Effects of Informal Saving Schemes Short Term Loans on Livelihoods in Laikipia County, Kenya

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Abstract

The study object was, to examine the effects of short term loans provided by Informal saving schemes on household’s livelihoods for residents in Laikipia County. Probabilistic and sample random sampling utilized to select target population and sample size. The study object data collection guided by participants’ response on impact at household level on determined ten core economic activities. Descriptive and deductive statistics like charts and tables were utilized. Research outcomes indicated that Informal saving groups were popular as they availed disciplined environment for members saving pool, to save money and to access short term loans without constraint and as to when needed. In cessation, the research found that Informal saving schemes are critical in helping individuals diversification on socio-economic activities on collective means at household levels with ultimate aim to achieve and sustain incomes. Commend was, the need of a self-regulating legal framework to sustain the gains.

Key Words: Informal saving schemes, Short term loans, Households, Livelihoods, Impact.
1. Introduction
Livelihoods’ elucidated as a household’s means of earning a living, which includes activities to meet basic human needs in good and bad times, as well as acquiring capabilities, resources and assets to realise these activities (Chambers & Conway, 1992). The ideal of Informal saving schemes was developed to assist distraught persons in the general public who has been dismissed by formal financial systems for different grounds (Kurgat, 2018). According to (World Bank Group., December 2018), more than 70% of persons in the upcoming economies do not own any bank account and have devised their other methods to save their monies in spite of the vigorous promoting in the conventional banking sector.

An Informal saving scheme is a social association that are created to assist members of the community set aside finances for explicit purpose (FAO, IFAD, ILO, 2015) more than 57% of the total populace have to move to Informal saving schemes with marginally more than 30% originating from the third world states (Global Report, 2014). The most widely recognised model like rotating saving and credit association (ROSCAs) work through contribution of members deposits from individuals or groups, afterward loaning entire month contribution to a couple of individuals from the group. Individuals’, who benefit from the sum of that month, depends on an already determined rotation, guaranteeing every member will in the end get s larger sum.

In several cases, banks and microfinance institutions (MFIs) have been the key subjects of conversation in the push to battle for unemployment in monetary turn of events (Khadka, 2019). In any case, there is a shortage of confirmation in concentrates because of financially enabled local people in underdeveloped nations (Brannen, 2010). Even with growing investment of group-based livelihoods promotion, there exist little consensus on how effective these programmes have been, and why or why not (Banerjee, 2015). Again even with the aggressive results of Informal saving schemes under the auspicious of table banking under the (Kenya Vision 2030) flagship project, the Government of Kenya didn’t proceed with the implementation. It was noticed that people in general had just embraced Informal saving schemes and were prepared to execute it with or without the help of the administration (Karanja, 2014).

It is widely acknowledged that most of the people in Laikipia County are associated with very low income, low literacy levels, low consumption per household as well as low mean per capita consumption expenditure (KNBS, 2017). It is approximated that up to 33% of Kenyans have joined an Informal saving scheme and many of them belong to more than one. The primary limitations affecting SMEs, revenue generating processes in parts of the country is access to funds. The formal financial sector finds it hard to appraise informal income generating activities and SMEs for loans due to lack of legal entities, insufficient accounts, marginal loan size and lack of security. The lengthy process of loan application, elaborate terms and conditions not clearly disclosed, hence making the disadvantaged people avoid the formal financial sector (Nguyet, 2014).

According to, (Republic of Kenya (2016). FinAccess Household Survey, 2016), studies have found out that banks (8.1%) and informal mechanisms (8.7%) pose significantly prevalent among users of financial services. This study was executed in Laikipia County which is predominantly an arid and semi-arid area with high poverty index (KNBS, 2017). Despite its significance, there is need to have clear policies and guidelines that drive informal saving schemes in Kenya. It is also not clear of the effects of Informal saving schemes contributions to improvement of household income of families in rural Kenya and to what extent. The study, therefore, explored the effects of Informal
saving schemes on livelihoods in Laikipia County. Specific on how short term loans provided by Informal saving schemes contribute to improved livelihoods.

The selection of the county of Laikipia was as a result of it being the launching pilot of Informal saving scheme (Action Aid, 2012) and among the poorest region country wide, Laikipia north sub-county (Commission on Revenue Allocation [CRA], 2012). Hence, carrying out the research provided a realistic conclusion and recommendation for generalization to effects of Informal saving schemes short term loans in improving livelihoods in Kenya.

The research outcome indicated that Informal saving schemes offer members chance to access short term loans depending on their saving, leading to self-reliance on the much needed financial independence achieved from access and use of loans, which was rated by the management at 70% and key contributor of poverty reduction. This object, examined the effects of short term loans provided by Informal saving schemes on livelihoods in Laikipia County. The results of the study indicated that Informal saving groups were popular for various reasons; one, they availed disciplined culture for members saving pool, a chance to save small amounts of money, access short term loans without constraints and as to when needed, a chance that is rare in the informal financial services.

The research deduce that, in view of the fact that, the main clients/members of Informal saving schemes or entirety Informal saving groups are those who lack significant amount of land or assets, the persons who are struggling to alleviate poverty, the disadvantaged and desperate to nourish realistic livelihoods. The research commends that Informal saving schemes or groups need to have a self-regulatory framework to sustain the gains and multiplier effect. The need for enhanced capacity building to make informed decisions on the utilization of short term loans for maximum gain and long term effects on their livelihoods. Prioritization of core activities in household is key for fit to meet purpose and motivational to sustain membership contributions, as Informal saving schemes remain a valuable common interest groups.

2. Literature

The ideal of Informal saving schemes or groups have been explained here with the Adverse Selection theory of financial markets and Sustainable Livelihood Approach theories. According to a study by (Philippon & Skreta, 2012) measures to satisfy financial demands afflicted by Adverse selection echoed the advocates of adverse selection theory of financial markets that effectiveness of an interposition is evaluated by the effects on the proceeding interest rates in the market. An alternative source to access the financial demand is determined by accessible and effectiveness of the financial choice availed. Whereas the terms and conditions of formal financial services are beyond the reach of the majority, the unsatisfiable demand dictates the borrower to revert to Informal saving schemes and groups as the optional sources. Hence, the adverse selection of financial markets leads to optimal interventions within the formal and informal financial sector.

The credit managing and loans cost control dependent on the unbalanced data hypothesis didn’t legitimately clarify the motivation behind why Informal sparing plans rose and existed, yet uncovered the guidelines of the beginning from which Informal sparing plan acquired the room of endurance and advancement. The theoretical literature on Informal saving schemes has drawn most (yet not the entirety) of its creativity from the proof on formal exchanges in creating nations outside Africa. Theories have concentrated on two possible mechanisms which serve to provide repayment reasons. First, self-enforcing contract, where, the borrowers repay because they cannot afford to
lose their future access to loans in the event that they default, this is what is clarified by borrowers when inquired as to why they pay loans on time. Besides, is the formation of social authorization to rebuff defaulters? Especially the defaulters are censured and punished extensively by the network all in all, notwithstanding being denied access to future advances. This plainly demonstrates general social approvals assume a significant role in continuing Informal saving schemes (Udry, 1999). We postulate that successful Informal saving groups are allied to the enforcement of social sanctions which punish defaulters.

The two general classifications of Informal saving schemes and Informal saving groups (pivoting and non-turning) appear to fill changed direct financial needs, Informal saving gatherings give methods for aggregating reserve funds for the acquisition of resolute merchandise more rapidly than should be possible in autarchy (Underhill, 2015). They explained that in a situation where demand for loans, credit rationing arises and formal financial institutions use interest rates to allocate the funds. The interest rates discourage some borrowers who result to other alternatives in the Informal saving schemes. (Care, 2013), postulated that stringent requirements by formal financial institutions contributed to inefficient allocation of credit especially in rural areas.

The convenience of the Informal saving schemes and negotiability make them popular among the disadvantaged both in rural and urban areas reasons that reduce the popularity of using formal financial institutions such as high rates are examined and analyzed. Hence, this study researched the effects of short term loans obtained from Informal saving schemes on livelihood, as informed by the popularity spread. Relevance of the subject study, prospective clients opt for Informal saving schemes due to adverse selection and risk practices exhibited by the formal financial services. The mechanism of evaluating the prospective client’s ability in the formal financial sectors includes a fixed screening procedures .e.g. ownership of valuable and disposable assets, saving history, predictable source of income and other persons holding equal credentials. Perspective who do not pass the shredding mechanism are locked out and therefore, seek financial inclusion in the Informal saving schemes for self-reliance and satisfying economic independence. The benefits of Informal saving schemes, accessible and affordability makes them suitable options and popular amongst the necessities in rural and urban locality.

According to (Morse & McNamara, 2013) recognized two basic structures of growth that forms the bases of sustainable livelihood approach theory. The Immanent growth of which defines the progress of the community today. Immanent is habitually expedited by platform that accords the exchange of ideas and technologies throughout worldwide and societal integration. On this study, the Immanent of growth and the intentional interventions shows the theory of sustainable livelihood approach is applicable on the Informal saving schemes, for instance, the actualization of independent variables to dependent variable helps to build a coherent society that is able to meet its basic needs and contributes to the economic growth of the country.

Sustainable Livelihood approach is inclusive and individuals focused from an unequivocal perspective (Hogh-Jensen, 2009) and dependent on the incorporation of those intended to profit on the progressions just as their nearby encounters (Mercer, 2010). Really this sanctioned and applicable position as it is hard to envision having the option to actualize a sustainable livelihood approach without the inclusion of these people. Hence, sustainable livelihood approach forces an engagement with those benefiting from the intervention or policy.
(Simon, 2010) and (Wlokas, 2011, April) discusses ‘Sustainable Urban Livelihoods Approach, as the essence, and hence, Sustainable Livelihood Approach works from this current information and experience base as opposed to finding another bearing. According to (Fan, et al., 2011) a core element of (Department for International Development (DFID), 2014) approach is the sustainable livelihood framework, an expository structure to facilitate a wide and deliberate comprehension of a few factors that oblige or elucidate business openings, and to show how they identify with one another. It is satisfactory that scaled up consideration must be coordinated towards the different factors and procedures which either induce or elevate needy individuals’ capacity to improve their living in a monetarily, biologically and socially feasible way. The practical livelihood approach coincide the possibilities of a progressively reasonable and incorporated way to deal with destitution.

The relevance of this theory in this study, based on the emphasis on sustainable approach, the discipline of the society builds on self-regulatory, cohesiveness and adherence to the growth and sustain the society endeavours, especially the Informal saving schemes and groups for the achievement of self-reliance on financial needs and economic development independence leading to improved household livelihoods. However, we cannot conclusively determine whether international interventions by the government and development partners would change the society attitude towards the Informal saving schemes as the intervention will be accompanied by regulatory policies, donor fatigue such that the society may feel the loss of ownership and sense of belonging, therefore, the sustainability may not be forthcoming.

Related empirical literature on saving groups that Informal saving schemes can be effective at encouraging people to keep saving, where group saves for the benefit of one of the members, or common goal, (Karlan D. S., 2017) inspected reverse funds drove microfinance programs work in poor provincial networks in creating nations to set up Informal sparing plans that spare and afterward drove out the amassed investment funds to one another. Existing studies demonstrates Informal saving schemes are common with rural and urban inhabitants (Kumar, 2013). Studies show that in Cameron, India, Sri Lanka, among creating nations, experts among others with moderately significant wages regularly take an interest with most Informal sparing plans (Gugerty, 2007). Ubiquity in Informal sparing plans with low and centre pay bunches indicates individuals prefer to spare and get, significance despite difficult conditions (Global Report, 2014) (Allen, 2018). The essential mover of individuals to ROSCAs is that they need additional and value enrolment in these affiliations provoked them to identify as such (Gugerty, 2017).

Individuals in gathering set a measure of cash every party contributes week by week or month by month. The gathering meets once every month, where individuals pay their commitment, eat and drink together thus regularly share encounters, achievements and difficulties going on their lives subsequently. ROSCAs don’t just fill in as monetary yet as social capital help device as well (Stewart, 2017) (Welfens, 2019). Who examined Informal saving schemes among Asian workers in the USA discovered friend inspiration among Informal saving groups members encourages “constrained reserve funds” which is unintended monetary advantage of Informal sparing plans. In another investigation, (Aliber, 2015) considered an example of 70 Informal sparing gathering with 1,066 individuals in Kenya and found that individuals join Informal saving plans since sparing require self-control, and Informal gatherings give an aggregate component to singular restraint. She cites members saying ‘You can’t spare alone’. As indicated by (Dupas P. G., 2012), poor family
units utilize comparable types of Informal reserve funds in creating nations independent of their sparing purposes. In Africa, Informal sparing plans is gradually picking up pace. In country territories, is the place Informal sparing gatherings was begun by the (Dynamic survey, 2013), because of the overwhelming impacts of post-political race viciousness, cruel climatic conditions, absence of training and funds, sexual orientation equality and segregation subsequent to finding that rustic ladies were living in contemptible destitution. (Kibuuka, 2019), did a study on Informal finance in South Africa, the main reasons behind use of Informal saving schemes. The study used essential information and questionnaires were utilized to gather information. A random sampling method was utilized to sample of 13 groups and descriptive design used to analyze data. The results of the study indicated that Informal saving groups were popular for various reasons, one, they availed disciplined environment for saving pool, where saving can be withdrawn before the end of the cycle. Additionally, Informal saving schemes offer their members chance to small amount savings a chance rare in the formal financial services. In additional, Informal saving schemes are popular as they provided networking chances to members and also a sense of belonging which is hardly felt in the formal financial institutions.

Also, failure to get adequate financing from the formal financial sector due to major challenges categorized as, lack of convectional securities and inadequate policies to recognize the Informal sector and rural income generating activities as factors to be considered before approving a loan, leading to inadequate household livelihoods to sustain live in among the rural settlements. This deficit reinforces the formation of informal saving groups to steer the growth of Informal saving schemes. Hence, there is need for household with small economic status to be supported via Informal services in order for them to enhance their business and initiate more income generating activities (Gichuki, 2014).

The Informal saving schemes is the essential wellspring of budgetary help arrangement accessible to low pay or poor family units in Africa. As per (Howarth, 2014), in Africa informal sparing plans (table banking/chamas), has assembled pace and held onto as a main plan of action. It was underlined by Action Aid in 2013 just as (Shane, 2013) showed the requirement for making consciousness of Informal sparing plans (table banking) in order to guarantee that rural and rural-urban households initiatives on income generating activities embraced it effectively within their endeavours. Shane (2013) records that with enhanced publicity, increased loan amount are anticipated exponentially which is good for the Informal saving schemes as table banking and chamas are significantly becoming popular.

(Asseto, 2014) ascertained that rural and rural-urban income generating activities in Kenya have adopted Informal saving schemes so as to improve the household livelihood as it enables them to access loans from their contributions. Loans contribute to a very important part in enhancement and creation of industrious forces. Informal saving schemes provide significant saving and credit facilities to person’s household livelihood. Hence, the poor both in rural and sub-urban areas receive alleviation and endurance techniques as a method of adapting to the drain of destitution (Grant, 2010). Furthermore, (Johnson, 2012) showed the access of credit for small scale ventures can affect the individual salary and that of the family unit. Informal saving schemes are critical in helping individual’s involvement in different socio-economic activities collective livelihood at the household levels, with the ultimate aim to achieve and sustain it. However, several factors are crucial on just how long sustainable household livelihood achievement. Hence, sustains of Informal saving schemes depends, for instance, the socio-economic activities a household takes part in to
achieve its livelihood may degenerate the means it depend on creating unsustainable resource. But it is more sustainable when a household engages on various income generating activities that does not degrade environment, thus ensured food security and wealth creation. Therefore, this study researched on the effects of short term loans obtained from Informal saving schemes contribute to improved livelihoods in Laikipia County, Kenya.

Diverse reasons of emergence of Informal saving schemes includes, absence of security, stringed terms and conditions of formal financial sector, low income and unfavourable bank products (Shane S. &., 2015). Even with the significance of Informal saving schemes in improving household income, leading to wealth and employment creation (Amunga, 2013), empirical studies on their income generating activities decisions are scanty, undocumented and minimal in Kenya related cases, where this study intended to fill the knowledge gap.

3. Methodology
The design to guide the study was exploratory collected from a target research that involved cross-section survey quantitative methods. According to (Kohlman, 2013), cross-sectional is a type of observational study that analyses data collected from a target population or a representative portion at a specific point in time, whereas, quantitative research is the systematic empirical investigation of observable phenomena via statistical, mathematical or computational techniques, therefore, in this study Informal saving groups with short term loans disbursed are investigated. The design was suitable because it enabled the collection of the needed information on the determined variable at a single point in time and from a cross-section of a fairly uniform cohort group. Besides, collecting data appropriately that is quantitative in nature and within natural occurrence.

A total of 24 Informal saving schemes were selected where a study population of 920 participants was obtained. The research study used stratified random sampling to sample respondents from four categories i.e. members, officials, managers and opinion leaders.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Population/N</th>
<th>Sample (N/920×90)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scheme members</td>
<td>800</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Officials</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managers</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opinion leaders</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>920</strong></td>
<td><strong>90</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this study, data gathering used; questionnaire, interview, focus group and key informants practices. The instruments used in collecting data included; paper questionnaires, structured interview guide or unstructured, focus group discussion guide and schedules. All this was used for the purpose of research clarity to the participants, which enabled the research to receive appropriate and reliable information. Questionnaires were administered on come back basis despite the loss of control on filling the questions due to exposure and effects of low literacy levels, still hopes to collect reliable statistics after analysis for variability and reliability, where the focus of the study objectives was maintained. Interviews conducted involved dispensing oral-verbal stimulant in terms of unwritten response, systematic and consistent, with relaxed and resilient unstructured interview.
Focus group discussion guide used on purposive group meeting to stimulate discussion on the predetermined research object and question where collaborative views are correlated. A pilot study was conducted to examine the validity and reliability of research instruments by aligning the guiding questions to the research question and object of the study. The study used descriptive method in analyzing data for presentation into tables, charts and figures, using the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) in analysis of statistics concerning relationship between small loans provided by Informal saving schemes and livelihoods of participants improved households.

4. Findings
The application of the set exploration procedure is conformity with the research intent using descriptive method along the prescribed variable. A sample size of 90 participants, achieving a response rate of 80 respondents’ questionnaires. This sub-division presents the effects of short term loans provided by Informal saving schemes at household level livelihoods on ten core activities (clothing, housing, education, food, water, medical, social capital, finance, business and assets).

4.1. Table 1: The participants’ response on the impact of short term loans accessed at household level livelihoods on ten core activities distributed as frequencies and percent.

### Table 2: Effects of short term loans on ten core activities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Activity</th>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clothing</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>93.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social capital</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assets</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>52.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>47.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questionnaires</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Clothing:** In view of the fact that, clothing is among the key human basic needs, it’s imperatively an indicator of improved socio-economic status. Therefore, the study outcome shows that 90% of
the participants felt that the short term loans accessed at the Informal saving schemes had improved clothing for self and other household members. But 10% expressed that they use the short term loans on more prioritized needs other than improve clothing.

**Housing:** Relatively housing standard is used as an indicator of improved or low poverty index within the community or society. Therefore, with the short term loans accessed from the Informal saving schemes, the study outcome shows that 71% of the participants indicated that they were able to improve the housing infrastructure i.e. permanent houses, modern floors and ceilings while others embarked on planning their housing compounds (landscaping). However, 29% did not own homes as they either rented or stayed with parents, therefore, prioritized other activities.

**Water:** Water is an essential commodity for human survival for domestic use, agriculture and livestock farming. Therefore, the study outcome shows the majority 93.7% indicated that water being an essential commodity they used the short term loans obtained from the Informal saving schemes to improve the water access points at individual levels i.e. invested on rain water harvesting systems, storage tanks and others undertook the drilling of traditional boreholes. Whereas, 6.3% did not invest on this core activity as they rented residences, where the water access was the landlords’ responsibility and few others had access to permanent natural sources of water, therefore, did not undertake this activity.

**Education:** In view of the fact, that education is key in transformation of human life and social empowerment. The study outcome shows that 81% response was that the short term loans obtained from the Informal saving schemes was instrumental in improvement or accessing education of their children and self, especially high education and skills. While, 19% of the respondents said they currently had access to free primary and day secondary school education provided by the government, hence, the responsibility relieved and others retired or had young families, as such no children to educate.

**Food:** In the view of the fact, that food is an essential basic human need, it forms the core activity in expenditure. The study outcome shows that 84% response was that food intake or consumption was a much more prioritized basic need, hence, handled first, as such, the short term loans obtained from the Informal saving schemes was to provide or further improve food intake and basket security. Whereas, 16% of the respondents lived with their parents or relatives and not being household heads, the providence of food was not their responsibility, this category comprised of medium youths (graduates of secondary schools), colleges and universities seeking self employment.

**Medical:** To afford medical services or attention is crucial for human survival. Hence, the study outcome shows that about two-thirds 64% did not feel the urge to spend the short term loans accessed from the Informal saving schemes on medical services/insurances, since this category composed of persons aged below 45 years and majority enjoyed good health, therefore medical seeking behaviour was occasional. Whereas, 34% of the respondents have chosen to sustain medical insurance covers, as well as, social welfares for convenience purpose in times of need.

**Social capital:** Considering that social influence is instrumental to human social and economic development. The study outcome shows that majority 96% enjoyed or benefitted most from the social services capital derived from the short term loans from the Informal saving schemes, since it accrues social trust and integrity. Whereas, 4% of the respondents were not sure of permanent social acquaintance as future or change of marital status could affect their social service capital such as influence of new social behaviour.
**Assets:** Given that, expenditure on every day and future needs, investment is prioritized on short term and long term. The study outcome shows that 59% of the respondents invested on both tangible and intangible assets from the short term loans received from the Informal saving schemes in form of household items, electronics and acquiring of pieces of land on instalment purchase plans. While, 41% had other core activities more prioritized and spending more money on them than investing on assets.

**Business:** In view of the fact that businesses in all forms are key recipients of loans acquisition and other forms of income generating activities. The study outcome shows that 85% of the participants were able to start and sustain their business ventures or SMEs with much ease as the short term loans obtained from Informal saving schemes ensured sustainability of the income sources. While 15% of the participants responded had no interest in business and chose other income generating activities.

**Finance:** Considering financial is instrumental in access and affordability of essentials in life. The study outcome shows that 52.5% of the participants indicated that they were able to pay their utility bills with short term loans accessed from the informal saving schemes, an indication of financial capability somehow. While 47.5% indicated that they still had difficulties in settling their bills as other core activities like education spending was high, especially education for self or children. The object of the study was, to examine of short term loans provided by Informal saving schemes on livelihoods for residents in Laikipia County. The participants response on the effects of short term loans accessed at household level on the predetermined ten core activities (clothing, housing, water, food, education, medical, social capital, finance, business and assets), study outcome shows that on average 75% response rate returned indicating improvement as an impact derived from short term loans accessed from the Informal saving schemes across the ten core activities. Whereas on average 25% response rate indicated minimal improvement across the ten core activities, this was occasioned by the prioritization of more urgent needs among the ten core activities, where age factor and composition of the household affected decision-making on needs. From the research finding on the ten core activities (clothing, housing, water, education, food, medical, social capital, finance, business and assets) on posed questionnaire, six core activities either formed the basic human needs or meant to facilitate the achievement of the same i.e. clothing, housing, water, food, finance and social capital. Whereas four core activities i.e. education, medical, assets and business were optional and not fundamentally human basic needs.

**Conclusion**

Hence from research outcomes, Informal saving schemes provides short term loans that impact on the socio-economic status of the family circle means. Self-reliance and substantial financial independence is achieved. Notable indicator is significant improvement on ten core activities (clothing, housing, water, education, food, medical, social capital, finance, business and assets) that form the compounded human need and wants. Informal saving schemes are critical in helping individual involvement in different socio-economic activities, collective livelihoods at the household levels, with the ultimate aim to achieve and sustain it. Hence, sustenance of Informal saving schemes depends for instance on the socio-economic activities a household takes part in to achieve its livelihood and does not degrade the environment, thus ensures sustainable livelihoods. Research recommends, the formation of precedent social services networks existing in various forms e.g. social assembling, religious assembling remain the entry points of eventually the idea of
Informal saving schemes formation. Informal sensitization and awareness creation is created and mutually adopted. Hence, due to the substantial of this informal approach in poverty reduction, arise the necessity of elaborative awareness to preserve and sustain the accrued benefits, more managerial, technical skills instructions for outreach and sustainability, as Informal saving schemes are instrumental in both development and economic growth in a country. Another research may be carried out to enquire the sustainability of Informal saving schemes amid natural pandemics, natural and man-made disasters.

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