provides better leadership**

Respondents were asked whether they thought men naturally provide better leadership than women, responses are summarized and presented in table 4.3 below.

**Table 4.3: Men naturally provide better leadership than women**

Responses	Frequency	Percentage	Mean	Std. Deviation
Yes	8	80	1.11	.333
No	1	10		
No response	1	10		
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>100</b>		

Findings in table 4.3 above show that majority of the respondents (80%) said that men naturally provide better leadership than women and (10%) of the respondents said that men do not naturally provide better leadership than women. When respondents were asked why they think men naturally provide better leadership, (50%) of the respondents said that leadership is inborn in men, (10%) of the respondents said that men are courageous, (10%) of the respondents said that men treat each other equally and (10%) of the respondents said that women are more reliable. This also shows the influence of patriarchy system on the society. Patriarchy system instills the belief that men provide better leadership and that leadership in men is natural and inborn. These are the same responses that were got

**SHG would attract more men members if most key leaders are men**

Respondents were asked whether they think that their SHG would attract more men members if most of the key leaders are men, responses are summarized and presented in table 4.4 below.

**Table 4.4: SHG would attract more men members if most key leaders are men**

Responses	Frequency	Percentage	Mean	Std. Deviation
Yes	8	80	1.00	.000
No	-	-		
No responses	2	20		
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>100</b>		

Findings in table 4.4 above show that (80%) of the respondents said that their SHG would attract more men members if most key leaders are men. When asked why men leaders would attract more men members, (10%) of the respondents said men always have new ideas and (50%) of the respondents said men can trust their fellow men. This is also an indication of patriarchy system influence. Patriarchy system expects dominion of men over women and in any instance where this does not happen men will tend to reject the situation. I have a problem with women having leadership positions in SHGs. Respondents who are not members of SHG's were asked to respond to the following statement 'I have a problem with women leadership positions in SHGs'; responses are summarized and presented in table 4.11 below.

**Table 4.11: I have issues with women having leadership positions in the SHGs**

Responses	Frequency	Percentage	Mean	Std. Deviation
Yes	29	50	1.48	.504
No	27	46.6		
No responses	2	3.4		
<b>Total</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>100</b>		

Findings in table 4.11 above show that majority of the respondents (50%) have issues with women having leadership positions in the SHGs and (46.6%) of the respondents do not have issues with women having leadership positions in the SHGs. When asked to give reasons for their answers, (1.7%) of the respondents said that decisions by men carry more weight, (1.7%) of the respondents said that leadership is never trusted with women, (1.7%) of the respondents said that leadership makes women disrespectful, (10.3%) of the respondents said that women mix emotions with leadership, (6.8%) of the respondents said that women prioritize their issues first and (20.6%) of the respondents said that Women are not good leaders.

#### **Decision Making in SHG**

Respondents who reported to be in mixed gender SHGs were asked which gender they felt was more involved in their groups; responses are summarized and presented in table 4.5 below.

**Table 4.5: Gender involvement in decision making in SHGs**

Responses	Frequency	Percentage	Mean	Std. Deviation
Men	9	90	1.10	.316
Women	1	10		
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>100</b>		

Findings in table 4.5 above show that majority of the respondents (90%) said that men are more involved in decision making than women members and (10%) of the respondents said that women members are more involved in decision making than men members. When asked why men are more involved in decision making than women members in SHGs, (20%) of the respondents said men tend to stick to their final decisions more than women, (20%) of the respondents said men are always ready to improve their life as compared to women, (10%) of the respondents said it was because men are the majority in the leadership and (10%) of the respondents said men are majority in the SHG. Whether it is true or not that men make more decisions than women, the influence of patriarchy system is felt here is well; men are supposed to be making decisions and their decisions are the best and that is why they are supposed to be in leadership. Similarly an element of gender stereotyping comes out with the percentage that felt that men are always ready to improve their lives as compared to women.

#### **Importance given to decisions made by different genders**

Respondents were asked whether a decision by man is given more weight by other group members, responses are summarized and presented in table 4.6 below

**Table 4.6: A decision by man is given more weight by other group members**

Responses	Frequency	Percentage	Mean	Std. Deviation
Yes	4	40	1.20	.447
No	1	10		
No responses	5	50		
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>100</b>		

Findings in table 4.6 above show that majority of the respondents (40%) said a decision by man is given more weight by other group members and (10%) of the respondents said that a decision by man is not given more weight by other group members. When asked why decision by man is given more weight by other group members, the 10% that thought decisions by all are taken seriously said it would be against gender equality to give weight to decisions made by men only, (20%) of the respondents said many believe in decisions made by men, (10%) of the respondents said men have never misled the group and (10%) of the respondents said women are not naturally involved in decision making. This is another indicator of the influence of the patriarchy system since there is a feeling that women are not naturally involved in decision making and that many of them are more comfortable with decisions made by men. Also of interest is the fact that for those who thought all decisions are given equal weight or importance thought it is because they need to ensure gender equality (expected of mixed groups by law) not because they think the decisions or contributions by women are of substance

#### Male involvement in SHGs

Respondents who reported not to being members of SHG were asked to respond to items below in regard to male involvement in SHGs, responses are summarized and presented in table 4.7 below

**Table 4.7: Male involvement in SHGs**

Male involvement in SHGs		Yes	No	No response	Mean	Std. Deviation
I have a problem with groups whose leaders are women	Frequency	31	26	1	1.54	.503
	Percentage	53.4	44.8	1.7		
I have a problem with women domination in groups	Frequency	29	28	1	1.49	.504
	Percentage	50.9	49.1	1.7		
Men can join SHGs but only to provide direction and leadership	Frequency	32	25	1	1.44	.501
	Percentage	55.2	43.1	1.7		
Men should be involved in financial decision making than women	Frequency	38	19	1	1.33	.476
	Percentage	65.5	32.8	1.7		
<b>N=58</b>						

Findings in table 4.7 above show that:

***I have a problem with groups whose leaders are women:*** With respect to having problems with women leaders, (53.4%) of the respondents have problems with women leaders and (44.8%) of the respondents do not have problems with women leaders. This shows that the majority of men have a problem with women leadership. This is in line with the expectations of the patriarchy system

***I have a problem with women domination in groups:*** With respect to having problems with women domination in groups, (50.9%) of the respondents have problems with women domination in groups and (49.1%) of the respondents do not have problems with women domination in groups. This implies that men shun groups because of domination of women because they are the majority in the groups. This again shows that patriarchy system has an influence

***Men can join SHGs but only to provide direction and leadership:*** With respect to men can join SHGs but only to provide direction and leadership, (55.2%) of the respondents said yes and (43.1%) of the respondents said no. This shows that deep down the majority of men feel that their place is over that of women which is basically a patriarchal expectation which expects men to provide leadership and not to be followers.

***Men should be involved in financial decision making than women:*** With respect to Men being involved in financial decision making than women, (65.5%) of the respondents said yes and (32.8%) of the respondents said “no”. This indicates deeply rooted patriarchal compliance which expects men to have dominion over women and hence explains why men would not want to be in an SHG where financial decisions are made by all.

When asked what can be done to address the challenges and influence men to join SHGs, (7.3%) of the respondents said changing perception of SHGs, (10.2%) of the respondents said empowering women, (25%) of

the respondents said gender balance in all SHGs, (1.4%) of the respondents said men should be spoken to join SHGs, (10.2%) of the respondents said need to educate on benefits of SHGs, (7.3%) of the respondents said there was need to create awareness about SHGs, (2.9%) of the respondents said education on SHGs operations, (11.7%) of the respondents said give leadership to men and (4.4%) of the respondents said have more profit making projects in the SHGs since this would attract men

**How masculinity influences men’s participation in self-help groups**

In order to determine how masculinity influences men’s participation in self-help groups, various questions were asked. This section presents the findings.

**Reasons that have influence on non-participation/joining a SHG.**

Respondents who reported not being in SHGs were asked to indicate whether some of the reasons given had any influence on their non-participation/joining a SHG. The responses are presented as below.

**SHGs are feminine just by the way they are organized:** With respect to the statement that SHGs are feminine just by the way they are organized, responses are summarized and presented in table 4.8 below.

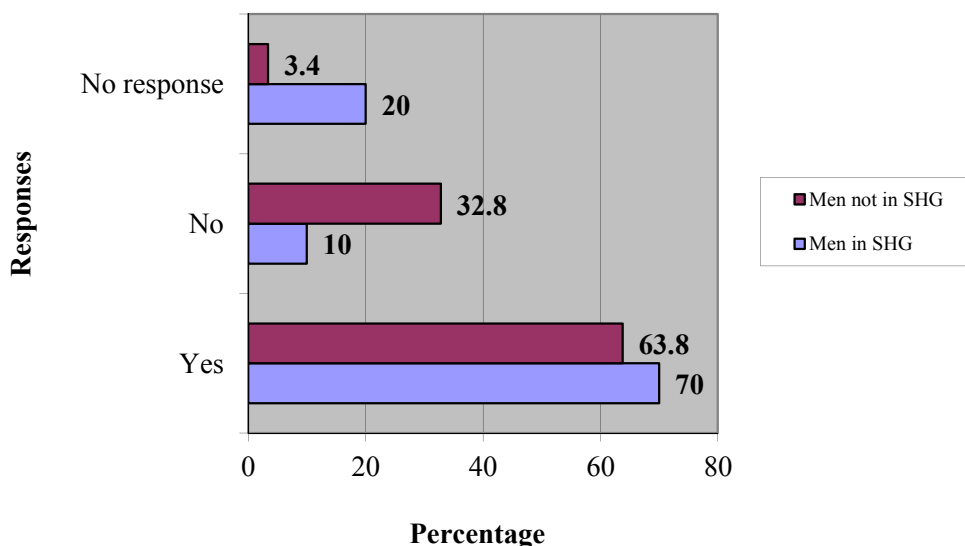
**Table 4.8: SHGs are feminine just by the way they are organized**

Responses	Frequency	Percentage	Mean	Std. Deviation
Yes	33	56.9	1.41	.496
No	23	39.7		
No responses	2	3.4		
<b>Total</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>100</b>		

Findings in table 4.8 above show that majority of the respondents (56.9%) feel that SHGs are feminine just by the way they are organized and (39.7%) of the respondents feel that SHGs are not feminine by the way they are organized. When asked why they feel that SHGs are feminine just by the way they are organized, (10.3%) of the respondents said that SHGs are very mismanaged which indicated femininity, (41.3%) of the respondents said that majority members are women which indicated that they are feminine, (13.7%) of the respondents said that some men have also benefited from SHGs, (3.4%) of the respondents said that there are no men related SHGs around, (8.6%) of the respondents said that they meet a lot of time and only women have time for such kind of meetings and (3.4%) of the respondents said that women like doing things in groups and hence it was not manly to be in the groups. This shows that masculinity which leads men to shun anything that is considered feminine has an influence on whether they join SHGs. This is because by joining a ‘feminine’ group challenges their masculinity

**Men refuse to belong to SHGs not to be seen as weak**

Respondents were asked whether men refuse to belong to SHGs not to be seen as weak, responses are summarized and presented in figure 4.8 below



**Figure 4.8: Men refuse to belong to SHGs not to be seen as weak**

Findings in figure 4.8 above show that (70%) of respondents in Self Help Group agreed that men refuse to belong to SHGs not to be seen as weak and (10%) of the respondents in Self Help Group disagreed that men refuse to belong to SHGs not to be seen as weak. (63.8%) of the respondents not in Self Help Group agreed that men refuse to belong to SHGs not to be seen as weak and (32.8%) of the respondents not in Self Help Group



disagreed that men refuse to belong to SHGs not to be seen as weak. Being weak is an indicator of low masculinity and hence men who want to be identified as masculine will avoid anything that shows that they are not masculine. Therefore if belonging to a group is perceived to show weakness men tend to avoid it

***I am a man, self-sufficient with resources and require little help from others:*** With respect to “I am a man, self-sufficient with resources and require little help from others” especially women statement, responses are summarized and presented in table 4.9 below

**Table 4.9: I am a self-sufficient man**

Responses	Frequency	Percentage	Mean	Std. Deviation
Yes	32	55.2	1.57	.499
No	24	41.4		
No responses	2	3.4		
<b>Total</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>100</b>		

Findings in table 4.9 above show that majority of the respondents (55.2%) said that they are self-sufficient and (41.1%) of the respondents said that they require little help but more from men than women. When asked to give reasons for their answers, (10.3%) of the respondents said that their income is sufficient, (3.4%) of the respondents said that they get loans from financial institutions without need of being in SHG, (10.3%) of the respondents said that sometimes it is hard to be self-sufficient, (13.7%) of the respondents said that men are supposed to work hard, (5.2%) of the respondents said that men help each other and (53.4%) of the respondents said that women are supposed to get help from men and not the other way round. This also shows clear influence of masculinity on men avoiding help seeking behaviour and feeling that as men they should not be expecting help from men or any other person for that matter. Masculinity tends to push men to look strong and self sufficient.

***I earn enough income to support myself without soliciting financial help from other people:*** With respect to “I earn enough income to support me without soliciting financial help from other people” statement, responses are summarized and presented in table 4.10 below.

**Table 4.10: I earn enough income to support me without soliciting financial help from other people**

Responses	Frequency	Percentage	Mean	Std. Deviation
Yes	37	63.8	1.65	.481
No	20	34.5		
No responses	1	1.7		
<b>Total</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>100</b>		

Findings in table 4.10 above show that majority of the respondents (63.8%) said that they earn enough income to support them without needing to get help from others with (34.5%) of the respondents said that they are comfortable soliciting for help from other people. When asked to give reasons for their answers, (6.8%) of the respondents said that they are business men who are making their own money, (15.5%) of the respondents said that they have enough money to sustain themselves, (10.3%) of the respondents said that they live within their own means and (1.7%) of the respondents said that they seek loan from banks and not individuals. This shows deep entrenchment of masculinity influences in men which push them from SHGs which are by essence a means of organized institution of getting help from others

***You need others to benefit from SHGs:*** With respect to “I have problem with the fact that you need to involve others to benefit from SHGs” statement, responses are summarized and presented in table 4.12 below.

**Table 4.12: I have problem with the fact that you need to involve others to benefit from SHGs**

Responses	Frequency	Percentage	Mean	Std. Deviation
Yes	29	50	1.45	.503
No	24	41.4		
No responses	5	8.6		
<b>Total</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>100</b>		

Findings in table 4.12 above show that majority of the respondents (50%) have problem with the fact that they need to involve others to benefit from SHGs and (41.4%) of the respondents do not have problem with the fact that they need to involve others to benefit from SHGs. When asked to give reasons for their answers, (25.8%) of the respondents feel that benefits should be personal, (6.8%) of the respondents feel that liabilities should not be shared and (1.7%) of the respondents feel that they are worth a lot as an individual and being in groups undermined their distinctiveness as men. This is another indicator of masculinity influence by being masculine a man is supposed to be self-sufficient and hence being in a situation that one needs others to succeed challenges that position

### Facts influencing decisions not to join an SHG

Respondents were asked to indicate whether they fully agree, partly agree or do not agree to the following statements in regard to not joining SHGs, responses are summarized and presented in table 4.13 below

**Table 4.13: Facts influencing decisions not to join an SHG**

Facts influencing decisions not to join an SHG		Do not Agree	Partly agree	Fully agree	Mean	Std. Deviation
Am ready to face any challenge in life	Frequency	14	13	28	2.25	.844
	Percentage	24.1	22.4	48.3		
I have witnessed successful men who don't belong to any SHG	Frequency	10	14	32	2.39	.779
	Percentage	17.2	24.1	55.2		
<b>N=58</b>						

Findings in table 4.13 above show that:

**Am ready to face any challenge in life:** With respect to am ready to face any challenge in life, (24.1%) of the respondents “Disagree”, (22.4%) of the respondents “Partly agreed” and (48.3%) of the respondents “Fully agreed”. One indicator of masculinity is courage and not easily intimidated. The fact that 48% fully agree and 22% partly agree that as men they are ready to face life and this has influenced their non-participation in group shows masculinity at play.

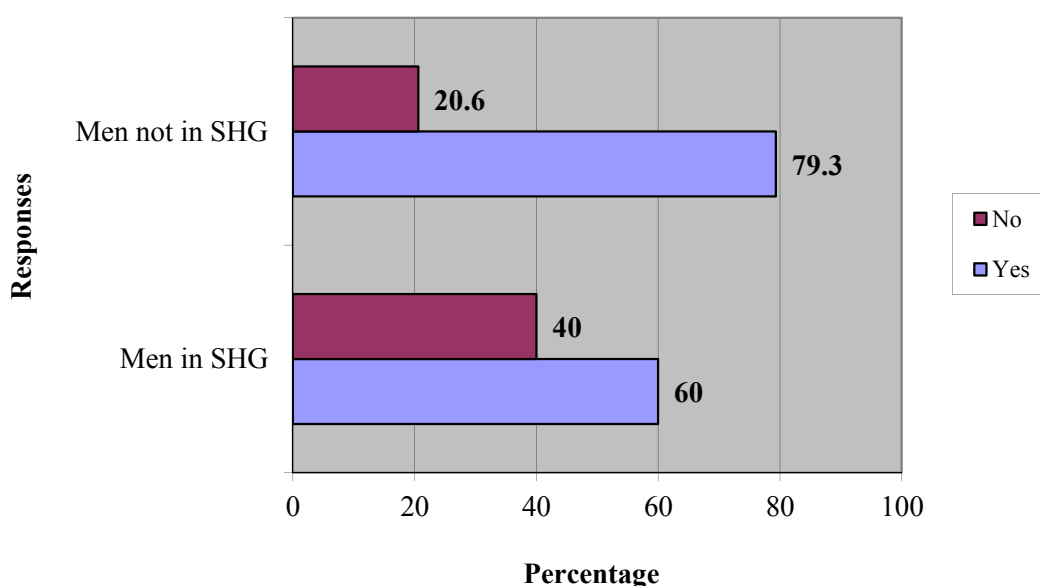
**I have witnessed successful men who don't belong to any SHG:** With respect to I have witnessed successful men who don't belong to any SHG, (17.2%) of the respondents “Disagree”, (24.1%) of the respondents “Partly agreed” and (55.2%) of the respondents “Fully agreed”. This is another indicator of masculinity influencing male participation in SHGs since they feel that as men they might not to be in an SHG to be successful and also that they look upon other men who have been successful(not women) and have not been in SHGs. Further respondents were asked to suggest ways to encourage men to joining SHG, (19.1%) of the respondents suggested basic education on the benefits of SHGs, (17.6%) of the respondents suggested to encourage integration of the society, (23.5%) of the respondents suggested showcasing benefits of SHG to attract men, (10.2%) of the respondents suggested awareness creation, (4.4%) of the respondents suggested putting in place policies that support equitable development, (7.3%) of the respondents suggested encouraging formation of men only groups and (20.5%) of the respondents suggested Impeding cultural influences that discourage men.

### How socio culture influences men's participation in self-help groups

In order to determine how socio-culture influences men's participation in self-help groups, various questions were asked. This section presents the findings.

#### Belief that SHG is a women affair

Respondents were asked whether they agree with the belief that SHG is a women affair, responses are summarized and presented in figure 4.9 below



**Figure 4.9: Belief that SHG is a women affair**

Findings in figure 4.9 above show that majority of the respondents not in Self Help Group (79.3%) agreed with the belief that SHG is a women affair and (20.6%) of the respondents not in Self Help Group disagreed with the belief that SHG is a women affair. (60%) of the respondents in Self Help Group agreed with the belief that SHG is a women affair and (40%) of the respondents in Self Help Group disagreed with the belief that SHG is a women affair. When asked to explain their answers, (14.7%) of the respondents said that most SHGs are started by women, (2.9%) of the respondents said that women have time to meet, (7.3%) of the respondents said that women are the majority members, (8.8%) of the respondents said that most SHGs deals with women projects and (5.8%) of the respondents said that SHGs benefits the whole society irrespective of gender. This shows that socio-culture has an influence on whether men join SHGs or not. This is because the belief has been put in place by the society and going against it is basically going against the socio-cultural expectation.

**Male members are reluctant to belong to SHGs because it is not cultural to join such a group.**

Respondents in SHG were asked whether some male members are reluctant to belong to SHGs just because it is not cultural to be in groups as men, responses are summarized and presented in table 4.14 below

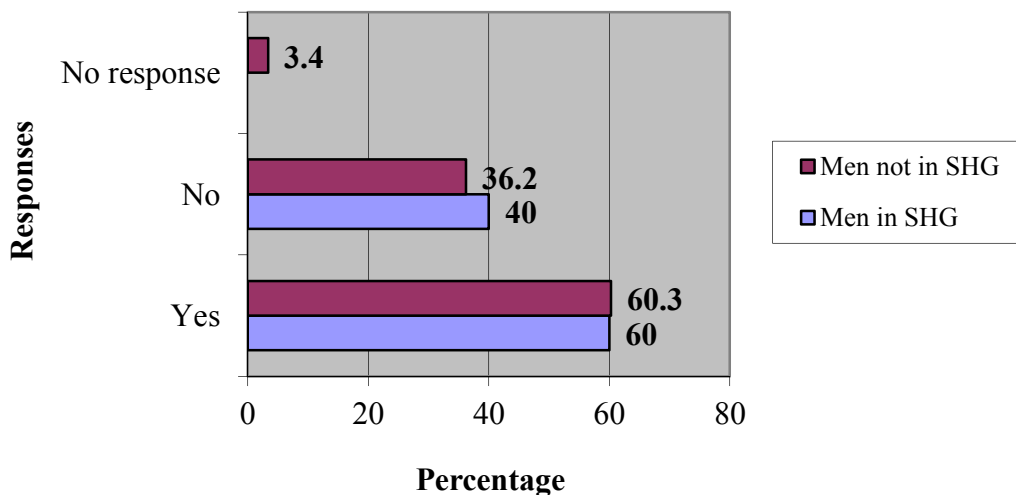
**Table 4.14: Some male members are reluctant to belong to SHGs**

Responses	Frequency	Percentage	Mean	Std. Deviation
Yes	8	80	1.11	.333
No	1	10		
No response	1	10		
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>100</b>		

Findings in table 4.14 above show that majority of the respondents (80%) feel that men are reluctant to belong to SHGs because it is not cultural to be in groups and (10%) felt otherwise. This shows that what the society has put in place as an expectation for men is that they should not come up with solutions together with women and hence this definitely affects men’s subscriptions in SHGs.

**Society expects men to be self-reliant, strong and not seek help from others**

Respondents were asked whether society expects men to be self-reliant, responses are summarized and presented in figure 4.9 below



**Figure 4.9: Society expects men to be self-reliant**

Findings in figure 4.9 above show that (60%) of the respondents in Self Help Group agreed that society expects men to be self-reliant strong and not seek help from others and (40%) of the respondents in Self Help Group disagreed that society expects men to be self-reliant strong and not seek help from others. (60.3%) of the respondents not in Self Help Group agreed that society expects men to be self-reliant strong and not seek help from others and (36.2%) of the respondents not in Self Help Group disagreed that society expects men to be self-reliant strong and not seek help from others. This shows that men avoid SHGs because the society expects them to be self-reliant and solution oriented and by being in a SHG proves them otherwise

**How gender stereo typing influences men’s participation in self-help groups**

In order to determine how gender stereo typing influences men’s participation in self-help groups, various questions were asked. This section presents the findings.

### Perception of men on appropriate members of SHG

Respondents were asked who they think fits more in SHGs, responses are summarized and presented in table 4.15 below

**Table 4.15: Perception of men on appropriate members of SHGs**

Responses	Frequency	Percentage	Mean	Std. Deviation
Women	7	70	2.88	.354
Both	1	10		
No response	2	20		
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>100</b>		

Findings in table 4.15 above show that majority of the respondents (70%) think that women fits more in SHGs and (10%) of the respondents think that both gender fits more in SHGs. When respondents were asked to give reasons, (10%) of the respondents said that Development in SHG benefits women, (50%) of the respondents said that women are better at working in groups with compared to men and (20%) of the respondents said that they should all be involved. It is clear that gender stereotyping has an influence on Men's participation in groups since they already have a perception that SHGs fit women more. The reasons that they give for women fitting more also indicate gender stereotyping because there is a feeling women are better at working in groups than men and hence fit into groups better

### Women are better at nurturing and working with others

Respondents were asked whether they think that women are better at nurturing and working with others and therefore are better at being members of SHGs, responses are summarized and presented in table 4.16 below.

**Table 4.16: Women are better at nurturing and working with others**

Responses	Frequency	Percentage	Mean	Std. Deviation
Yes	5	50	1.44	.527
No	4	40		
No response	1	10		
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>100</b>		

Findings in table 4.16 above show that (50%) of the respondents said that women are better at nurturing and working with others and (40%) of the respondents said that women are not better at nurturing and working with others. Again this shows that gender stereotyping has an influence on male participation because there is an existing stereotype that women are better at nurturing and working with others and hence fit more into SHGs and men do not

### SHGs are women oriented

Respondents were asked whether they agree with the fact that SHGs are women oriented, responses are summarized and presented in table 4.17 below.

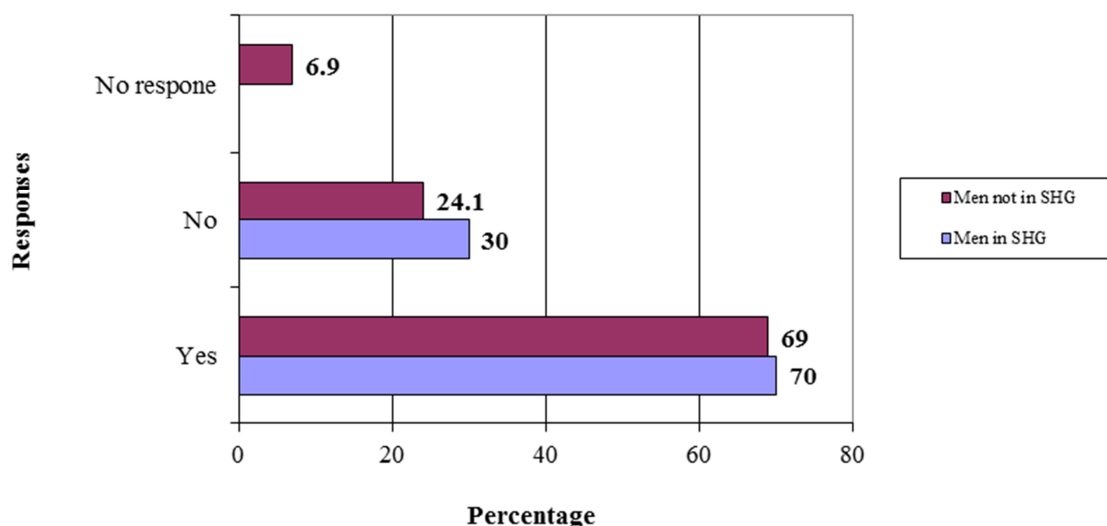
**Table 4.17: SHGs are women oriented**

Responses	Frequency	Percentage	Mean	Std. Deviation
Yes	7	70	1.22	.441
No	2	20		
No response	1	10		
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>100</b>		

Findings in table 4.17 above show that majority of the respondents (70%) agree that SHGs are women oriented and (20%) of the respondents disagreed that SHGs are women oriented. There an existing stereotype that SHGs are women oriented or preoccupied with women issues and hence men do not fit in.

### Rules/regulations of microfinance/finance institutions that govern registered SHGs

Respondents were asked whether government/financial institutions support one gender, responses are summarized and presented in figure 4.10 below



**Figure 4.10: Rules/regulations of microfinance/finance institutions that govern registered SHGs**

Findings in figure 4.10 above show that (70%) of respondents in Self Help Group agreed that there is gender discrimination in rules and regulations of the institutions and (30%) of respondents in Self Help Group disagreed that there is gender discrimination in rules and regulations of the institutions. (69%) of respondents not in Self Help Group agreed that there is gender discrimination in rules and regulations of the institutions and (24.1%) of respondents not in Self Help Group disagreed that there is gender discrimination in rules and regulations of the institutions. When asked why they feel there is gender discrimination, (64.7%) of respondents indicated that the institutions support women oriented SHGs, (4.4%) of respondents indicated that Government support both gender, (20.5%) of respondents indicated that the government favours women and (10.4%) of the respondents said that there is a lot of media campaign on women empowerment. Similarly financial institutions and not for profit organizations that work with SHGs that were interviewed said that their institutions are more inclined towards working with women because of the expectations of their back donors and funders who are convinced that women are more developmental oriented than men. All these are indicators of gender stereotyping at individual levels, government level and institution levels.

Further respondents were asked whether SHGs rules these policies affect men subscription in SHGs, responses are summarized and presented in table 4.18 below.

**Table 4.18: Policies effect to men subscription in SHGs**

Responses	Frequency	Percentage	Mean	Std. Deviation
Yes	6	70	1.33	.500
No	3	30		
No response	1	10		
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>100</b>		

Findings in table 4.18 above show that majority of the respondents (70%) said that the policies affect men subscription in SHGs and (30%) of the respondents said that the policies do not affect men subscription in SHGs. When asked why the policies affect men subscription in SHGs, (22%) of the respondents indicated women leadership, (11.7%) of the respondents indicated bureaucracy, (17.6%) of the respondents indicated registration time and (5.8%) of the respondents indicated that the SHG policies are not man-friendly.

**Low participation levels of men in SHGs**

Respondents were asked whether low participation of men discouraged other men from joining SHGs, responses are summarized and presented in table 4.20 below

**Table 4.18: Low participation levels of men in SHGs**

Responses	Frequency	Percentage	Mean	Std. Deviation
Yes	34	58.6	1.35	.480
No	18	31		
No response	6	10.3		
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>100</b>		

Findings in table 4.18 above show that (58.6%) of the respondents agreed and (31%) of the respondents disagreed. The 58.6% felt that the fact that their low participation of men in SHG shows that they are not

relevant to men. Just by the fact that they are few men in existing SHGs has led to groups being labelled or stereotyped as women forums that men do not belong to

**Perception of men about Complexity of working with Women in SHG** Respondents were asked whether they felt that there would be a challenge working with women who are the majority SHGs, responses are summarized and presented in table 4.20 below

**Table 4.19: Women are easy to work with in the SHG**

Responses	Frequency	Percentage	Mean	Std. Deviation
Yes	2	20	1.80	.422
No	8	80		
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>100</b>		

Findings in table 4.19 above show that majority of the respondents (80%) said that Women are not easy to work with in the SHG and this discouraged their joining SHGs and (20%) of the respondents said that Women are easy to work with in the SHG. For the ones who felt that women are not easy to work (30%) felt that women are emotional and have all the time to waste in groups. (20%) of the respondents said that women are very slow in implementing projects and (10%) of the respondents said that women are not comfortable working with men, 10% felt that women are petty and prefer gossiping. Those who felt women are easy to work with gave the following reasons: (30%) of the respondents said that women are more devoted and punctual, (10%) of the respondents said that women have much respect to their male counterparts. This also shows that gender stereotyping has a negative influence on men's participation in SHGs since they feel that working with women is difficult because of the stereotypes that they have put on them

## SUMMARY, DISCUSSIONS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### Summary of findings

The key findings of the study are as presented below.

#### Background information

The findings indicate that majority are not in self help groups, which supports the findings from previous studies, which could imply that men are not comfortable seeking for help. The findings also show that older men tend to shun self- help groups more as compared to younger men, implying that age has an intervening effect on men's participation in self-help group or men's help seeking behaviour. The findings also show that majority of the respondents who are in a family situation are more likely to join SHG as compared to those who are not. This then implies that increased responsibilities and expectations at the family level have a potential of influencing men to join a self-help group.

With respect to level of education, the findings indicate that an increase in level of education comes with an increase in likelihood of men to join a self-help group or to be more comfortable seeking help. A higher percentage of men with diplomas have joined SHGs compared to men with the same qualifications who have not. Similarly, a higher percentage of men with degrees have joined a SHG as compared to those with the same level of education who have not. The findings also show that men who have low incomes despite the fact that they would benefit from SHGs do not join groups and similarly men who would be considered to be earning better in Kenyan Standards (over 50,000) do not join SHGs. This can also indicate that men who earn less than Ksh.10,000 may be lacking confidence to join SHGs since their low income or need would be exposed and that those who are earning better may be feeling that they do not need others since they are self sufficient.

#### Factors influencing participation of men in anti-poverty self-help groups

This section presents a summary of findings pertaining to the objectives of the study

#### How patriarchy influences men's participation in self-help groups

Findings show that majority of the respondents indicated that the leaders in SHGs are men, which is an indication that the patriarchy system has also infiltrated groups and that just as the patriarchy system dictates, leadership is still with men. Majority of the respondents would prefer men to women in leadership of SHGs due to the perception that men are faster in decision making than women. This indicates that the influence of the patriarchy system is high with a majority of respondents preferring a man leader and hence would be uncomfortable being in a group where all or some leaders are women. Majority of the respondents also said that men naturally provide better leadership than women, since they treat each other equally; they are born leaders and are courageous. This also shows the influence of patriarchy system on the society. Patriarchy system instils the belief that men provide better leadership and that leadership in men is natural and inborn.

Majority of the respondents were of the opinion that their SHGs would attract more men members if most key leaders are men. The opinion was advanced on the premise that men always have new ideas and that men can trust their fellow men. This is also an indication of patriarchy system influence. Patriarchy system expects dominion of men over women and in any instance where this does not happen men will tend to reject the

situation. Majority of the respondents have issues with women having leadership positions in the SHGs since decisions by men are perceived to carry more weight, besides the perception that women in leadership positions tend to be disrespectful.

The findings show that majority of the men are more involved in decision making than women members since men tend to stick to the decisions they make. This is an indication that whether it is true or not that men make more decisions than women, the influence of patriarchy system is felt here is well; men are supposed to be making decisions and their decisions are the best and that is why they are supposed to be in leadership. Similarly an element of gender stereotyping comes out with the percentage that felt that men are always ready to improve their lives as compared to women. With respect to the relative importance given to decisions made by different gender, the findings show that majority of the opinion that decisions made by men tended to carry more weight since men hardly misled SHGs. This is another indicator of the influence of the patriarchy system since there is a feeling that women are not naturally involved in decision making and that many of them are more comfortable with decisions made by men. Also of interest is the fact that for those who thought all decisions are given equal weight or importance thought it is because they need to ensure gender equality (expected of mixed groups by law) not because they think the decisions or contributions by women are of substance

With respect to male involvement in SHGs, the responses were as follows: Majority of men indicated that they have a problem with women leadership, which is in line with the expectations of the patriarchy system; men tended to shun groups because of domination of women because they are the majority in the groups. This again shows that patriarchy system has an influence; the majority of men feel that their place is over that of women which is basically a patriarchal expectation which expects men to provide leadership and not to be followers; men were predominantly involved in financial decision making, which indicates a deeply rooted patriarchal compliance which expects men to have dominion over women and hence explains why men would not want to be in an SHG where financial decisions are made by all. In order to address the challenges faced and influence men to join SHGs, the respondents made the following suggestions: enhanced women empowering; ensuring gender balance in all SHGs; convincing men to join SHGs; creating awareness and sensitizing men on the benefits of SHGs; assigning men more leadership roles in SHGs; and investing in more profit making projects in the SHGs.

#### **How masculinity influences men's participation in self-help groups**

Majority of the respondents indicated as follows:

SHGs are feminine just by the way they are organized. The reasons advanced for the answer include the following: SHGs are mismanaged; majority members are women; some men have also benefited from SHGs; there are no men related SHGs around; they meet a lot of times and only women have time for such kind of meetings; and women like doing things in groups and hence it was not manly to be in the groups. This shows that masculinity which leads men to shun anything that is considered feminine has an influence on whether they join SHGs. This is because by joining a 'feminine' group challenges their masculinity

Majority of the respondents indicated that men refuse to belong to SHGs so that they may not be looked at as weak. Being weak is an indicator of low masculinity and hence men who want to be identified as masculine will avoid anything that shows that they are not masculine. Therefore if belonging to a group is perceived to show weakness men tend to avoid it.

Majority of the respondents also indicated that they were men, self-sufficient and with adequate resources and hence required no little help from others. The reasons advanced for this response included the following: their income is sufficient; they get loans from financial institutions without need of being in SHG; sometimes it is hard to be self-sufficient; men are supposed to work hard; men help each other; and women are supposed to get help from men and not the other way round. This also shows clear influence of masculinity on men avoiding help seeking behaviour and feeling that as men they should not be expecting help from men or any other person for that matter. Masculinity tends to push men to look strong and self sufficient.

Majority of the respondents indicated that they earned enough income to support themselves without soliciting financial help from other people. The following reasons were advanced for the answer: When asked to give reasons for their answers, the following were the responses: they are business men who are making their own money; they have enough money to sustain themselves; they live within their own means; and they seek loan from banks and not individuals. This shows deep entrenchment of masculinity influences in men which push them from SHGs which are by essence a means of organized institution of getting help from others.

Majority of the respondents indicated that they needed others to benefit from SHGs: the reasons advanced for the response include: benefits should be personal; liabilities should not be shared; they are worth a lot as an individual and being in groups undermined their distinctiveness as men. This is another indicator of masculinity influence by being masculine a man is supposed to be self-sufficient and hence being in a situation that one needs others to succeed challenges that position. With respect to factors influencing decisions not to join an SHG, the findings indicate as follows:

Majority of the respondents indicated that they were ready to face any challenge in life. One indicator of masculinity is courage and not easily intimidated. The fact that majority of the respondents shared this opinion; this influenced their non-participation in group shows masculinity at play; and majority of the respondents indicated that they had witnessed successful men who did not belong to any SHG, which is another indicator of masculinity influencing male participation in SHGs, since they feel that as men they might not to be in an SHG to be successful and also that they look upon other men who have been successful(not women) and have not been in SHGs.

The following were the interventions suggested by the respondents that should be employed to encourage men to join SHGs: provision of basic education on the benefits of SHGs; encourage integration of the society; showcasing benefits of SHG to attract men; awareness creation; putting in place policies that support equitable development; encouraging formation of men only groups; and discouraging impeding cultural influences that discourage men.

#### **How socio culture influences men's participation in self-help groups**

Majority of the respondents, irrespective of whether they were members of SHG or not expressed the opinion that SHGs was a women's affair. The reasons advanced for such response were as follows: most SHGs are started by women; women have time for meetings; women are the majority members; most SHGs deal with women projects; SHGs benefit the whole society irrespective of gender. This shows that socio-culture has an influence on whether men join SHGs or not. This is because the belief has been put in place by the society and going against it is basically going against the socio-cultural expectation.

Findings of the study also indicate that majority of the respondents indicated that male members are reluctant to belong to SHGs because it is not cultural to join such a group. This shows that what the society has put in place as an expectation for men is that they should not come up with solutions together with women and hence this definitely affects men's subscriptions in SHGs. Majority of the respondents also indicated that society expects men to be self-reliant, strong and not seek help from others, which is an indicator that men avoid SHGs because the society expects them to be self-reliant and solution oriented and by being in a SHG proves them otherwise

#### **How gender stereo typing influences men's participation in self-help groups**

The findings show that majority of the respondents were of the opinion that women fitted more in the SHGs than men. The reasons advanced for such thinking included the following: development in SHG benefits women; and women are better at working in groups with compared to men. This is a clear indicator that gender stereotyping has an influence on Men's participation in groups since they already have a perception that SHGs fit women more. The reasons that they give for women fitting more also indicate gender stereotyping because there is a feeling women are better at working in groups than men and hence fit into groups better.

The findings also show that majority of the respondents were of the opinion that women are better at nurturing and working with others, which also shows that gender stereotyping has an influence on male participation because there is an existing stereotype that women are better at nurturing and working with others and hence fit more into SHGs and men do not. Further, the respondents indicate that majority of the respondents were of the view that SHGs are women oriented, which is a stereotype that SHGs are women oriented or preoccupied with women issues and hence men do not fit in.

With respect top whether the government or financial institutions supported one gender and discriminated against the other, majority of the respondents answered in the affirmative. Reasons advanced for suggesting that there was gender discrimination were as follows: the institutions support women oriented SHGs; the government favors women; there is a lot of media campaign on women empowerment. Similarly financial institutions and not for profit organizations that work with SHGs that were interviewed said that their institutions are more inclined towards working with women because of the expectations of their back donors and funders who are convinced that women are more developmental oriented than men. All these are indicators of gender stereotyping at individual levels, government level and institution levels. In addition, the findings show that the policies and regulations affect men's subscription in SHGs. The reasons advanced for this kind of thinking include: women leadership; bureaucracy; and registration time.

Majority of the respondents were of the opinion that the low participation levels of men discouraged other men from joining SHGs. The respondents were also of the view that the fact that their low participation of men in SHG shows that they are not relevant to men. Just by the fact that they are few men in existing SHGs has led to groups being labeled or stereotyped as women forums that men do not belong to. The findings also show that majority of the respondents did not find it easy to work with women who are the majority in SHGs, which discouraged their becoming members. The reasons given for this kind of response included: women are emotional and have all the time to waste in groups; women are very slow in implementing projects; women are not comfortable working with men; and women are petty and prefer gossiping. The respondents who held the view that women are easy to work with provided the following reasons: women are more devoted and punctual; and women have much respect to their male counterparts. This also shows that gender stereotyping has a



negative influence on men's participation in SHGs since they feel that working with women is difficult because of the stereotypes that they have put on them.

### **Discussion of Findings**

The discussions of the findings are presented in this section

#### **How patriarchy influences men's participation in self-help groups**

Findings show that majority of the respondents indicated that the leaders in SHGs are men, which is an indication that the patriarchy system has also infiltrated groups and that just as the patriarchy system dictates, leadership is still with men. Majority of the respondents would prefer men to women in leadership of SHGs due to the perception that men are faster in decision making than women. James (2003), articulated areas in which men's involvement may be ratified- working with men as decision makers and service providers; integrating men into the development process with a 'gendered lens'; and targeting groups of men and boys when and where they are vulnerable (for example in relation to issues of poverty or sexuality).

This indicates that the influence of the patriarchy system is high with a majority of respondents preferring a man leader and hence would be uncomfortable being in a group where all or some leaders are women. Majority of the respondents also said that men naturally provide better leadership than women, since they treat each other equally; they are born leaders and are courageous. Gayle (2004) asserted that marginalized men seek to challenge the position of powerful men but not patriarchy, as they themselves want to occupy the position of patriarch. Powerful and marginalized men in this sense hold on to the past with the intention of maintaining patriarchal values, symbols and status – a past which is obsolete. Men therefore believe in their right to dominate, and those unable to dominate are deemed to be failed individuals.

This also shows the influence of patriarchy system on the society. Patriarchy system instills the belief that men provide better leadership and that leadership in men is natural and inborn. When women's profile within the communities' are raised, it may lead to mistrust by men who again influences their relationships and associations with other groups. Men also tend to feel threatened by the perceived influence wielded by women. (Nokia Research Africa and Institute for Development Studies, University of Nairobi, ND).

Majority of the respondents were of the opinion that their SHGs would attract more men members if most key leaders are men. The opinion was advanced on the premise that men always have new ideas and that men can trust their fellow men. This finding supports the argument by Kassily & Onkware (2010) that power is traditionally believed to be the province of men while women are seen as exercising power primarily at home. Patriarchy system expects dominion of men over women and in any instance where this does not happen men will tend to reject the situation.

#### **How masculinity influences men's participation in self-help groups**

Majority of the respondents indicated as follows:

SHGs are feminine just by the way they are organized. This shows that masculinity which leads men to shun anything that is considered feminine has an influence on whether they join SHGs. This is because by joining a 'feminine' group challenges their masculinity. Majority of the respondents indicated that men refuse to belong to SHGs so that they may not be looked at as weak. Being weak is an indicator of low masculinity and hence men who want to be identified as masculine will avoid anything that shows that they are not masculine. Therefore if belonging to a group is perceived to show weakness men tend to avoid it. Strict gender roles are internalized, and boys learn to divorce themselves from qualities they identify as feminine - passivity, weakness, illness, dependence and sensitivity (Male Participation in Sexual and Reproductive Health: New Paradigms Symposium, 1998). According to Kaufman (2003), males or male-defined traits include assertiveness, aggressiveness, ruggedness, toughness, decisiveness, inventiveness, risk-taking, confrontation, conquest seeking, ruthlessness and having a killer instinct. Men's own health and wellbeing are limited by contemporary constructions of manhood.

Majority of the respondents also indicated that they were men, self-sufficient and with adequate resources and hence required no little help from others. The reasons advanced for this response included the following: their income is sufficient; they get loans from financial institutions without need of being in SHG; sometimes it is hard to be self-sufficient; men are supposed to work hard; men help each other; and women are supposed to get help from men and not the other way round. This finding is in line with the findings by Ministry of State for Planning, National Development and Vision 2030, (2008), which indicate that in the urban areas, the poverty prevalence is 30 per cent for male-headed households compared to 46.2 per cent for female-headed households. Though the poverty in female-headed households is higher we cannot disregard the poverty that is in male-headed households. In addition, Mwabu, *et al.* (2000) using the cost of basic needs (CBN) and food energy intake (FEI) approaches in computing poverty rates for Kenya, found that poverty rates were just marginally higher in female-headed households (41 percent) than in male-headed households (38 percent) where husband and wife live together.

Majority of the respondents indicated that they earned enough income to support themselves without

soliciting financial help from other people. The belief that it is more masculine and therefore better to be entirely independent and invulnerable (never disabled, never sick, never vulnerable) leads to a collective failure to provide social services such as health care, unemployment insurance, welfare benefits, and other benefits that help everyone, including men and boys (Ashley, 2011). This then justifies why men would not want to be involved in SHG since to be a member one has to be vulnerable and rely on others to succeed.

The following were the interventions suggested by the respondents that should be employed to encourage men to join SHGs: provision of basic education on the benefits of SHGs; encourage integration of the society; showcasing benefits of SHG to attract men; awareness creation; putting in place policies that support equitable development; encouraging formation of men only groups; and discouraging impeding cultural influences that discourage men. The findings is supported by the argument by Izugbara (2009) that helping men to know themselves and be able to engage with and peel through their own behaviors in the light of gendered cultural constructions is a logical complement to women's health and children's health, and an essential component of building a complete and inclusive health care system, achieving optimal overall health in the continent, and getting men to be true allies in the global struggle for gender equality.

#### **How socio culture influences men's participation in self-help groups**

Majority of the respondents, irrespective of whether they were members of SHG or not expressed the opinion that SHGs was a women's affair. The reasons advanced for such response were as follows: most SHGs are started by women; women have time for meetings; and most SHGs deal with women projects. African culture perpetuates culturally sanctioned biases against women and provides excuses for men. Cultural biases operate at all levels ranging from national institutional level, government policy, community level, household and individual levels (Kiriti, 2003b). Historically, SHG membership in Kenya and all over Africa has been predominantly women with their roots in a long tradition of community self - help groups, such as funeral and rotating labor clubs. However, Chant & Guttman (2000) introduced another dimension to the whole debate of participation showing the need for involving men in activities meant to empower women. Leaving men out of efforts towards gender equality can provoke male hostility and retaliation, arising out of both exclusion and more general anxieties among men, as some development projects have found. Focusing only on women, in relation to such issues as economic participation, credit, or sexual and reproductive health for example, can leave women with yet more work to do and thus intensify gender inequalities. Women-only projects can mean that women still have to deal with unsympathetic men and patriarchal power relations, and can leave women with sole responsibility for sexual health, family nutrition, and so on. They conclude that including men will be critical to the successful creation of gender equality.

Findings of the study also indicate that majority of the respondents indicated that male members are reluctant to belong to SHGs because it is not cultural to join such a group. This shows that what the society has put in place as an expectation for men is that they should not come up with solutions together with women and hence this definitely affects men's subscriptions in SHGs. Majority of the respondents also indicated that society expects men to be self-reliant, strong and not seek help from others, which is an indicator that men avoid SHGs because the society expects them to be self-reliant and solution oriented and by being in a SHG proves them otherwise. However, according to Karmakar (1999), the approach of Self-help Groups (SHGs) towards poverty alleviation is that it should be self-help. The logic is that individual effort is too inadequate to improve their fate. This brings about the necessity for organizing in a group by which they get the benefit of collective perception, collective decision making and collective implementation of programmes for common benefit.

#### **How gender stereo typing influences men's participation in self-help groups**

The findings show that majority of the respondents were of the opinion that women fitted more in the SHGs than men. Yordanova (2006) noted that gender stereotypes lead to faulty reasoning and actions in the advantage or disadvantage of others. Further, Aalberg & Jenssen (2007), whether we like to admit it or not, we all use stereotypes as information shortcuts in everyday life. Because we cannot have full information about everything, we often rely on conventional and oversimplified conceptions. According to Bannon & Correia (2006), gender has stubbornly remained a one-sided topic group. Men are seen as the guilty party, lurking ominously in the background. Little effort has been devote to understanding men's possible motivations let alone their own gendered conditions. Further, Amuyunzu - Nyamongo and Francis (2006) noted that Kenyan men have experienced the reverse of empowerment in the last two decades. Disempowerment is understood as a process that has decreased their abilities to overcome barriers to self-actualization (Bannon & Correia, 2006). Given that many women already interact with men on a daily basis in their households and public lives, involving men can make interventions more relevant and workable (Chant & Guttman, 2000). Male inclusion increases men's responsibility for change.

The findings also show that majority of the respondents were of the opinion that women are better at nurturing and working with others, which also shows that gender stereotyping has an influence on male participation because there is an existing stereotype that women are better at nurturing and working with others and hence fit more into SHGs and men do not. Further, the respondents indicate that majority of the respondents

were of the view that SHGs are women oriented, which is a stereotype that SHGs are women oriented or preoccupied with women issues and hence men do not fit in. Stereotypical gender roles have probably existed as long as human culture and are such a natural part of our lives that we barely take notice of them. Nevertheless, images of what we perceive as typically masculine and feminine in appearance and behaviour depend on the individual's perception. Within each gender one can find different stereotypes. A commonly assumed idea is that men are hard and tough, while women are soft and vulnerable. (Bauer & Jahlmar, nd). Evidence in (Khandker, 2003) suggests that lending to women yields greater social and economic impacts relative to lending to men with fear is that if aid is given to men, they might sell food stamps and mispend resources, possibly wasting money on gambling, tobacco, and alcohol. The superiority of women as hardworking, reliable, trustworthy, socially responsible, caring and cooperative is often asserted; whilst men on the other hand are frequently portrayed as lazy, violent, promiscuous and irresponsible drunkards (Cleaver, 2000). Gender stereotypes are one of the most persistent causes of gender inequality. They are rooted in every aspect of life and we encounter them at every stage of life. If not dealt with, gender stereotypes on the 'proper' roles of women and men become easily imprinted in people's thoughts and minds and are (re)produced from generation to generation (Gortnar, 2008) and largely determine how we relate with others. Stereotypes can lead development workers or people responsible for empowering to actually end up discriminating against them.

With respect to whether the government or financial institutions supported one gender and discriminated against the other, majority of the respondents answered in the affirmative. Reasons advanced for suggesting that there was gender discrimination were as follows: the institutions support women oriented SHGs; the government favors women; there is a lot of media campaign on women empowerment. Similarly financial institutions and not for profit organizations that work with SHGs that were interviewed said that their institutions are more inclined towards working with women because of the expectations of their back donors and funders who are convinced that women are more developmental oriented than men. This finding supports the findings from a 2001 survey by the Special Unit on Microfinance of the United Nations Capital Development Fund (SUM/UNCDF) of 29 microfinance institutions revealed that approximately 60 per cent of these institutions' clients were women. Six of the 29 focused entirely on women. Among the remaining 23 mixed-sex programs, 52 per cent of clients were women meaning that the average representation of men was at 41% (Deshpanda, 2001). According to Bannon & Correia (2006), despite the fact that SHG are valued for their potential contribution to development, the focus of the government and development agencies on women and girls and the empowerment and emancipation of women and affirmative action have largely side-lined men just by the way development is designed and organized.

Majority of the respondents were of the opinion that the low participation levels of men discouraged other men from joining SHGs. The respondents were also of the view that the fact that their low participation of men in SHG shows that they are not relevant to men. Flood (2004), questions whether men should be included in programming and policy related to gender. He further questions how male inclusion can be made most beneficial. It therefore becomes clear that the question of male involvement is slowly creeping into the agenda in gender and development work, as it is in such fields as sexual and reproductive health but again there lacks clarity on how best to fit it in.

The findings indicate that by the fact that they are few men in existing SHGs has led to groups being labelled or stereotyped as women forums that men do not belong to. According to Mutugi (2006), the initial self-help groups were women's groups whose main activity was saving and lending money - the popularly-called 'merry-go round'. Older groups, which are more cohesive, tend to move on to development activities such as the purchase of household utensils, items of clothing (khangas and sweaters), iron roofing sheets and water tanks, as well as the construction of latrines and bathrooms. Other than these activities, the self-help group provides the single most important forum for education among women at the grass roots. This is due to its social organization and cohesion, important considerations for peer influence and healthy competition among members.

## **Conclusions**

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions are drawn:

### **How patriarchy influences men's participation in self-help groups**

Majority of the leaders in the SHGs are men, which is an indication that the patriarchy system has also infiltrated groups and that just as the patriarchy system dictates, leadership is still with men. In addition, men are preferred in leadership positions due to their ability to make quick and firm decisions when required, which indicates that patriarchy system instills the belief that men provide better leadership and that leadership in men is natural and inborn. Patriarchy system expects dominion of men over women and in any instance where this does not happen men will tend to reject the situation. The influence of patriarchy has led to the perception that women are not naturally involved in decision making and that many of them are more comfortable with decisions made by men. Patriarchy system has an influence since the majority of men feel that their place is above that of women, which is basically a patriarchal expectation which expects men to provide leadership and not to be followers.

### **How masculinity influences men's participation in self-help groups**

SHGs are considered feminine just by the way they are organized, which is an indicator that masculinity which leads men to shun anything that is considered feminine has an influence on whether they join SHGs. This is because by joining a 'feminine' group challenges their masculinity. In addition, men refuse to belong to SHGs so that they may not be looked at as weak, which is perceived as an indicator of low masculinity and hence men who want to be identified as masculine will avoid anything that shows that they are not masculine. Men were perceived to be self-sufficient and with adequate resources and hence required no little help from others. This also shows clear influence of masculinity on men avoiding help seeking behavior and feeling that as men they should not be expecting help from men or any other person for that matter. Masculinity tends to push men to look strong and self sufficient.

### **How socio culture influences men's participation in self-help groups**

Socio -culture has an influence on whether men join SHGs or not. This is because the belief has been put in place by the society and going against it is basically going against the socio-cultural expectation. In addition, males are reluctant to belong to SHGs because it is not cultural to join such a group. This shows that what the society has put in place as an expectation for men is that they should not come up with solutions together with women and hence this definitely affects men's subscriptions in SHGs.

### **How gender stereo typing influences men's participation in self-help groups**

Gender stereotyping has an influence on Men's participation in groups since they already have a perception that SHGs fit women more. In addition, gender stereotyping has an influence on male participation because there is an existing stereotype that women are better at nurturing and working with others and hence fit more into SHGs and men do not. There is perception that the various institutions, including the government and microfinance institutions supported one gender (female) and discriminated against the other. Low participation levels of men discouraged other men from joining SHGs. Just by the fact that they are few men in existing SHGs has led to groups being labelled or stereotyped as women forums that men do not belong to. This also shows that gender stereotyping has a negative influence on men's participation in SHGs since they feel that working with women is difficult because of the stereotypes that they have put on them.

## **Recommendations**

This section presents the recommendations of the study

### **Recommendations for policy and practice**

The recommendations pertaining to how patriarchy influences men's participation in self-help groups are presented below.

#### **How patriarchy influences men's participation in self-help groups**

In order to address the obstacles to men's active participation in SHGs and involvement of both gender, the following measures should be employed: ensure enhanced women empowering; ensure gender balance in all SHGs', especially in leadership positions; create awareness on the benefits of SHGs and sensitize more men to join; and investing in more profit making projects in the SHGs.

#### **How masculinity influences men's participation in self-help groups**

In order to address the issues pertaining to masculinity, the following interventions should be considered: provision of basic education on the benefits of SHGs; encourage integration of the society; showcasing benefits of SHG to attract men; awareness creation; putting in place policies that support equitable development; and encouraging formation of men only groups.

#### **How socio culture influences men's participation in self-help groups**

In order to address impediments arising from socio-cultural influence, men should also be encouraged to take the initiative and form SHGs and be encouraged to create time for meetings; the projects to be implemented should include male oriented ones so as to avoid the notion that only women activities are supported; the whole society should be sensitized that SHGs benefit the whole society irrespective of gender; and discourage impeding cultural influences that discourage men.

#### **How gender stereo typing influences men's participation in self-help groups**

In order to address issues pertaining to gender stereotyping, there is need to form integrated groups where democracy is exercised in picking the leaders and equal participation in decision making is encouraged. Men should be encouraged to emulate women as team players while working in groups so as to become good team players, besides the organizations that support SHGs being encouraged to give equal attention to the needs of both gender.

### **Suggestions for further research**

The findings of this study, it is hoped, will contribute to the existing body of knowledge and form basis for future researchers. The following areas of further researcher are thus suggested: (1) Whereas the current study focused on responses from men, future studies should focus on responses from women; and (2) The findings of the study should be replicated in other countries for comparison purposes.

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