Social Cohesion Heritage and Self-Help Groups on Sustainable Livelihoods among Households in Nyakach Sub-County, Kenya

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Abstract: **One of the heritages we have adopted from the past and which is assumed to help marginalised communitiess address common communal realities is social cohesion. Through social cohesion, informal groups have emerged at the grass-roots which have enabled accumulation of capital by way of small savings and facilitating members access to formal credit facilities. Through such credit facilities, SHG members are assumed to be in a position to acquire assets for production as well as food and improved nutrition. However, in some regions such as Nyakach Sub-County in Kenya, poverty levels have continued to remain high as around 40% of households living below one dollar per day. This tends to cast aspersions upon virtues of social cohesion existing in SHGs inhelping to solve social problems such as sustainable livelihood among participating members. The purpose of the study was to explore how social cohesion heritage inherent in SHGs have influenced sustainable livelihood among participating households in Nyakach Sub-County, Kenya. Specific objectives were to explore how cultural heritages in SHGs influence sustainable livelihood, determine how social cohesion existing in SHGs influence sustainable livelihood, and to assess how empowerment from participation in SHGs influence sustainable livelihood among participating households in Nyakach Sub County, Kenya. Collective Action Theory was used to guide the study. The study adopted qualitative research approach on a target population of 458 SHGs with a membership of 6824 household heads and 3 Sub-County Divisional Social Services Officers (DSSOs) who were all included in data collection exercise. The study yielded a sample size of 377 and Interviews were used to collect data from DSSOs while Focus Group Discussions were used to collect data from SHG officials. Field observations were also used to gather data related to group activities in the study area. Findings showed thatsocial cohesion heritage existing in SHGs (M=3.53; SD=0.93) have influenced livelihood of their households and is a significant predictor of sustainable livelihood $\{F_{(1, 377)} =88.495, P<0.05\}$. Similarly, it was found that 40.4% change in household livelihood was attributed to social cohesion heritage in SHGs under this study. The study concludes that social empowerment at the grassroots among families at the bottom of the socio economic pyramid can be attributed to participation in SHGs. The study recommends that further research needs to be done on influence of life skills' training on social empowerment of SHG participants.**

Key Words: **Cultural Heritage; Household; Self-Help Group; Social Cohesion; Sustainable Livelihood**

I. INTRODUCTION

The preservation of cultural heritage is generally regarded as a shared common good by which everyone benefits. Heritage is the full range of inherited traditions, monuments, objects and culture. Most important, it is the range of contemporary activities, meanings and behaviors drawn from them adopted from those who came before us, or the past (Avdyli, 2020). Probably, even more than other cultural expressions, cultural heritage is considered as a tool for sustainable development particularly in developing countries (Dallaire & Colbert, 2012). Heritage is considered as a critical asset for the well-being of the current and future generations (Van der Auwera & Schramme, 2016). In particular, heritage is viewed as a driver for sustainable development in different domains such as inclusive social, cultural and economic development, harmony, environmental sustainability and peace building (Labadi, Giliberto, Rosetti, Shetabi, and Yildirim, 2021).Cultural heritage has also been explicitly discussed as one of the targets in Agenda 2030 under Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 11.4) as well as under New Urban Agenda (Nocca, 2017 ;UN, 2016). Whereas cultural heritage has been viewed in terms of material culture such as art,architecture, landscape form, and intangible culture including performances of dance, music, theater, and ritual, as well as language and human memory,inherited common practtices which were adopted like social cohesion or collective action in the wake of social reality have been overlooked.

Despite being definedin diverse perspectives, social cohesion has widely been discussed with the emphasis of attributes and benefits to group members (UNDP, 2017). Pervaiz, Chaudhary & van Staveren (2013) define social cohesion as a phenomenon of togetherness which works to keep the society united and harmonised.On their part, Dragolov et al(2013) refer to it as the manifestation of an intact society, marked by solidarity and helpfulness and by a kind of team spirit. It is a desirable quality that makes a society liveable and sustainable. Another definition given to social cohesion is that it is the capacity of societies, not merely groups and networks, to peacefully manage collective action problems (Woolcock,

2011). According to Jenson (2010), cohesion is a process that should be fostered and protected in every community. Indeed social cohesion has been associated with improvement in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (Grimalda & Tänzler, 2018), subjective well-being (Delhey & Dragolov, 2016), and health (physical and mental health (Kawachi & Berkman 2001, cited in Grimalda & Tänzler, 2018). A study by Degli and Grimalda (2016) indicated that participants in associations show higher pro-social motivations than non-participants. Despite the fact that societies, especially those facing less economic endowment, have adopted collective action in building social cohesion, how this has influenced sustainable livelihood of families particularly those participating in self help groups (SHGs) seems to have received limited documentation.

Households in rural communities often practise a variety of shared sustainable methods of collective action to deal with their everyday social reality (Dhal, Lane & Srivastava, 2020). According to Finnis (2017), women's collectives, such as SHGs, are persistently working towards sustainable grass-roots collective action and the transfer of knowledge both within and between SHGs. De Hoop et al (2019) explain that SHGs are small voluntary groups created with the underlying assumptionthatwhenindividualsjointogethertheytake action towardsovercoming obstacles and attaining social change These grass-roots collective action processes continue to survive through community-led initiatives as part of cultural heritage (Guha, 2013). A study done in India by Nithyanandhan and Mansor (2015) revealed that levels of self-confidence and self-esteem of women participating in SHGs increased indicating positive changes. On their part, Meena and Singh (2013) found a significant improvement in attitude of SHG members on socio economic improvement, education and training, marketing and entrepreneurship qualities and banking or credit aspects in a study done in Pakistan. Another study done in Kenya by Ochanda (2013) found that increases in SHG resource mobilization activities, organizational meetings, governmental recognition (registration), membership and village outreach had significant positive influence on the number of economic empowerment activities. However, published literature focushing on heritages with social cohesion related practices such as SHG participation have hardly illustrated their influence on sustainable livelihoods of households.

According to Carney, 1988 (cited in Rahman & Akter, 2014) asserted that livelihood comprises of the capabilities, assets (including both material and social resources) and activities required for a means of living. The Sustainable Livelihoods Approach (SLA) developed by the British Department for International Development (DFID) in their cooperation development program since 1997 has at its core the livelihoods of households (Scoones, 2009). However, the influence of social cohesion inherent in SHG participation on livelihood of households has not been conclusively investigated. Furthermore, such focus would be significant in areas which, despite the existence of diverse forms of SHGs,

poverty incidents are still rampant such as Nyakach Sub-County in Kisumu County, Kenya.

Nyakach sub-county in Kenya has experienced a rise in the numbers of SHGs from 796 in 2010 to about 1,561 in 2019 (Republic of Kenya, 2020). This shows a significant level of social cohesion among households in the area. However, poverty levels have continued to remain high in the area at around 40%, while cattle rustling incidents in the sub county is the highest in the whole county of Kisumu. Several authors (Bruhn, 2009; Langer et al, 2015; Grimalda & Tänzler, 2018) have outlined the virtues of social cohesion such as helping in solving social problems as well as peacebuilding. Moreover, participation in SHGs has also been credited for empowering women as well as provision of life skills to members (among others) by scores of authors (Meena & Singh, 2013 ; Ochanda, 2013 ; Nithyanandhan & Mansor, 2015). However, influence of social cohesion of SHGs on the livelihoods of members' households in Nyakach Sub-County seems to be inconsistent with results from earlier studies in many parts of the world.

Statement of the Problem

One of the heritages we have adopted from the past and which is assumed to help marginalised communities address common communal realities is social cohesion. Through social cohesion, informal groups have emerged at the grass-roots which have enabled accumulation of capital by way of small savings and facilitating members access to formal credit facilities. Through such credit facilities, SHG members are assumed to be in a position to acquire assets for production as well as food and improved nutrition. However, poverty levels in some regions in Kenya has remained high ataround 40% in Nyakach Sub County in Kenya despite the existence of several SHGs. Similarly, where as social cohesion has been credited with peaceful coexistence and peacebuilding among communities, incidents of cattlerustling remains high in Nyakach SubCounty. There was therefore need to explore how social cohesion heritage inherent in SHGs have influenced sustainable livelihood among participating households in Nyakach Sub-County, Kenya. Specific interest was to explore how cultural heritages in SHGs influence sustainable livelihood, determine how social cohesion existing in SHGs influence sustainable livelihood and to assess how empowerment from participation in SHGs has influenced sustainable livelihood among participating households.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to explore how social cohesion heritage inherent in SHGs have influenced sustainable livelihood among participating households in Nyakach Sub County, Kenya.

Specific Objectives

Specific objectives were to:

i. Explore how cultural heritages in SHGs influence sustainable livelihood among participating households in Nyakach Sub County, Kenya.

ii.   Determine how social cohesion existing in SHGs influence sustainable livelihood among participating households in Nyakach Sub-County, Kenya.

iii.   Assess how empowerment from participation in SHGs has influenced sustainable livelihood among participating households in Nyakach Sub County, Kenya.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Fonseca, Lukosch & Brazier (2019) explored different perspectives of social cohesion for the purpose of providing a framework to be used to characterise it and help support resilient cities. The study adopted literature review methodology. The framework highlights the factors that play a substantial role in enabling social cohesion, and shows from which perspective it can be fostered. The authors identified a gap between definitions for social cohesion currently in use in societies and the current goal for resilient cities on the promotion of cohesive and engaged communities.

In a related sudy, Nocca (2017) analysed whether the cultural landscape can play a role in sustainable development in Italy. The author focused on the role that cultural heritage can play in the sustainable development framework by analysing 40 case studies using an assessment framework. Findings showed that although analyses often refer to sustainability, it is not concretely addressed because there is an imbalance among the dimensions: in most cases, only the economic component has been extensively highlighted, leaving out the social and environmental dimensions. Furthermore, the impacts related to cultural-led projects are mainly interpreted in terms of tourism and real estate impacts.

While looking at the livelihood promotion of rural women, Lyngkhoi & Elizabeth (2019) explored the dynamics of women self – help groups for livelihood promotion using a population from West Khasi Hills District of Meghalaya state, India. The study was descriptive in nature based on primary and secondary data. Primary data was elicited through administration of structured interview schedule among 400 women who were involved in SHGs. The study arrived at a conclusion that SHG acts as a mechanism for livelihood promotion of women in the rural areas. The success of a SHG depends on the level of the group dynamics which includes the participation, decision making and cohesion of the members in the group.

Sharma et al (2014) assessed the effectiveness of self-help groups in their developmental influences on the livelihood security and gender empowerment. In all 80 SHG members were selected through purposive and random sampling methods. The study included both women and men, successful and non-successful self-help groups so as to analyze the effectiveness of SHGs for gender empowerment. Data were collected through personal interview using pre-tested structured interview schedule and focused group discussions. In successful SHGs the upper age was 45 years, in non-successful SHG majority of respondents were in the age group

of 46 years and above. Among women's successful groups majority of the members were educated up to secondary level and 90% of respondents were educated up to secondary level in men SHGs. In case of non-successful women SHG a few respondents were illiterate while majority were educated up to primary level. There was a definite improvement on all aspects related to empowerment and livelihood security after joining the SHGs as compared to before joining the SHG as there was positive impact in all types of groups.

A study was cconducted in Sri Lanka by Gunasekara, Premaratne & Priyanath (2017) who sought to find out the impact of social capital on livelihood success of the members of community based organizations. The sample was selected from the North Central Province in Sri Lanka using multi-stage sampling method. Data were gathered for the structured questionnaire from 183 members conducting face to face interviews. Three variables of social capital ; collective action and cooperation, information and communication and trust and solidarity were used to study the relationship with the livelihood success. Among these three variables, collective action and cooperation and information and communication indicated a significant positive association with livelihood success of the members of community based organizations.

Huang, et al (2021) analysed the factors influencing livelihood strategy choices of rural households in tourist destinations in Vietnam. Five villages in Sa Pa District, Vietnam, were selected in this study, to conduct household surveys and interviews with 180 households. Results showed that for rural households, tourism livelihood yields the highest income, but the lack of diversity of livelihood activities may make tourism household livelihood more vulnerable to the externalrisk and shocksthanbalancedlivelihood ofhouseholds. Similarly, households with more natural capital were less likely to choose livelihoods other than agriculture livelihood. And households with more financial capital were less likely to engage in agricultural livelihood. Both financial capital and social capital can facilitate engagement in balanced livelihood.

It has been argued that the attitude of amemberis key in social heritage and self-help group activities. Meena and Singh (2013) explored the attitude of self-help group members using a randomly selected 100 SHG members of Patna district, Bihar at two points of time (before and after), during 2008 and 2013. The study showed a significant improvement in attitude of SHG members on all the five dimensions including socio-economic upliftment, education and training ; marketing and entrepreneurship qualities ; technology adoption and participatory research ; and banking/credit aspects.

Agreeing with Meena and Singh (2013), Nithyanandhan and Mansor (2015) analysed the significance and effect of programmes by Self Help Groups (SHGs) by comparing empowerment levels before and after three years of programme intervention based on a survey conducted in the city of Chennai, Tamil Nadu. Quantitative methodology was adopted using the self-reporting method. A three-stage

stratified random sampling method was employed for data collection. The study revealed that levels of self-confidence and self-esteem of women increased indicating positive changes. The women in SHGs emerged as more assertive of their rights, in particular when dealing with the local community and on social matters.

Gombe, Suandi, Ismail & Omar (2016) sought to identify and discuss the factors influencing SHG member empowerment in Nigerian communities. The authors identified and discussed factors such as leadership, cohesiveness, participation, volunteerism, communication, goals/objectives as (Group factors), while age of SHG member, gender, location and marital status as (Personal factors). They concluded that understanding why community members remain in their various SHGs or otherwise is very important in empowerment studies and holistic community development.

Contributing tothisdebate, Ochanda (2013) used a case of Harambee self-help group to explore the socio-economic empowerment by grassroots organizations in Kenya. Data for this study were provided by the provincial administration of Riruta Location in Nairobi, Kenya. The study found that increases in SHG resource mobilization activities, organizational meetings, governmental recognition (registration), membership and village outreach had a significant positive influence on the number of economic empowerment activities. Decreases in networking and increases in challenges faced by the SHGs had a negative influence on their activity

In concurrence with previous scholars, Nyagwanga (2016) examined the influence of SHGs on economic empowerment of women in Central Kamagambo ward, Migori County, Kenya. Findings showed that with the help of SHGs women earn money and become economically and financially strong. They can use this money for fulfilling their needs and can spend a happy life with their family. They can get a say right in their family decision making by becoming self-independent. By networking to build better business, women can get economic empowerment. The group based approach not only enables the poor to accumulate capital by way of small savings but also helps them gain access to formal credit facilities.

The foregoing review demonstrates the fact that discussions on social cohesion as cultural heritage to address realities faced by marginalised communities remains inconclusive. More specifically, scholars have concentrated on tourism in the discussions of heritage at the expense of practices related to groupings formed to overcome common disadventeges such as self help groups. Similarly, studies focusing on social cohesion (Gombe et al, 2016 ; Fonseca et al, 2019) have related it with SHG performance and sustainability of cities, and not sustainable livelihood of households in rural areas. While social cohesion has been widely viewed as one of the practices passed on to us by our earlier generations, it appears clear that literature has failed to discuss it through the lenses of SHG hence its relationship with household livelihoods cannot be gauged.

2.1 Theoretical Framework

Collective action (CA) is defined as the act of mobilizing people around common concerns to harness the 'power of the group' to solve their problems (Badejo, Majekodunmi, Kingsley, Smith, and Welburn, 2017).This theory was first developed by Mancur Oslon in 1965 in his book titled the logic of collective action (Oslon, 1971). He argued that the primary fuction of organisations is the furtherance of common interests of individuals. He declares that in general, an organisation will fail if it does not further the common interest of its members.It is argued that women's collectives, such as SHGs, are persistently workingtowards sustainable grass-roots collective action and the transfer ofknowledge both within and between SHGs (Finnis, 2017).Collective action has been seen as a force behind women's empowerment movements to solve problems of exclusion, gender based violence and child mariage. According to Alison & Nambiar (2013), absence of CA is a significant contributor to experiences of disempowerment for the less fortunate populations. Indeed Bharamappanavara & Jose (2015) have argued that due to joint effortstowards loan collection, credit repayment in most SHGs has experienced improved performance over the years.The limitations of collective action theorynotwithstanding, thistheoryfound favour withthis study which sought to explore social cohesion heritage and self-help groupson the livelihoods of participatinghouseholds and posterity in Nyakach sub-county, Kisumu county kenya.

III. METHODS AND MATERIALS

3.1 Research Design

This study adopted descriptive survey design comprising mixed-methods approach utilizing both quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection and analysis. Mixed-methods approach involves collection and analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data. The design is ideal because the study presents a systematic and accurate description of how social cohesion relates to sustainable livelihood of households participating in SHGs(Akhtar, 2016). Descriptive research is a technique where information is gathered from a sample of people using a questionnaire or interview technique (Sileyew, 2019).

3.2 Study Area

The study location was Nyakach sub-County of Kisumu County. The area borders Lake Victoria to the East and lies to the 0.4 S latitude and 35 E Longitudes. It has a mean annual rainfall of between 1000-1500 mm (Republic of Kenya, 2019). The sub-county covers an area of approximately 357.30 square kms and isdivided into 3 administrative regions namely :West, lower and upper divisions. It has a population of 133, 041 (Republic of Kenya, 2019). Figure 2 presents a map of the area.
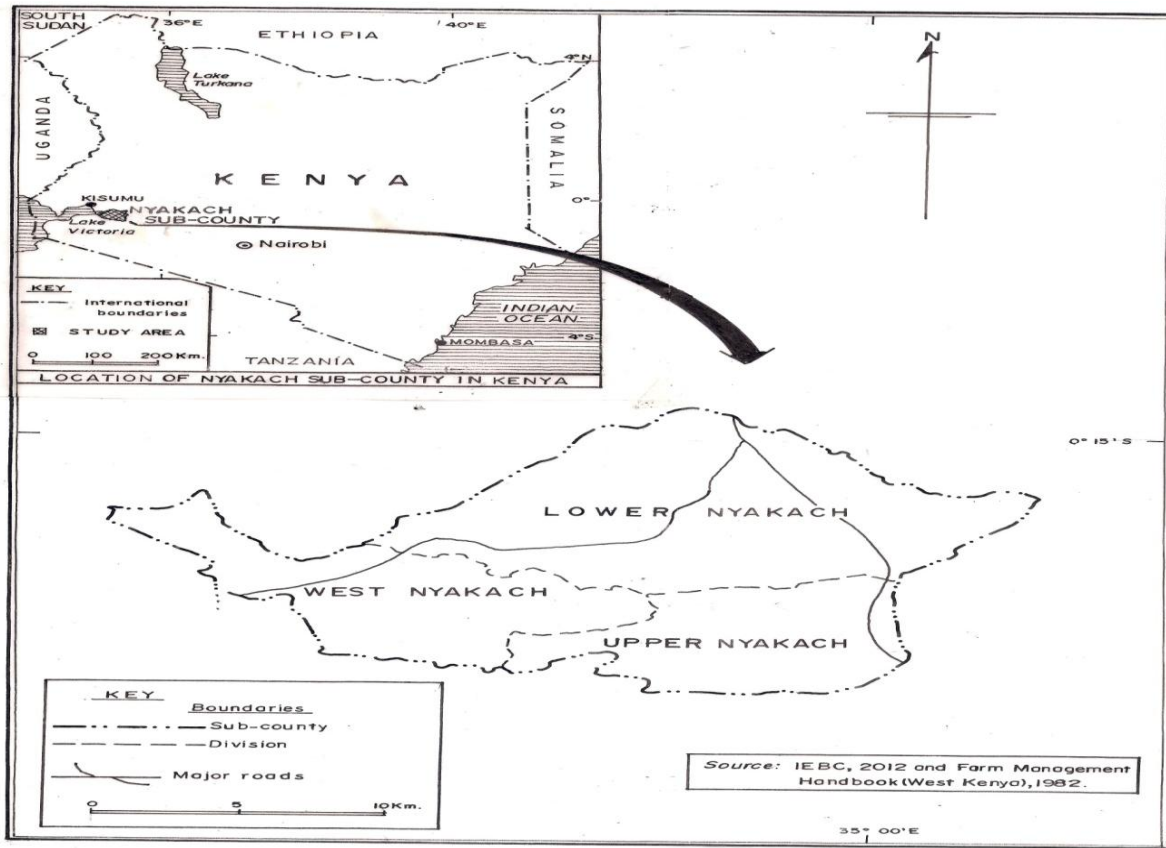
Figure 2 : Map of the Study Area

3.3 Target Population and Sample Size

Nyakach Sub-County is made up of three (3) divisions and each division is managed by a Divisional Social Services Officer (DSSO). The study targeted two divisions comprising of 458 SHGs alongside two DSSOs. Accordingly, the target population of the study therefore was 458 self-help groups with a membership of 6824.

The focus of analyses for the study was group members and it adopted Yamane (1967; cited in Israel, 2013) formula to calculate the sample size of group members as shownbelow:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)2}$$

$$n = \frac{6824}{1+6824\,(0.05)^2} = 377$$

Where *n* is the sample size, *N* is the population size, and *e* is the level of precision (0.05).

Stratified random sampling involving dividing the population into homogeneous subgroups and then taking a simple random sample of *f = n/Nx sample size* in each subgroup was used to ensure equal representation of each division (Creswell, 2018). Where *f* was the sample size of the sub group ;*n* was the population of the sub group ; and *N*was the target population. The sample distribution of SHG members was as shown in Table 1.

Table 1 : Sample Distribution of SHG Members

Divisions	Target Population (SHGs)	Membership (Group members)	Sample Size
Upper Nyakach	232	3511	194
Lower Nyakach	226	3313	183
TOTAL	458	6824	377

3.4 Data Collection Instruments

Questionnaire and interview schedule were used for data collection. The study used closed ended questionnaire to collect quantitative data from the respondents. Questionnaire was deemed suitable in this study since it solicited views of respondents on their experiences with SHGs across the villages in the three divisions (Sileyew, 2019). Semi structured interviews were used in the study to collect data from Divisional Social Services Officers (DSSOs). The interview schedule was appropriate for the study as it provided in-depth information and a detailed understanding of the issue under research.

3.5 Validity of Instruments

Instrument validity was measured by conducting construct and content validity measurements. Onstruct validity was attained through operationalization of the research variables. The

researcher ensured that the operationalization through translation reflects the true meaning of the constructs. According to Akhtar(2016), construct validity is how the researcher translates or transforms a concept of an idea into function and operating reality. Content validity index (CVI) was used to measure the degree of which the instruments had appropriate items for measuring livelihood of households (Polit & Beck, 2006). Four experts were asked to rate each scale item in terms of its relevance to the underlying constructs using a 4-point ordinal scale :1=not relevant; 2=somewhat relevant; 3=quite relevant; 4=highly relevant. Then, for each item, the CVI was computed as the number of experts giving a rating of either 3 or 4 (thus dichotomizing the ordinal scale into relevant and not relevant), divided by the total number of experts. The instrument was rated as highly relevant by three out of four judges, giving a CVI of .80.

3.6 Reliability of Instruments

Split-half method was done during pilot study with randomly selected 38 respondents to test instrument reliability. Internal consistency of the instrument was determined via split-half reliability index using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient (Cronbach, 1970, cited in Akhtar, 2016). Split-half method involved dividing the test scales into two halves of equal items then calculating the coefficients of each half (Silewey, 2019). The internal consistency (reliability) of the study generated an Alpha coefficient of 0.849 which is greater than the threshold 0.7 espoused by Kothari (2010)

3.7 Data Analysis and Presentation

Data collected was processed and analyzed using descriptive statistics : mean (M), Standard Deviation (SD) and regressions with the aid of Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) tool. The regression model used is as shown below :

$$Y_0 = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \varepsilon$$

Qualitative data obtained from interviews was analysed through Thematic Analysis. This entailed categorization of generated answers into outstanding themes and reported in narrative forms (Braun & Becker, 2013).

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Results

The first of the instrument used for collecting data focused on the dependent variable.

4.1.1 Livelihood of Households

The researcher enquired from the sampled interviewees to indicate the state of household livelihood since they started to participate in SHGs. Table 2 presents the distribution according to the state of household livelihood of SHG participating members.

Table 2 : State of Household Livelihood of SHG Participating Members

Livelihood of SHG Participants	N	M	SD
Social Capital	377	3.57	.937
Human Capital	377	3.61	.926
Physical Capital	377	3.49	.932
Natural Capital	377	3.41	0.96
Financial Capital	377	4.42	0.97
Overall mean and std. Dev	377	3.7	.95

The table demonstratedthat thelivelihood of the sampled SHG members was at a high state (M=3.7 ; SD=0.95). The standard deviation (SD=.95) was small implying that there was no big difference in the opinions of the respondents with regard to their livelihood status. This tended to suggest that social cohesion as heritage has improved the livelihoods of the households participating in SHGs to a large extent. Based on the mean interpretation scale, the respondents agreed that financial capital (M=4.42; SD=.77) of their households had improved due to social cohesion. Similarly, the sampled SHG members also agreed that their social capital (M=3.57; SD=1.37), human capital (M=3.61; SD=.93), and physical capital (M=3.49; SD= had improved since joining On the other hand, natural capital (M=3.41; SD=.96) as components of household livelihood had been attained to a moderate extent through social cohesion among households participating in SHGs.

4.1.2 Social CohesionHeritageand Sustainable Livelihood of Households

The researcher ran a descriptive statistics of the independent variable of the study to explore the influence of social cohesion heritage on sustainable livelihood of households participating in SHGs. The independent variable was described in terms of cultural heritages in SHGs, influence of social cohesion existing in SHGs and influence of empowerment from participation in SHGs. Table 3 presents the Mean (M) of the influence of independent variable components on sustainable livelihood of households participating in SHGs in the study area.

Table 3 : Influence of Social Cohesion Heritages inSHGs

Social cohesion heritages	N	M	SD
Cultural heritages in SHGs	377	3.22	0.29
Existing social cohesion in SHGs	377	3.45	0.71
Existing social empowerment from participation in SHGs	377	3.91	0.70
Overall mean and std. Dev	377	3.53	0.93

Findings presented in Table 3 illustrate that the sampled respondents agreed that social cohesion heritage existing in SHGs (M=3.53 ; SD=0.93) had influenced livelihood of their households. Table 3 also indicates that existing social cohesion in SHGs (M=3.45 ; SD=0.71) and existing social empowerment from participation in SHGs (M=3.91 ; SD=0.70) have had influence on sustainable livelihood of

households participating in SHG in the study area. The table also indicates that the sampled respondents agreed that the size of SHGs (M=3.45 ; SD=0.71) had influence on livelihood of households. Table 3also illustrates that existing social empowerment from participation in SHGs (M=3.91 ; SD=0.7) had influenced household livelihood of participating members in the study area. This tend to imply that cultural heritages inherent in SHGs and social empowerment accruing from participation in SHGs are important in influencing sustainable livelihood of participating households.

During interviews with the DSSOs, it emerged that the heritage of social inclusivity that makes SHG members to empathise with disadvanged positions of each of their colleagues forms the back borne of livelihood strengthening. An outstanding theme emerging from one of the interviews was :

Most of the SHGs in this area are formed on the basis of enabling members to be self dependent in terms of food security, health, and education. Bearing in mind that it is part of the African culture of being mindful of the neighbour's welfare including dietary needs, health needs, and education needs, SHG members often take shared actions to reduce poverty, poor health, and social degradation (DSSO 2).

The statement attributed to *DSSO 2* tends to imply that people at the grassroots, particularly marginalised rural poor, often organise themselves to adopt actions aimed at solving specific social realities left unattended to by the authorities. Realities like food deficiency and lack of healthcare access at the grassroots level seem to be fully addressed by adoption of cultural heritages such as caring for the wellbeing of neighbours or relatives.

In another interview, the researcher deduced that most of the SHGs have enabled their members to be economically and socially empowered through micro-credit and social skills training often offered by international organizations. An important theme captured by the researcher appeared as:

SHGs have adopted the habit of making small savings periodically which, in turn, enables them to acquire small micro-credit. These enable members to acquire or purchase household goods and assets. It also enables them become financially independent hence economically empowered. Most of the SHG members can now have a voice in the society unlike previously when they were exposed to poverty and forced to rely on tokens from the rich in the society. SHG members have become aware that their potential can only be realised when they are in partnership with their social peers (DSSO 1).

Based on the statement attributed to *DSSO 1*, it can be averred that SHG members have come to realise that getting into partnership or joining hands with social peers is the only avenue to achieve social stability in terms of livelihood. It is also significant to note that participation in SHGs has tended to enable the members to offer their views in development processes or activities in the community as opposed to being passive in everything taking place around them because of their poor status. Therefore, collective action evident in the SHGs leads to capacity building and access to material assets.

The researcher further carried out correlation analysis to determine the direction of the relationship between social cohesion heritage in SHGs and sustainable livelihood of participating households at 0.05 significant level.

4.2 Model Summary

The researcher proceeded to determine the nature and direction of the relationship existing between coefficients of social cohesion heritage in SHGs (cultural heritage in SHGs, social cohesion in SHGs, existing social empowerment) and sustainable household livelihood in the study area, the researcher proceeded to conduct stepwise multiple regression analysis. An analysis to check how well the model ($Y = \alpha + \beta_1 x_1 + \beta_2 x_2 + \beta_3 x_3 + e$) could predict the relationship was first carried out through an analysis of variance (ANOVA). Table 4 presents the ANOVA.

Table 4: The Analysis of Variance Result					
Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	91.326	3	6.992	88.495	0.000[b]
Residual	285.792	369	0.827		
Total	377.118	377			

a. Dependent Variable: Sustainable Livelihood of Households

b. Predictor/Constant variables : Cultural heritages in SHGs, Social cohesion in SHGs, Social empowerment in SHGs

Table 4 illustrates that social cohesion in SHGs under study are significant predictors of sustainable livelihood of households {$F_{(1, 377)}$ =88.495, P<0.05}. The significance value of F in this case is 0.000, which is less than 0.05 (P<0.05). Thus, cultural heritages in SHGs, social cohesion in SHGs, and social empowerment in SHGs are significant in explaining the variation in sustainable household livelihood.

4.4 Relationship between Social Cohesion Heritagein SHG and Household Livelihood

The relative importance of each coefficient of social cohesion in SHGs in predicting sustainable household livelihood is presented in Table 5.

Table 5: Model of Prediction using Multiple Regressions

Mode 1	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std Error of the Estimate	R Square Change	Change Statistics			
						F Change	df 1	df 2	Sig F Change
1	.63575 [a]	.4042	.4021	.60088	.4019	39.083	3	374	.000

a. Predictors : (Constant), Cultural heritage, Social cohesion, Social empowerment

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.218	.166		7.337	.000
	Cultural heritage	.428	.102	.164	4.1960	.000
	Social empowerment	1.188	.093	.816	12.774	.000
	Social Cohesion	.601	.048	.811	12.521	.000
a. Dependent Variable: Sustainable livelihood						

b, Predictor/Constant variables: Cultural heritages in SHGs, Social cohesion in SHGs, Social empowerment in SHGs

Findings from the model in Table 5 present the actual influence of the coefficients of the independent variable (social cohesion heritage in SHGs) on the dependent variable (sustainable livelihood) of SHG participating members. The unstandardized beta for cultural heritage is .428. This implies that exerting more effort in adopting cultural heritage in SHGs can contribute 0.428 unit improvement in household livelihood of members. Similarly, the unstandardized beta for social empowerment is 1.188. This implies that should more effort be put in empowerment via participation in SHGs can contribute 1.188 unit improvement in sustainable livelihood. Equally, the unstandardized beta for social cohesion is 0.601. This implies that improvement in social cohesion efforts in SHGs can contribute 0.601 unit improvements in sustainable livelihood of participating households.

The regression equation $Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \varepsilon$, with the constant ($\beta_0$) being 2.4225, the coefficient can be plugged into the formula to predict sustainable livelihood of households in the study areaas :

$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \varepsilon,$

$Y = 2.4225 + (.428) X_1 + (1.188) X_2 + (.601) X_3$

With R^2 of .4042, it can be deduced that 40.4% change in household livelihood is attributed to social cohesion heritage in SHGs under this study. The remaining 59.60% of change in household livelihood may be attributed to other factors beyond this study. The study findings point at the fact that social and cultural heritage in SHGs, social empowerment in SHGs and social cohesion in SHGssignificantly influence sustainable livelihood of households which participate in SHGs in Nyakach Sub-County, Kenya.

V. DISCUSSIONS

The study has found that social cohesion heritage in SHGs influences livelihood of households, contributing to an estimated 40.4% change in household livelihood. The study additionally found that financial capital, social capital, and human capital have all improved due to SHG participation. This seems to concur with observations made in Labadi et al (2021) that social cohesion heritage fosters socio-economic regenerationand poverty reduction, strengthenssocial well-being, improves the appeal andcreativity of regions, and enhances longterm development benefits. This also agrees with Van der Auwera&Schramme (2016) that heritage is a driver for sustainable development in different domains such as inclusive social, cultural and economic development, harmony, environmental sustainability and peace building. This also supports the aspirations of the theory of collective action which articulates that communities often practise differentkinds of sustainable and shared methods of collective action, such as women's collectives or self-help groups working to ensure food security (Dhal et al, 2020). This study points at the significance of grassroots social networks or partnership formed on the basis of shared experience. Rural households at the bottom of socio economic pyramid therefore adopt traditional learnt experience such as sharing information and working together by pooling resources to better their livelihoods.

VI. CONCLUSIONS

The study concludes that social cohesion heritage adopted by SHGs is instrumental in influencing sustainable livelihood among households at the bottom of socio economic pyramid. It is also concluded that social empowerment in SHGs is significant in enabling households to have a voice in the society and to participate in decision making in issues touching on ttheir wellbeing. By adopting traditionally held collective methods of joining hands while performing duties, families participating in SHGs have pooled savings together to enable them acquire small credit to help them better their livelihood.

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