

# Women Community Based Self-help Groups, Access to Credit and the Effect on the Wellbeing: A Case of Kiambu Sub-County

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**Abstract:** Women play a key role in the development of their households because of their day to interaction with issues, needs, and emergencies. Relying on men as sole bread winner for married women, or acting as sole bread winner for single winner may be difficult, if the women do not take action. Through collective agency, many women especially in informal urban settings and rural set-ups are joining self-help groups to enhance their collective capabilities. This study sought to establish the effect of women self-help group credit access on the member's wellbeing. The study was undertaken as quantitative survey where a targeted 135 members of the 8 different women Self-Help Groups were interviewed. The study happened during COVID-19 disease period and therefore the questionnaires were sent to the women via a mobile-based online questionnaire. The study received 130 questionnaires representing 96.3% response rate. Data was analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences. The study utilised both descriptive and inferential statistics to generate results. Findings indicate that credit access have a positive effect on family wellbeing. It is recommended that banking solutions be tailored to suit women in self-help groups. Secondly, there is need to mobilise more women to participate in SHGs within their locality.

**Key Words:** Credit, Women Self-Help Group, Wellbeing, Kiambu sub-county.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Women have faced numerous discriminations in the society throughout the history and in some cases, they have been viewed as lesser human beings. The discrimination has included perceiving women as having lower thinking capacity, insecure and vulnerable, lacking freedom from their male counterparts. John Stuart Mills who was a male feminist and philosopher, (1806-1873), explains the notion of discrimination as where people claiming their rights through the protection of law. Thus, since rights exist before law which can be manipulated or changed in a certain direction to fit a particular situation, in most cases men being the law makers, they make sure it is to suit their needs. Women suffrage in Britain was fully declared in 1928 where women rights to vote were interfered with. Therefore, suffrage is interference to voting rights.

The genesis of Self-help groups has never been accurately traced although the adoption of this system all over the world is viewed as one of the best strategies in bringing development through active involvement of people. Self-help groups model was a brain child of Prof. Mohammed Yunus of Grameen Bank of Bangladesh in 1976. A self-help women group is a collection of women individuals usually between 15-20 people who come together with an objective to achieve a common goal and meet regularly to organize (Collins Dictionary). They pool or collect their resources like money to help in times of need. The group does not necessarily restrict the composition to hundred percent women but at least the majority; seventy percent and all the leadership of the group should be women (Ekpe, Mat, Mamun, & Nik Mahdi, 2015). These groups take various forms like merry-go round, table-banking groups, micro-finance groups, welfare groups, community service/advocacy groups among others (Narang, 2012).

Women's economic empowerment is central to realizing women rights and gender equality, which includes women's ability to participate equally in existing markets; their access to and control over productive resources, control over their own time, lives and bodies, increased voice, access to decent work, agency and meaningful participation in economic decision-making at all levels from the household to international institutions (Mwakumanya et al., 2016). When more women are empowered, economies grow since most of the time women are majority in any given economy and their role contributes to a major impact in economic development. Women economic empowerment therefore boosts productivity and increases economic diversification and income equality (Kesanta & Andre, 2015). In pursuit of achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, women empowerment cuts across almost all the seventeen goals. Women empowerment agenda is enshrined in the African Charter on Human Rights that was adopted in June 27<sup>th</sup> 1981. The declaration was signed by member states in line with international commitments where many African states signed. Limiting resources for women slows down their growth, thus reducing economic growth as women comprises the largest percentage of population compared to men (World Bank, 2003).

According to Mahatma Gandhi, the position of women in the society indicates the index of that society's civilization. 'Train a man and you train an individual, train a woman and you build a nation'. Women are more likely than men to be unemployed according to the global survey done in 2017, women stood at 6.2% while men at 5.5% and this has been projected to remain relatively unchanged through to 2021 (UN-Women, 2017). Despite this challenge, women have been over-represented in informal and vulnerable employment and paid less than men even with the same qualifications and same set skills. This has consistently created a huge gender gap particularly in developing countries where self-employment is prevalent. Women also have to deal with the triple burden of reproduction, production and community management work which puts more strain on the already strained resources (Blackstone, 2003). It is from these findings put in context, that has been like a wake-up call to women to find a lasting solution to the challenges bedevilling them in order to break free from this vicious cycle of poverty through combined effort of forming groups that ensures they are able to access the limited resources and improve their livelihood (Mandal, 2013).

The basics of self-help groups for women are based these principles: poor can save and be bankable where SHGs customers or members are able to bring their extensive creation of a common fund by donating little funds all the time, Participative financial management services become more responsive and effective. Self-improvement and mutual help are often influential to financial advancement for the poor. Loaning is based on trust with uncovered documentation and no security. Poor people need savings besides credit, the outreach, lower transaction expense and much lower risk cost for the banks. There is an easy-going democratic arrangement of working, defaults are rare because of group pressure, the loans advanced are little, frequent and for a limited time with occasional meetings non-traditional funds. Empowerment of women signifies conscious harnessing of women power through their tremendous potential by encouraging them to work towards attaining a dignified and satisfying way of life through confidence and competence as person with self-respect, rights and responsibilities (Bineta, 2013). The empowerment core elements have been defined as agency which is the ability to define one's goals and act upon them, self-esteem and self-confidence, awareness of gendered power structures.

The adoption of self-help groups as a strategy to empower women has its roots in India and later spread to almost the whole world (SHG et al., 2010). In India, SHGs uplift the women who are mostly invisible in the social structure by creating self-confidence and self-reliance. The government of India provided for self-help groups (SHGS) so proper attention to be given to their economic independence through self-employment, entrepreneurial development and well-being that ultimately leads to its contribution. SHGs have emerged as very powerful instrument for poverty alleviation and

women empowerment especially in rural economy. They pool meagre resources together to form a pool which then facilitates credit access for entrepreneurial activities among members. This is a source of inspiration for women's welfare and a viable alternative to achieve the objectives of rural development to get community participation in all rural development programs (Ch.Pavani & V.Chandrika, 2014).

In Kenya, women constitute majority of the population and therefore, ignoring this critical mass in development could spell doom to the society. Until early 1990's, women particularly in developing countries and Kenya in particular had been side-lined in decision making, access to jobs and resources and this resulted into indescribable inequality between men and women (Kiruja, 2014). As a result, gender-based violence committed by men against women became normal because powerless women were perceived as weak and indefensible. In addition, there was escalation of poverty especially among women-led households due to their difficulties to get employed, own properties or access other resources.

The first and second medium term plans for the years 2008-2012 and 2013-2017 respectively, highlight gender mainstreaming and the empowerment of women as key priorities to ensure equality between men and women in access to economic, social and political opportunities (Packson & Wleh, 2015). Although a woman for the longest time enjoyed ideally a status almost equal to that of their husbands, performing both social as well as biological functions, the mutual affection and love is now beginning to appear in her conception of her relationship with her husband. The husband-wife relationship has now become more equalitarian in character and much more companionable. In the family setting there is now more freedom of choice than was there before (Kyuvi, 2017). Because of the pressing economic needs, the modern woman now keenly desires to contribute to the welfare of the family and one will also find that most of the families are now headed by women (Kyuvi, 2017). This is either because of absent husbands either through separation, death or absconding duty. To fulfil the economic needs of the family and improve living standards, women have to actively participate in income generating activities. This is now easier to achieve when women come together in joined effort and participate in these activities.

In both rural and urban areas of Kenya, absolute poverty is higher among women than men at 50% and 46.2% respectively (Saul et al., 2015). Poverty continues to limit women's participation in development. Although women constitute 51% of the population in Kenya, gender disparities are still persistent in most sectors (Kirton, 2013). These disparities attribute these gender inequalities to limited access and control over productive resources, access to financial services, insufficient access to education, lack of skills, limited access to technology, cultural impediments and other constraints limiting employment options and participation in

decision making, among others. All these serve to severely constrain women's ability to participate effectively and benefit from economic development.

From previous studies, there is evidence that these SHGs have an impact on the wellbeing of women's households. It has been observed that SHGs are a strategic component in satisfying the needs of low-income individuals as well as a means of livelihood for majority of low-income families (Mahmud, 2003). Despite the notable success of SHGs there is a rising concern on the sustainability, credit access, continuity of income from these activities therefore education affordability, health affordability which are directly related to the wellbeing are compromised. Majority of these researches however focused more on micro-financing and community savings groups in various regions of the world as opposed to how self-help groups as a model that can improve the wellbeing of women. Thus, the current study sought to investigate the how women-self-help groups influenced access to credit and its effect on the household wellbeing.

## II. METHODOLOGY

The study adopted descriptive survey design. The design was preferred since it minimizes bias and allows maximum reliability of information. The study targeted eight registered women self-help groups from Kiambu sub-county with total membership of 135. The study used census approach because of the small size of the population of interest. Structured questionnaires were used to collect data from the members. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze data with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20.

## III. FINDINGS

The study reached 130 female members of the targeted women SHGs in Kiambu sub-county. This represents a response rate of 96.3% (see Table 1). This high questionnaire return rate was attributed to researcher administered questionnaires.

Table 1: Questionnaire Response Rate

Women Group Category	Administered Questionnaire	Returned Questionnaire	Response rate (%)
Mercy mothers	18	18	100
Ngegu Muungano	16	15	93.75
Ting'ang'a Mugumoini	20	20	100
By faith women	16	14	87.5
Joyful Women Group	15	14	93.33
Hamel Chama Group	16	16	100
Favoured women Group	18	17	94.44
Ngemwa Good Hope	16	16	100
Total	135	130	96.30

Source: Author (2020)

### 3.1 Demographic Characteristics

This sub-section presents the demographic characteristics of participants of covering age categories, marital status, and education level. As presented in Table 2, the model age-range was 25-35 years. There were 51% of the women who reported as being married whereas single-women significantly contributed to the participants at 43%. On highest education attained, the women SHGs in Kiambu County was secondary certificate with 47%. This formed the mean, modal, and median level attained.

Table 2: Study Participants Demographic Characteristics

Characteristics	Frequency (f)	%
Age Categories		
18-25	5	4
25-35	61	47
35-45	48	37
45-55	13	10
55-65	3	2
Subtotal	130	100
Marital Status		
Divorced	3	2
Married	66	51
Separated	5	4
Single	56	43
Subtotal	130	100
Education Level		
Secondary	61	47
Tertiary Colleges	40	31
University	16	12
Others	13	10
Subtotal	130	100

Source: Author (2020)

The education data compares well with KNBS Kenya Household Population Census (2019) report that found women with highest attained education qualification being 16% for Kiambu Sub-County where the data was drawn.

### 3.2 Effect of Women Self-Help Credit access on the wellbeing

The study sought to investigate the effect of women self-help groups credit access on their family wellbeing. To response to this objective, and analysis of both dependent variable (well-being) and independent variable (credit access) was conducted. Table 3 presents summary statistics on the wellbeing of households whose women are members of SHGs where they were asked to rate various statements on Likert scale of 1-5.

Table 3: Descriptive statistics on well-being (N=130)

Statement	SD %	D %	N %	A %	SA %	Mean	Std. Deviation
Belonging to the SHG enabled me to raise fees to educate their children better	1.5	6.9	12.3	50	29.2	3.9846	.91486
I have been able to afford books for my children every term	3.1	3.8	14.6	48.5	30	3.9856	.93994
I have been able to reduce fees arrears for my children	5.4	4.7	25.5	51.9	22.5	3.8140	1.01371
Being in SHG ensures improved nutrition for family,	5.4	10.1	23.3	34.9	26.4	3.6667	1.13422
Being in HSG ensures my family take three meals a day	6.2	14.0	20.9	42.6	16.3	3.4884	1.11184
I have been able to have a balanced diet for my children	5.5	9.4	18.1	44.9	22.0	3.6850	1.08891
Being in SHG has improved my ability to afford my household's medical bills	8.0	3.1	13.1	51.5	31.5	4.1000	.79582
Being in SHG enables members to pay house rent	0.0	3.1	13.1	60.0	23.8	4.0462	.70284
Being in SHGF has enabled to me to afford good housing	3.8	3.1	8.5	55.8	28.7	4.0233	.92251

Key: Mean Strongly Disagree=1-1.9, Disagree=2-2.9, Neutral=3, Agree=3.1-4, Strongly Agree=4.1-5

According to the statistics, majority of the respondents were either in agreement with mean of above 3 points or strongly agreed with a mean of above 4 points. to the argument that belonging to SHG enhanced their well-being. For instance, women agreed to the assertions that; belonging to the SHG enabled me to raise fees to educate their children better, I have been able to afford books for my children every term, being in SHG ensures improved nutrition for family with means of 3.9846, 3.9856 and 3.6667 respectively. In addition, the respondents strongly agreed to the arguments that Being in SHG has improved my ability to afford my household's medical bills (4.100), Being in SHG enables members to pay house rent (4.0462), and Being in SHGF has enabled to me to afford good housing (4.0233). Several authors have supported these findings. For instance, Machin (2009) conducted a study on effect of self-help groups on the well-being of the members where he found that SHGs enhances financial ability of the household and hence, well-being. In addition, Kirton (2013) found that self-help groups assist members in a greater way in improving their livelihood.

3.2.1 Factor Analysis

The study used factor analysis method to reduce the items of Likert scale so to contact both correlation and regression analysis. Table 4 presents the output of explained output of the factor analysis method.

Table 4: Total Variance Explained

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	2.437	27.073	27.073	2.437	27.073	27.073	2.050	22.779	22.779
2	1.635	18.164	45.236	1.635	18.164	45.236	1.888	20.983	43.762
3	1.416	15.733	60.969	1.416	15.733	60.969	1.549	17.207	60.969
4	.845	9.394	70.363						
5	.710	7.886	78.249						
6	.662	7.351	85.600						
7	.493	5.476	91.076						
8	.432	4.795	95.871						
9	.372	4.129	100.000						

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

The statistics in Table 4 show that three (3) components have been extracted. In total, the three components account 60.969

variances. Next, a rotated component matrix is presented in Table 5.

Table 5: Rotated Component Matrixa

	Component		
	1	2	3
Belonging to the SHG enabled me to raise fees to educate their children better	-.099	-.024	.685
I have been able to afford books for my children every term	.052	.004	.747
I have been able to afford food for the family	.299	.164	.643
Being in SHG ensures improved nutrition for family,	.773	-.044	.096
Being in HSG ensures my family take three meals a day	.812	.139	.137
I have been able to have a balanced diet for my children	.823	.088	-.085
Being in SHG has improved my ability to afford my household's medical bills	.101	.806	.019
Being in SHG enables members to pay house rent	.048	.695	.236
Being in SHGF has enabled to me to afford good housing	.019	.837	-.130
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.			

The first three variables are substantially loaded on the component three which is associated affordability of basic needs while the next three variables associated with good living conditions are substantially loaded to the first component. Finally, the last three variables are loaded on the second component which is associated with decent housing.

Finally, Table 6 presents summary statistics for the extracted components.

Table 6: Descriptive statistics on Well-being

Variables	N	Number of Items	Mean	Std Deviation	Cronbach's Alpha
Basic needs	130	3	4.20	.10060	0.754
Good living conditions	130	3	2.903	.4576	0.750
Decent housing	130	3	4.202	0.023	0.860

Mean: strongly disagree=1-1.9, Disagree=2-2.9, Neutral=3, Agree=3.1-4, Strongly Agree=4.1-5

Summary statistics indicate that strong agreement on affordability of basic needs (4.20), and decent housing (4.202). With regard to good living conditions, the second component indicates disagreement on the effect of SHG on well-being. Cronbach's Alpha coefficients indicate that all items are reliable.

### 3.2.2 Access to Credit

With regard to credit access, respondents were asked various questions. To begin with, they were asked to indicate if they had received any loan from their respective SHGs. Findings

show that 76% of the women were able to apply and receive credit from the self-help group they belonged. Findings indicate that development of women especially accessing credit has highly been influenced by their membership of SHGs. The women belonging to the lowest strata were given a chance to interact with many institutions such as banks, NGOs and officials from the government in addition to being exposed to public institutions. Group participation was one of the major elements of SHGs. Meetings helped to develop friendship, express solidarity with the problems of others, develop natural leadership and enhance the members' capacity for development. Peer groups provided an efficient social support system. The women discovered a new identity through SHGs as reported by some of the members. In addition, the study reveals that 69% of the participants were able to borrow between Ksh. 100,000-200,000. In all the loan bands, the proportion of those borrowing was higher. On the upper band, the Ksh. 400,000-500,000 had 11% of the women borrowers. Furthermore, the study reports that investment credit products were most prevalent at 42% whereas the emergency loans covered 29% of the products. The school fees loans accounted for 15% of the Women SHGs credit products.

In well-established SHGs, members contributed substantially to their family development in the form of getting credit for the education of children, health needs and even for weddings and the construction of houses. It paved the way for poor women to be involved in income-generating activities and helped them to increase their savings and mobilisation of capital in the future employment with assured wages throughout the year, sustainable livelihoods, improved health and education, enhanced social dignity and better status for women and the female children. Moreover, findings show that an individual's cumulative savings was a fundamental decision at 58%. The ability to pay was considered in the 17% of the women's SHGs whereas need for guarantors, and previous loan experience was covered by 10% each of the bank requirements.

The study participants were assessed on the waiting period before borrowing, maximum processing period, and maximum repayment period (Table 7).

Table 7: Debut Loan Waiting, Routine Max Processing and Repayment Period

Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Upon joining the group, what is the waiting period before one can borrow? (f=45)		
1 Day	3	7
1 Month	5	11
3 Months	14	31
6 months	17	38
Over 6 Months	6	13
Subtotal	45	100

What is the maximum processing period upon loan request? (f =44)		
Instant	5	11
1 Day	5	11
3 Days	6	14
1 Week	21	48
1 Month	7	16
Subtotal	44	100
What is the maximum loan repayment period? (f = 45)		
1 month	2	4
6 months	7	16
1 year	29	64
5 years	7	16
Subtotal	45	100

The median and modal waiting period was estimated at 6 months. The maximum processing period was set at 1 month whereas the mean maximum loan repayment period was 12 months at 64%. The study found that some SHGs level other charges on loans, namely late repayment penalties, and loan processing or legal fees. Levying of other charges on loan was principally guided by the need to deter the defaulters from late payment, and to ensure that the cost of administering the loan is well covered. Loan processing or legal fees were common with a number of SHGs.

Additionally, the influence of women self-help groups on the improved access to credit ((SD-Strongly Disagree, D-Disagree, I-Indifferent, A-Agree, and SA-Strongly Agree). See Table 8 for summary results.

Table 8: Influence of women self-help groups on access to credit

Statement	SD %	D %	N %	A %	SA %	Mean	Std. Deviation
Loan eligibility requirements are simple	2	11	36	16	36	3.7364	.92297
Loan application procedure is simple	4	9	27	22	38	3.7769	.89152
Loan processing procedure is simple	2	9	22	29	38	3.4615	1.08659
The collateral requirement for loans is affordable	7	14	20	18	41	3.5308	1.03571
Members are willing to guarantee each other	4	0	11	18	67	3.6154	.96757
The loan size is based on a member accumulated savings	7	4	21	37	30	3.5154	1.01336
The loan sizes extended to members are adequate for their respective purposes	2	7	22	33	36	3.6615	.77313
The loan repayment period and interest rates are suitable to members	2	9	18	36	34	3.7692	.79278

Key: Mean Strongly Disagree=1-1.9, Disagree=2-2.9, Neutral=3, Agree=3.1-4, Strongly Agree=4.1-5

Findings show that women SHGs have improved and demystified loan eligibility requirements for 74% of

participants. For loans applications and processing procedure have been simple for 76% and 78% respectively. On collateral, the affordability and fair evaluation was improved for 75%. The most improved segment was the loans provided on the basis of members accumulated savings. The grace period for settlement of loans and repayment period lauded by 78% and 79% respectively.

With reference to the mean response, the study reveals that most women who were interviewed agreed to all the arguments that women SHGs enhances accessibility to credit. This is demonstrated by the mean score of more than 3 points but less than four in all cases. This findings are consistent with Makena, Kubaison, & Njati (2014) who reported that SHGs encourages savings among members and this promotes accessibility to credit.

Next, Table 9 presents total variance explained (factor analysis process) which indicate that three components were extracted from the eight Likert scale items. The three components account for 57.715% of the total variance.

Table 9: Total Variance Explained

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	2.191	27.386	27.386	2.191	27.386	27.386	2.058	25.726	25.726
2	1.247	15.587	42.974	1.247	15.587	42.974	1.327	16.592	42.318
3	1.179	14.742	57.715	1.179	14.742	57.715	1.232	15.397	57.715
4	.851	10.638	68.354						
5	.768	9.605	77.958						
6	.752	9.398	87.357						
7	.566	7.072	94.429						
8	.701	8.741	100.000						
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.									

Table 10 presents statistics on rotated component matrix which indicate that the first two variables and the last variable associated with loan requirements are sufficiently loaded on component three. Similarly, the next two variables associated with loan requirements are loaded on the second component. Finally, the last three variables associated with loan amount and guarantees are substantially loaded on the first component.

Table 10: Rotated Component Matrixa

	Component		
	1	2	3
Loan eligibility requirements are simple	.446	-.161	.740
Loan application procedure is simple	.125	.320	.647
Loan processing procedure is simple	.046	.748	.002
The collateral requirement for loans is affordable	.056	.753	.047
Members are willing to guarantee each other	.785	.164	-.046
The loan size is based on a member accumulated savings	.747	-.092	.147
The loan sizes extended to members are adequate for their respective purposes	.806	.178	-.069
The loan repayment period and interest rates are suitable to members	-.118	-.082	.767

Source: Author (2020)

Table 11 presents summary statistics for the extracted variables. Since, the second and third components are related, a composite variable (loan amount) was computed.

Table 11: Descriptive on Credit Access

Variables	N	Number of Items	Mean	Std Deviation	Cronbach's Alpha
Loan amount	130	5	3.870	.920	0.810
Loan requirements	130	3	3.703	.823	0.795

Mean: strongly disagree=1-1.9, Disagree=2-2.9, Neutral=3, Agree=3.1-4, Strongly Agree=4.1-5  
Source: Author (2020)

Summary findings for the extracted components show that respondents agreed to the assertion that SHGs promotes access to credit among the women members. This is given by the means of 3.870 and 3.703 for loan amount and loan requirements respectively. The next sub-section presents correlation results (Table 12).

Table 12: Correlation between credit access and well-being

		Basic needs	Good living conditions	Decent housing	Loan amount	Loan requirements
Basic needs	Pearson Correlation	1	.134	.556*	.791**	.555**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.202	.007	.003	.001
	N	130	130	130	130	130
Good living conditions	Pearson Correlation	.134	1	.162*	.237**	.554**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.202		.050	.001	.040
	N	130	130	130	130	130
Decent housing	Pearson Correlation	.556*	.162*	1	.216*	.225*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.007	.050		.014	.010
	N	130	130	130	130	130

	N	130	130	130	130	130
Loan amount	Pearson Correlation	.791**	.237**	.216*	1	.491**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.003	.001	.014		.000
	N	130	130	130	130	130
Loan requirements	Pearson Correlation	.555**	.554**	.225*	.491**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.040	.010	.000	
	N	130	130	130	130	130
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).						
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).						

Source: Author (2020)

There is a positive correlation between well-being variables and credit access as indicated in Table 12. In addition, all these correlations are statistically significant at 5% level. This implies that there is at least a statistical relationship between women SHGs and well-being. To explore further on this relationship, the next sub-section conducts regression analysis.

### 3.2.3 Regression Analysis

The study regressed well-being variables on credit access. Summary results are presented in Table 13. Probability of F-statistics show that all the three models are well fit give their values of 0.001, 0.000 and 0.004 for models 1, 2 and 3 respectively.

Turning to the coefficients, the results show a positive and statistically significant relationship between loan amount and affordability of basic needs (0.113, Sig.=0.002). However, the coefficients for both good living condition and decent housing are not significant. This implies that access to credit from women SHGs have a positive effect on household basic requirements and not good living conditions and decent housing. This could be attributed to probably low amount credit advanced to the members which may not be sufficient enough to cater for other needs beyond the basics of live such as food, clothing, medical care and basic housing. Jaya S. Anand (2002) established similar results by reporting that SHGs help to promote living standards of the household.

With regard to loan requirements, the study has established a positive and statistically significant relationship with good living conditions (0.047, Sig.=0.000). In addition, there is a negative and statistically significant relationship between loan requirements and decent housing (-0.067, Sig.=0.031). This could be attributed to probably stringent loan requirements like collateral and interest rates which may have affected borrowing capability of the women members for housing purposes. Nevertheless, the study has not found a statistically significant relationship between loan requirements and basic needs. Probably, women members borrow loans from their

respective SHGs for investment and not smoothening of consumption in their households.

Table 13: Regression Coefficients

Independent	Model 1					Model 2					Model 3				
	B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
(Constant)	2.458	.453		5.434	.000	3.217	.617		5.349	.000	3.239	.617		5.249	.000
Loan amount	.209	.095	.113	1.383	.002	-.010	.111	-.008	-.071	.935	-.010	.121	-.007	-.081	.935
Loan requirements	.031	.082	.036	.381	.704	.056	.117	.047	.582	.000	-.056	.118	-.067	-.382	.031
Dependent	Basic needs					Good living conditions					Decent housing				
R – squared	0.191					0.110					0.029				
Adj. R squared	0.169					0.033					0.006				
Std. Error	0.7456					0.8210					0.643				
F – ratio (3, 156)	3.200					7.13					1.235				
Prob. > F	0.001					0.000					0.004				

Source: Author (2020)

#### IV. CONCLUSION

Findings reveal that in Kiambu sub-county, there is positive relationship between women SHG access to credit and well-being. This implies that SHGs facilitates access to credit which leads to better livelihood of the members. Unlike financial institutions like banks, women in SHGs are able to access credit more easily because of the flexibility. For example, loan eligibility is based on membership of six months and over and one can apply for a loan up to four times their savings. Other factors that make credit accessible are the application procedure, collateral where members guarantee each other, the repayment period is also flexible and the interest rates are minimal. It can therefore be concluded that SHGs have favourable terms and conditions of credit access which ultimately promotes affordability of basic needs and good living condition in general. Hence, credit access function of the SHG has a positive effect on the well-being. The study recommends up-scaling these groups across the country to facilitated credit access and promote wellbeing of Kenyan citizens.

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