SOCIAL CAPITAL AND WOMEN’S EMPOWERMENT IN KENYA
CASE STUDY OF MURANG’A COUNTY

By
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Introduction

• Women empowerment is essential for the achievement of pro-poor growth and sustainable development (OECD, 2012).
• Women represent one-half of the population and therefore enhancing their ability to contribute boosts economic growth at all levels (Hausmann et al. 2012).
Introduction

• When women are empowered, they are equipped with knowledge to make informed decisions about their everyday lives and to gain bargaining power.

• Improved women’s abilities to make decisions regarding childbearing, childrearing, sexual relations, and use of contraceptives can bring about broader development in many areas.
Introduction

• The building of social institutions and social capital is considered as one of the pillars towards directly bringing about empowerment (World Bank, 2001).
Objectives

• This study sought to examine the relationship between social capital and women empowerment in Gikindu location, Murang’a county in Kenya.
Objectives

• The objectives of this paper are:
  • To assess the patterns of different dimensions of women empowerment across sub-population groups such as age, sub-location etc.
  • To study the effect of various household characteristics (such as household size) and individual characteristics (such as education, age, health, marital status) on women’s empowerment?
  • To examine the extent of access to government funds and micro credit/finance among women across sub-population groups such as age, sub-location etc.
  • To examine the effect of use of WEF and micro credit/finance on women’s empowerment?
  • To analyze the effect of social capital on women’s empowerment
Methodology

• Definition of women empowerment
• According to Narayan (2002), empowerment is the expansion of assets and capabilities of poor people to participate in, negotiate with, influence, control and hold accountable institutions that affect their lives.
• Jetti (2006) defines empowerment as “bringing about equality between women and men in the control of production factors and the control of distribution of the benefits of development” (Jetti, 2006 p. 61)
Introduction

• In its broadest sense, empowerment is the expansion of freedom of choices and action (Nega et al., 2009).
• Malhotra et al. (2002) identify three sets of indicators of empowerment frequently used in literature.
  • Domestic decision making
  • Access to and control over resources
  • Freedom/mobility indicators.
Methodology

• **The decision making indicator**
  – Decision making on family finances; investments; spending; domestic matters like cooking; welfare of children like their schooling, health and etc.

• **Access to and control of resources**
  – Concern whether a woman has access to income, assets, cash of the household and whether she has control over these.
  – It also captures woman’s participation in paid employment.

• **Freedom/mobility indicators**
Methodology

• **Access to and control of resources**
  – Do you have an enterprise/business?, Are you employed? Do you own any assets?

• **The decision making indicator questions**
  – Who usually decides how your earnings (if any) will be used? Who usually makes decisions about making major household purchases? Who usually makes decisions about health care for yourself? Who usually makes decisions about what food should be cooked each day?

• **Freedom/mobility indicators**
  – Who usually makes decisions about visits to your family or Relatives?
Methodology

• **Measurement of social capital**
  - Coleman, (1988) defines social capital as a structure of relations between and among individuals.
  - Coleman conceptualizes social capital as consisting of some aspect of social structures which facilitates certain actions of the individuals.
  - Like other forms of capital, social capital is productive
Methodology

- According to Jones and Woolcock (2007), social capital can be assessed across six dimensions.

  - **Groups and networks**
    - which considers the extent to which an individual/household participates in various social organizations, informal networks as well as participation in activities in the community.

  - **Trust and solidarity**
    - Evaluates how individuals trust their neighbors and how their perception of trust has changed over time.

  - **Collective action and cooperation**
    - Concerns the community coming together to work on communal projects.

  - **Information and communication**

  - **Social cohesion and inclusion**

  - **Political action**
Methodology

• Groups and networks
  – Do you belong to any social groups /organizations?,
  – What is your degree of participation in the group?,
  – How many of the group meetings held in the past 12 months were you able to attend?,
  – What are the benefits you enjoyed from being a member of this group?,
  – Compared to other people of your age, how often would you say you take part in social activities?
  – In the past 3 months, have you participated in any social activities?,
  – Do you regularly stop and talk with people in the neighborhood?, 
Methodology

• **Trust and solidarity**
  – Do you have any family/friends that you feel you can confide in?,
  – If you were in trouble, are there people whose help you could count on?
  – Would you say that most people in this neighborhood can be trusted?,

• **Collective action and cooperation**
  – Have you been involved in at least one social action project in this local area in the past 12 months e.g. construction of a school/hospital/bridge/market e.t.c
Methodology

- Since the dependent variable is a continuous variable, women empowerment index, the study will estimate an OLS regression model.
- The model can be specified as follows by equation 1 below,

\[ WE = \alpha_0 + \alpha_1 SI + \alpha_2 Age + \alpha_3 AA + \alpha_4 M + \alpha_5 E + \alpha_6 F + \alpha_7 C \]

- There may be a reverse causality between social capital and women empowerment
Methodology

• This bring about simultaneity bias that causes a problem of endogeneity whereby the error term in equation 1 may be correlated with the social capital variable (Wooldridge, 2002).
• To address the endogeneity problem we’ll use Instrumental variable (IV) estimation.
• In the context of linear models, instrumental variable (IV) methods represent the established solution to the problem of endogeneity of regressors (Geraci, Fabbri and Monfardini, 2012).
• Instrumental variable estimation technique requires valid instrumental variables.
Methodology

• Previous studies have attempted instrumenting social capital especially those investigating the relationship between self-rated health and social capital.
• Fiorillo and Sabatini (2015) Instrumental for social capital using mass attendance and average frequency with which people meet friends at the community level.
• Schultz (2008) used attendance of religious services and residence in community for more than 6 years as instrumental variables for social capital.
• Choice of the later instrumental variable was motivated by the finding by Dipasquale and Glaeser (1998) that homeowners were more likely to invest in social capital.
• Adepoju and Oni (2012) also used length of household in the community and membership to religious groups.
Study site

- The study collected data from Gikindu location in Murang’a County.
- The economic mainstay of Gikindu location is agriculture.
- Most women engage in small scale crop farming and livestock husbandry, practiced on small-sized family land holdings.
- The predominantly grown crops are food crops namely maize, beans, potatoes, cassava.
- The livestock reared include the indigenous breeds of cattle, goats and sheep.
Data

• The study collected data on 3479 households that made up a total of 9,482 individuals.
• Of these individuals approximately 2,806 were women.