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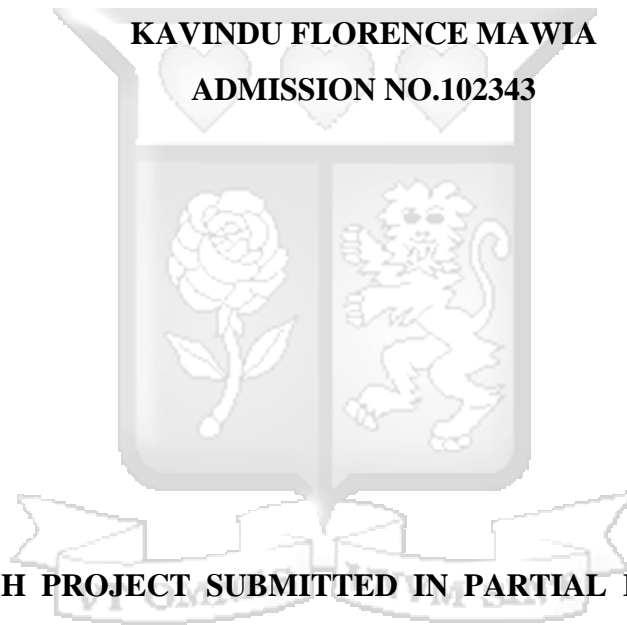
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**FACTORS INFLUENCING YOUTH PARTICIPATION IN AGRICULTURAL
COOPERATIVES IN THE SEMI- ARID AREAS OF KENYA
A CASE STUDY OF MWINGI, KITUI COUNTY**

KAVINDU FLORENCE MAWIA

ADMISSION NO.102343



**A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF MASTER
OF MANAGEMENT IN AGRIBUSINESS OF STRATHMORE UNIVERSITY**


MAY, 2023

DECLARATION

I declare that this research project is my original work and has not been previously submitted and approved for any award in any other university. To the best of my knowledge and belief, the project contains no material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the proposal itself.

Kavindu Florence Mawia

Admission 102343

Signature  _____

Date 02/03/2023


Strathmore Business School

APPROVAL

This research project has been reviewed and approved by the following:

Dr.S. Wagura Ndiritu

Strathmore University Business School

Signature  _____

Date 6/3/2023

ABSTRACT

Despite the fact that agriculture has a potential of creating jobs for the youth, few young people position themselves for a future in it. In this regard, this study intended to determine factors that influence participation of the youth in agricultural co-operatives in the semi-arid areas of Kenya. As such, the objectives of this research included identifying socio-demographic, economic and institutional variables that inform the youth's decision to join or not join cooperatives. This study was based on the collective action theory and the humanistic theories. The scope of the research was in Mwingi, Kitui County and intended to adapt descriptive survey research design. Target population was youth (15-35 years old). The targeted population was 243368 and a sample of 400 youth was selected. Out of these 397 responded. Collected data was from both primary sources using questionnaires as the main tool. Qualitative and quantitative methods were applied in data analysis. Descriptive statistics were used to analyse qualitative data and presented in form of percentages, frequencies standard deviations and weighted means. SPSS was the main software used for analysis. Factors under investigation had considerable influences on youth participation in the cooperatives. This was illustrated by positive and statistically significant relationship between participation of youth in agricultural cooperatives (the dependent variable) and youth's awareness on the existence of agricultural cooperatives in Kitui County; economic factors influencing youth participation in the cooperatives and institutional factors influencing the involvement of youth in the cooperatives. It can be deduced that the level to which the youth were aware about cooperatives, perceived that they could obtain economic benefits as well as the institutional attributes of cooperatives affected the membership of the youth to cooperatives. This participation was also segmented differently among youth of different socio-demographic characteristics. Enhancing the participation of the youth should thus take cognizance of these factors affecting their participation. In this line, the research recommends that there is for agricultural cooperatives to come up with strong marketing interventions that enhance youth awareness of cooperative societies. This research recommended that frameworks and policies should be put in place to continuously reform cooperatives to enhance their appeal to the youth.

Key words: Agricultural cooperatives, youth, youth participation

DEDICATION

This research project is dedicated to my dear parents Mr. and Mrs. Stephen Kavindu, sisters Felistus Mueni and Annah Damaris, daughter Adiah Sophie, son Ethan Kimanzi and niece Sofia Nina.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I thank God through whom this work was made possible. I acknowledge my supervisor Dr Simon Ndiritu for his efforts and input. Am also grateful to my family for guiding and encouraging me during the research. I thank SBS for the opportunity given to me and the knowledge acquired here that has enabled this work to be a success.

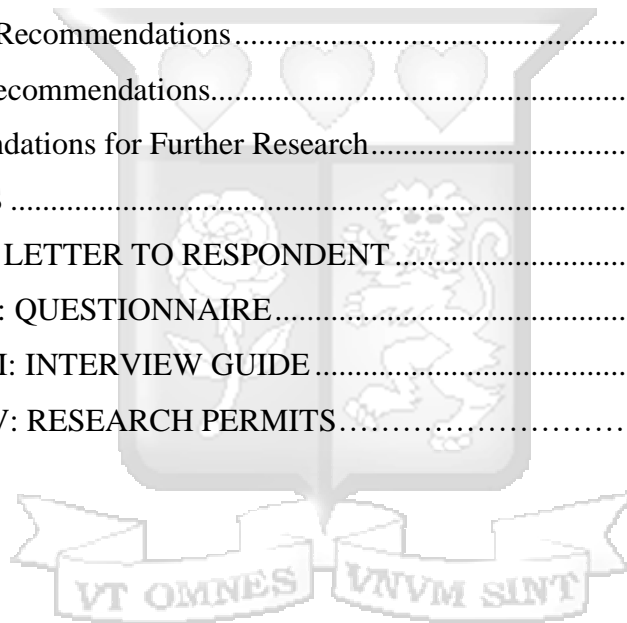


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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

This chapter comprises a basis of this study; factors influencing youth participation in agricultural cooperatives specifically in the arid and semi-arid areas of Kenya is provided. It gives a background to the research, problem statement, study objectives, research questions, the scope of the research, limitations of the study and also the justification of the study.

1.1 Background of the study

Participation is a vital right that young people need to make sure they exercise. According to Olutola (2020), it is one of the guiding concepts that were outlined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and it has been reaffirmed in a large number of additional Conventions and Declarations. Young people are given the ability to play an important role in their personal development as well as in the development of their communities through active participation, which also assists them in learning crucial life-skills, developing awareness on human rights and citizenship, and promoting good civic engagement (Singh, 2020). In order for young people to actively participate in society, they need to be provided with the appropriate tools, such as knowledge, education, and access to their civic rights (Olutola, 2020).

According to Checkoway (2011), participation among the youth is seen as a responsible and demanding deed aiming to fulfil sincere wants. This includes strategies that plan and make decisions which will in the process affect other related activities whose consequence or impact will be extended to others for instance outside or beyond the youth participants themselves (Lansdown, 2015). According to this point of view, in order for the community to achieve a particular socioeconomic objective, it must first make an honest assessment of the challenges it faces and then devise a strategy for overcoming those challenges.

This notion is intricately tied to standard arguments about the benefits of living in a democratic society where every voice may be heard. It would suggest that a more fundamental concern about the role of young people in society as 'active citizens' is at the root of the concern regarding participation. This is based on the implicit assumption that young people's active engagement in democratic processes is inherently beneficial

(Yonk & Reilly, 2012). As a result, youth participation can be justified by the four ideal-type justifications as in the Weberian sense (Weber 1949): a rights-based justification, involvement being an empowerment which is regarded radical, efficiency participation in policies in addition to developmental justification (Farthing, 2017).

Research on how to carry out participation, largely through the creation and improvement of typologies; has dominated the literature on youth participation (Frank, 2006; Farthing, 2015). Typologies alone 'are insufficient to address tensions in children and young people's engagement and assist in taking this participation forward' (Kay and Tisdall, 2009). However, these have been important tools for thinking regarding and expanding how participation is done. There has only been a little amount of critical analysis of the motivations for engagement, or the rationale of youth participation. As observed by Farthing (2017) youth participation and youth involvement is the active participation of young people in sports, government, learning institutions, socio economic activities and in community development. As such, the youthful population are able to provide an innovative and dynamic labour force especially in the agricultural sector. Consequently, they are technologically savvy and able to withstand high levels of risk (Farthing, 2017).

A past study carried out by United Nations Development Program showed that Kenya's unemployment level for the youth significantly exceeds the overall country's rate of unemployment. The results indicated that while the former is approximately 10% it grows to a high of 35% for youth, dependent on the age bracket. Moreover, World Bank (2018) noted that 80% of the 2.3 million currently unemployed are youths in the age bracket of 15 and 34 years.

As illustrated by Ministry of Agriculture (2017) unemployed youthful population are likely to indulge in negative activities such as drug and alcohol abuse, illicit sex, engaging in crime including terrorism. However, an adequately trained and empowered youthful population is a worthy asset for a nation's development agenda. On the same note, it presents an investment potential for both socio-political and economic growth. According to GoK (2017) agriculture has remained the pillar of the national economy. It contributes 24% directly to the annual GDP (Gross Domestic Product). Further, 27% contributes indirectly to the economy. Subsequently, it is regarded as among the core

sectors to actualize the desired 10% annual economic growth rate envisaged in the economic blue-print of the Kenya Vision 2030.

As opined by the Ministry of Agriculture (2017) agricultural sector provides a massive opportunity for employment creation for the youthful population and in the same line ensures food security is attained for future generations. On the other hand, the sector is not yet fully exploited to tap the youth's potential and hence it remains unpopular. Consequently, it is made worse by the notion that career in agriculture is not fashionable and poor monetary reward. Further, the ministerial report posits that access to information on market accessibility, factors of production such as land and funding is scarce, thus limiting adequate involvement of the youth in agriculture related activities (Ministry of Agriculture, 2017). As result, youth are poised to play an increasingly important role in steering the cooperative societies into adopting new technologies that will increase agricultural output (Anríquez & Stamoulis, 2017).

Agricultural cooperatives are institutions that have been used in many areas to remedy pervasive market failures in the agriculture sector. As illustrated by Marshall (2018) they are hinged on collective action principle among potential beneficiaries. According to the author, collective action takes place when people willingly come together as a group and coordinate their actions in fulfilling a similar challenge. In a broader definition, collective action describes a decision acted upon by a group "either directly or on its behalf through an organization" in line with members' perceived mutual interest. Most agricultural cooperatives started and act as Producer Marketing Groups (PMGs) (Marshall, 2018).

Youth participation in cooperatives can be achieved through forming their cooperatives or joining the already existing cooperatives. This is due to their ability to adapt to advances in technology in addition to possessing a higher affinity of innovation and entrepreneurship compared to their older colleagues. Conversely, they illustrate continuity and generational revival of membership and often challenge the status quo hence becoming agents of organizational transformation (Mwangi et al., 2016).

1.1.1 Development of Cooperatives in Kenya

Co-operatives were initially established in Kenya specifically as vehicles for the administration and sale of agricultural products produced by white farmers and were the sole preserves of colonial settlers at the time (Kobia, 2011). According to Zeleza (1990), the first co-operative to be established in Kenya was a dairy and agricultural co-operative at Kipkelion (previously Lumbwa) in 1908. This co-operative was established by European settlers. However, following the conclusion of the Second World War, Africans were granted permission to establish cooperative organizations, which led to the proliferation of a great number of cooperative societies (Minishi, 2012). After that point, the most common way for African farmers to connect with the expanding market economy that had been supported by colonial settlers up until that point was through the formation of cooperatives. Co-operatives immediately became synonymous with the generation of wealth, and Africans welcomed them with open arms, which sparked the rapid expansion of the sector, which in a short amount of time evolved into an essential component of development.

The Kenyan government provides cooperative society a legal supportive framework since 1965. To accelerate the process of forming co-operatives which enhanced land transfer to native Kenyans in addition to marketing produce from agriculture, and monetary institutions to foster the co-operative movement, the cooperative societies Act No, 39 of 1966 was enacted. As a result, a policy titled Session Paper No. 1 of 1970 was the first Co-operative Development document which the government sought to merge the progress realized in the co-operative movement. Later on, another co-operative policy was Session Paper No. 4 of 1987, titled “Renewed Growth through the Co-operative Movement” and it stressed the agriculture’s ministry commitment to promoting the involvement of citizens in the economy through co-operatives (Kobia, 2011).

A third cooperative policy was the “Session Paper No. 6 of 1997” on “Co-operatives in a Liberalised Economic Environment” which focused on reviewing its participation concerning running of co-operatives. Moreover, the government availed a legal model from which cooperatives would function in a competitive economic macroenvironment. In 1997 the Cooperative Societies Act No.12 was enacted giving more authority to the cooperative members’ movement. Amendments to this policy document were made in

the year 2004 to retain authority to the national government to assist in the running of cooperatives if need be. Consistent increase of financial cooperatives giving front office services led to the enactment of the “SACCO Societies Act of 2008” to regulate the financial aspects (Minishi, 2012).

The ability to acquire assets, access information, participate in the creation of policy and making choices, hold their leaders responsible, and cooperate with one another are all made possible for less privileged groups through the use of cooperatives. According to the World Co-operative Monitor, 2014), empowerment refers to a state in which individuals possess the assets and competencies necessary to engage in, negotiate with, and hold responsible organizations that have an impact on their lives. Since a long time ago, diverse groups of people, such as small-scale businesspeople, *jua-kali* artisans, and farmers in the rural areas, have always been supported by international organizations, national agencies, and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) to establish groups and launch cooperatives societies. This has been the case both on a national and an international level. The provision of technical, legal, and financial incentives by the government of Kenya has been connected to the expansion of the variety of cooperatives in Kenya as well as the total number of cooperatives.

Co-operatives provide an essential economic empowerment bridge for less fortunate people who would otherwise struggle to achieve adequate levels of economic security. The co-operative societies' proximity to members as well as the existence of strong user networks and community linkages presents chances to drive economic development among cooperating communities. Co-operatives generate employment in three ways: directly, indirectly, and through spillover effects (World Co-operative Monitor, 2014). Direct employment is created by Co-operatives and Co-operative firms, whereas indirect employment is created by members' income-generating activities that are begun with the help of Co-operatives (Wanyama, Develtere, & Pollet, 2008). Spillover employment is created by organizations that conduct business with co-operatives and co-operative firms, such as farm input suppliers.

Another benefit connected with cooperatives is poverty reduction. For starters, cooperatives provide opportunity for underprivileged people to rise out of poverty (Simmons & Birchall, 2008). Co-operatives improve the poor's ability to capitalize on

opportunities by facilitating finance, providing education and training, and fostering self-organization. They assist and encourage members who want to create enterprises or engage in income-generating activities including subsistence and cash crop farming. The money earned through these activities enables members to build a home, feed and clothe themselves, educate their children, and cover their medical expenditures. Cooperatives also facilitate input supply and members' access to markets. Furthermore, they provide members with a voice to advocate for fair trade and a favorable legal and policy environment for co-operative firms (Simmons & Birchall, 2008).

Figures from GoK (2017) indicate that by 2015, co-operative enterprises numbering 19,200 had been registered with a total membership of 14 million members. Similarly, SACCOs had mobilised approximately Kshs.600 billion in deposits and had forked out some Ksh.329 billion in the form of advances and loans. In the same breath, SACCOs had an asset base worth Kshs. 470 billion at the end of the same period, according to GoK (2017). However, agricultural cooperatives are not the majority considering agriculture's contribution to the overall economy of the country. Towards ending of 2017 slightly above five thousand agricultural-based marketing cooperatives in the country dealt with products such as coffee, dairy and pyrethrum. In addition, others involved livestock, cereals, cotton farming and marketing. However, Agri-based cooperatives performance has been hindered by issues such as being late in paying farmers and inefficient strategies for marketing farm produce. Moreover, their performance is hampered by lack of value addition to agricultural produce, inadequate supply of farm inputs, unavailability of credit facilities and overall inadequate capacity to manage. All these factors have led to slow growth and development of cooperatives in the country.

Observably, despite the availability of incentives and benefits associated with joining and participating in cooperative activities, this may pose a threat to the success and viability of farmer groups (Kayitesi, 2019). It is crucial to note that in any cooperative organization in Kenya and globally, there's little youth membership. As asserted by Kayitesi (2019) the gains of collective action arise through taking advantage of economies of scale and passive participation in the joint activities. However, this may put a strain to the success and viability of farmer groups and associations.

All over the globe, cooperatives are controlled by seven principles also known as (Rochdale principles): -

- a) Open and voluntary membership – according to this principle, cooperatives are voluntary formations which all individuals are free to join and are authorized to use their services, and willing to accept their responsibilities in the membership.
- b) Democracy – as such, cooperatives are democratic formations under control by their members, who participate actively in formulating frameworks and decision-making process.
- c) Membership economic involvement – under this principle, cooperative functions aim on serving the expectations and wants of their members. A cooperative involved in trading distributes surpluses to its members according to the business deals with the cooperative
- d) Autonomy and independence – as such, they are autonomous entities, self-help formations under control of its members.
- e) Educational, training, and information – cooperatives are entitled to meet educational needs and training for their members, elected officials, managers, and workers so that they are able to foster positively to cooperative development.
- f) Cooperation – cooperatives promote and bolster cooperative movement through working in tandem with local, national, regional, and global structures.
- g) Concern for community - cooperatives should strive to work for the sustainable development of their communities through policies agreed upon by their members.

Thus, this raises the crucial question of what are the “factors that limit or promote the youths from joining the cooperative organizations?”

1.1.2 Challenges Facing Youth Kitui County and the role of Co-operative Society

Kitui County is found in Kenya’s lower eastern region. It is comprised of 8 sub counties which are; Kitui central, Kitui south, Kitui East, Kitui Rural, Kitui West, Mwingi North, Mwingi West and Mwingi Central. The County extends over an area of 30,430 square kilometres, of which 6,370 square kilometres is covered by Tsavo East National Park.

The county has a population of 1,136,187 who reside in 262942 households with the average household size being 4.2. The population density (No. per Sq.km) is 37

according to data from Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS, 2019). As documented by KNBS (2019) the county has three livelihood zones; marginal mixed farming, mixed farming zone and formal employment, which contributes 44%, 52% and 4% of the population respectively. Further, the county is characterised by poor rainfall which is distributed poorly (spatial distribution).

The youth are confronted with a plethora of issues and difficulties, including but not limited to unemployment and underemployment, criminality, substance addiction, inadequate healthcare, dropping out of high school and college, and exploitation (KNBS, 2019). According to Mwangi et al. (2017), the majority of young people in Kenya who are between the ages of 15 and 24 years old are jobless and looking for work. According to Jivetti, Njororai, and Njororai (2016), the absence of adequate jobs has put young people at danger of engaging in risky and anti-social behaviour like as drug and substance misuse, criminal activity, and violent acts. In addition, because they are so desperate as a result of their restricted participation in productive activities, terrorist organizations and rebel movements can find it quite easy to attract members from among them. This disastrous fact is now a big headache for Kitui County.

The youth have the advantage of numbers and energy, but they are unable to participate in economic activities because they lack education, skills, experience, capital, and access to credit (Ayoo, 2022). While the youth have the advantage of numbers and energy, they are unable to participate in economic operations. In addition, they lack the assets necessary to acquire loans, and the majority of them rely on temporary jobs, which results in their income being erratic and unpredictable. Their ability to obtain credit from banks and other financial organizations is made more difficult as a result of this. Some of the initiatives that are managed by the government are also responsible for the practice of conditioning access to loans on a consistent flow of income, which prevents a considerable number of young people from gaining access to credit. Therefore, young people would profit in a variety of ways from forming co-operatives or joining existing ones.

According to Kundrliková and Holubčík (2016), first cooperatives generate synergies that can benefit members in launching and operating businesses. Second, becoming a member of a co-operative affords young people the chance to get experience in

positions of leadership, cultivate a concern for the well-being of their community, and make constructive contributions to it. This is important because young people often feel excluded from the decision-making process at both the national and the local level. In addition, cooperatives provide a setting in which young people can learn the skills necessary to deal with the issues they will face throughout their lives, such as the prevention of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) and HIV/AIDS, as well as business skills (Kundríková & Holubčík, 2016). The youth, by banding together to form a cooperative, would not only be able to provide work opportunities for themselves, but they would also be able to scale up their negotiating power through the use of collective voice.

Co-operatives might be a crucial source to seek for, especially considering that unemployment is the most significant difficulty that young people confront. According to the International Labor Organization (2021), it is anticipated that cooperatives around the world have the potential to generate over 100 million jobs. Additionally, there is a widely held belief that cooperatives have the potential to play a significant role in the entrepreneurial process. Cooperatives are seen as a viable option for young people who want to launch their own businesses and build new start-ups. As a consequence of this, the participation of young people in agricultural cooperatives is the single most essential thing that can be done to both advance the agricultural industry and raise the income level of young people in Kitui County. The formation of youth co-operatives dealing with agriculture, particularly in rural regions, will encourage young people to farm for commercial or business objectives, and as a result, agricultural co-operatives have the potential to play a key role in boosting outputs. Additionally, agricultural co-operatives for young people are able to contribute useful information to governmental entities, policy makers, and donor organizations, while also disseminating this information to the youth in order to strengthen their rights.

1.2 Problem Statement

Youth unemployment in Kenya is rated at 35% by The World Bank and every year an extra one million youth are absorbed into the labour market. This results to an extra demand for employment opportunities which calls for the creation of at least 1.3 million jobs annually. This leaves most of the youth vulnerable to vices such as exploitation,

underage pregnancies, sexual and drug abuse, prostitution, and HIV/AIDs infections (Mwangi, 2016).

Youth aged 18-35 is a workforce that has a great potential source of social and economic energy for the country and if well utilized could help drive the achievement of the much needed economic development. For transformation to take place the youth need to be passionate about it and this can only be achieved by empowering the youth as well as giving them opportunities for participation (NCPD, 2017).

As illustrated by ASDS (2010 – 2020) study, agriculture is recognised as the pillar of the country's economy, directly contributing to 24% of the annual GDP. This is in addition to another 27% indirect contribution. It is thus an important sector in employment creation to a great population. This is evident by the fact that it has been recognized as a core sector aimed at delivering the 10 percent annual economic growth envisaged in the economic blueprint of the Kenya Vision 2030 (Government of Kenya, 2007).

The youth have however abandoned the agriculture and farming and crave to work in white collar jobs. The government has in response developed many programs and strategies to enable the youth to actively participate in agriculture by empowering them. One such strategy is Kenya Youth Agribusiness 2017-2021 whose aim is to position the youthful population in the frontline of agricultural expansion and transformation (Ministry of agriculture, 2017).

Agricultural cooperatives are an excellent way to absorb the youth into the agricultural sector since they are essential in realising national, socio economic objectives in regard to accelerated economic growth, equitable and sustainable development.

Past research has been carried out on different factors influencing decisions of farmers in joining cooperatives in different parts of Kenya but these studies have failed to address the youth specifically in dry and semi-arid regions considering youth are the future adults and for continuity to be achieved in the cooperatives, youth engagement is crucial.

With the worrying discovery about youth's disinterest in agriculture, insignificant studies have been carried out to decipher and take into account views of the youth, voices and opinions regarding agriculture in general. As such, there is lack of sufficient evidence on active youth participation in agricultural cooperatives in the country. The research therefore aims to fill the existing research gap by carrying out research to evaluate factors that influence youth participation in cooperatives associated with agriculture in the semi-arid areas of Mwingi Sub- County, Kitui County in Kenya.

1.3 Research objectives

The broad objective of this study was to determine the factors that influence participation of youth in agricultural cooperatives in the semi-arid areas of Kenya specifically in Kitui County.

1.3.1 Specific Objectives

- (i) To establish youth's awareness on the existence of agricultural cooperatives in Kitui county and the extent of their involvement in them.
- (ii) To identify the socio-demographic factors influencing youth participation in the cooperatives
- (iii) To identify the economic factors influencing youth participation in the cooperatives
- (iv) To identify the institutional factors influencing the involvement of youth in the cooperatives

1.4 Research Questions

- (i) Are the youth aware of the existence of agricultural cooperatives in the county and what is the extent of their involvement in them?
- (ii) What are the socio-demographic factors influencing the involvement of youth in the cooperatives?
- (iii) What are the economic factors influencing the involvement of youth in the cooperatives?
- (iv) What are the institutional factors influencing the involvement of youth in the cooperatives?

1.5 Scope of the Study

The study focused on assessing factors that influence participation of youth in agricultural cooperatives in the semi-arid areas. It was carried out in Kitui County and was conducted between August 2022 and December 2022. The variable of the study include socio-demographic factors, economic factors, institutional factors and youth aware of the existence of agricultural cooperatives and their influence on participation in such cooperatives.

1.6 Significance of the Research

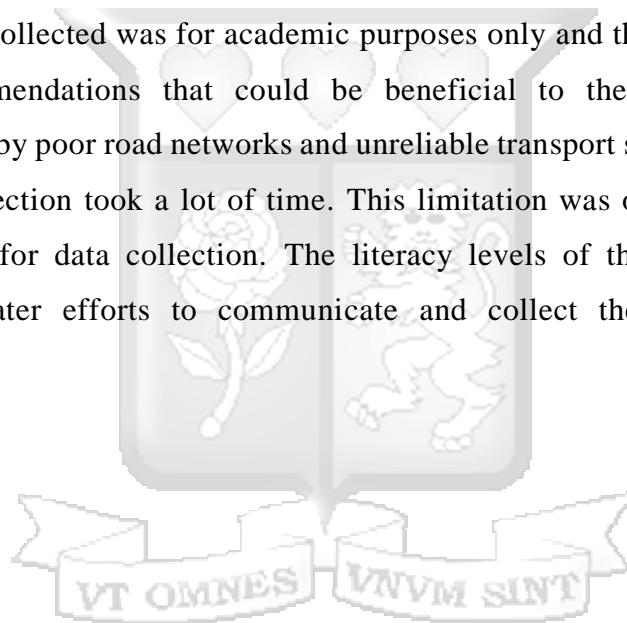
Youth participation and involvement in community-based movements has been a focus in the country in a bid to eradicate poverty by creating employment, reducing vulnerability and bringing a sense of belonging to the youth. For agricultural co-operatives to be successful in the long run, it is absolutely necessary to have the active participation of younger generations. These discoveries will contribute to the movement toward cooperatives in a variety of different ways. The findings would assist the members of the co-operative, the government, and other stakeholders in the sector to become aware of the numerous socio-cultural and economic issues that are preventing youngsters from participating effectively in agricultural marketing co-operatives. Additionally, it is anticipated that the findings will provide a variety of strategies that may be adapted or modified for the goal of boosting youth engagement in Agricultural cooperative societies and other forms of co-operatives, as well as enhancing youth empowerment generally.

Furthermore, the findings will contribute in influencing policy makers and other cooperative stakeholders to make interventions in policy reforms for matters relating to youth empowerment in the co-operative sector. This will be done in order to make young people active members of cooperative organizations and attract them to join co-operative organizations for the best interests of meeting their socioeconomic needs and aspirations and ensuring the sustainability of agricultural cooperative societies. In addition, it is anticipated that the findings will be beneficial for academic purposes, particularly for academics and scholars working on the same or a related problem. The findings of this research could be of assistance to the cooperatives and understand the different perspectives of the youth and develop roles that could be taken up by them to help them blend in the societies.

The youth would also benefit by pitching opportunities to engage in community development as well as become well equipped to handle barriers. Moreover, development partners and youth agribusiness financiers would be enlightened on issues affecting the participation of youth in agricultural activities in Kenya. In turn, this would aid in employment creation and ensuring food security in the country. This study would also inform scholars on researches that need to be done to improve the livelihood of youths.

1.7 Limitations to the Research

A major limitation was unwillingness of respondents to cooperate or failure to provide any information. This limitation was overcome by assuring the respondents that the data collected was for academic purposes only and that the findings could make recommendations that could be beneficial to them. Kitui County is characterised by poor road networks and unreliable transport system and this meant that data collection took a lot of time. This limitation was overcome by creating enough time for data collection. The literacy levels of the farmers varied. In response greater efforts to communicate and collect the relevant data was undertaken.



CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter offers a review of the previous research done on the parameters of the variables being studied. In addition to this, it includes the theory that the study was based on, as well as the conceptual framework, a summary of the literature review, and a discussion of any knowledge gaps.

2.2 Theoretical Literature Review

This is the framework that provides support for the relationships between pre-existing theories, the extent to which those theories have been explored, and the development of new hypotheses. According to Kombo and Tromp (2006), its primary purpose is to challenge and expand upon previously held information in order to better understand and forecast a certain occurrence. Collective Action Theory, Humanistic Theory (as formulated by Abraham Maslow), and Community Development Theory are the three theories upon which this study is based.

2.2.1 Collective Action Theory

This research was anchored on the theory of collective action. It was initially put forward by Olson (1965), an American economist and social scientist. According to the scholar, collective action takes place when more than one person is expected to contribute to an effort so as to achieve a desired outcome. Olson argued that success of collective action is dependent on individual ability to commit and participate to overcome inefficiencies that arise from a group attempting to provide a good. However, this possibility was restricted to very small groups, which Olson defined as privileged or intermediate. These are groups in which the activities of members can be easily monitored by others, which reduce the likelihood of free riders participating. According to the author, in order for larger or more covert groups to engage in collective action, there must first be some form of external incentives or coercive processes in place. Consequently, both technical and human skills are also necessary for a group to succeed (Sternberg, 1981).

So as to effectively handle members properly and offer essential needed service, cooperative management (board members and managers) ought to be capable of adequately responding to the requirements, interests and needs of individual members, in addition, to involve the external governance environment that aids or restricts agricultural cooperatives' mandates and reacts to adjustments in the market. In economic environments and political governance that is quickly changing, traversing this political-economic climate may be daunting, thus, compelling agricultural cooperatives to adapt both to the varying needs of its the external governance mechanisms and membership wherein cooperative leadership call for its members (Sedo, 2007).

Numerous variations in market dynamics or agricultural policy like quick increases in foreign direct investment (FDI) in business organizations in competition with agricultural cooperatives could influence cooperative members differently, resulting in cooperative members to select to not make collective action judgments in the same manner and at a similar time. This makes cooperative adoption slow, leading to a competitive disadvantage for the firm in the market.

Harris (1996) postulates that agricultural cooperatives are solely aggressive in the contexts of prolonged market failure, and the necessity of cooperatives lessens with market liberalization (Ortmann & King, 2006). However, this viewpoint has been condemned by others like Sexton and Iskow (1995) who assess that there is miniscule evidence that cooperatives are intrinsically less resourceful in comparison to other kinds of profit-orientated enterprises and investor-owned businesses (Ortmann and King 2006). Moreover, Cox (1996) argued that conventional cooperatives are capable of altering their property rights constraints by ensuring that the shared decision to reform their organization institutions and structure become more competitive (Ortmann & King 2006). And as pointed out by King (2006), he believes that the capability to adjust to change through a democratic and participatory approach of joint decision-making is the greatest strength of agricultural cooperatives.

Various critiques have been raised about the theory. The most typical causes of failure in collective action are individuals' lack of knowledge regarding how to successfully

act or their lack of sufficient motivation to behave in a manner that is in their best advantage. According to Ostrom (1994), human nature is a complicated combination of the pursuit of one's own self-interest as well as the ability to develop one's own internal norms of behaviour and the willingness to follow rules when those laws are comprehended and believed to be valid. Researchers that study evolutionary theories have claimed that people are born with the potential to learn general social standards as well as rules of reciprocity, both of which boost the rewards of collective action.

The success of collective action is linked to the heterogeneity factor of groups, which is related to cultural elements, variances in the kind of interests that individuals may have in a given collective action, and variations in the availability of resource endowments. This factor also plays a role in how individuals are endowed with resources. According to Vedeld (2000), economic interests within a social group must be completely consistent with one another in order for collective action to be possible. Defining a single aim in a situation where members of a group have competing priorities when it comes to the management of a resource can be difficult.

2.2.2 Humanistic Theory (Abraham Maslow)

Carl Rogers and Abraham Maslow are sometimes referred to as the "twin fathers" of the humanistic worldview (Lestar et al., 2019). They believed that psychoanalysis took an excessively pessimistic picture of the individual by placing an excessive amount of attention on the pathologies that were already present. Instead, Rogers and Maslow focused on developing a constructive perspective on the person, one that considers humans to be intrinsically good, endowed with an innate "actualizing tendency," and characterized by a preponderance of constructive development. According to this theory, people have innate ability of making decisions that will lead them to their destiny and facilitate in dealing with setbacks. One posits in using this theory is to focus on the level on which persons make use of their abilities to respond to life's challenges in fulfilling their own needs (Cox, 1996).

Abraham Maslow is credited with developing the concept of human needs and developing a theoretical hierarchy of requirements. In this hierarchy, needs are placed in a pyramid, with the most fundamental needs at the base and taking precedence over needs that are further up on the pyramid. He postulated that persons whose basic requirements were met would have the capacity to become self-actualizers, those

exceptional few who live up to their full potential. Maslow observed that this hierarchy was not set in stone and that, in practice, the boundaries between different needs could be fluid and hazy. He also said that if a person went for an extended length of time without a need being met, then it may develop in a 'fixation,' which is a term for an unhealthy obsession. Therefore, if a person had been subjected to a significant amount of physical violence, it is possible that they would continue to experience fear about violent situations even after the violence had stopped (Lestar et al., 2019)

The hierarchy of need which was formulated by Abraham, motivates individuals in realising needs in the top tier of the hierarchy indicating complete growth. In the same vein, it established that it is crucial for the wants located at the base of the pyramid are adequately met prior to advancing on to satisfy the needs at the next level. Involving, motivating and promoting youth to participate in the process of meeting their needs is paramount to their individual development.

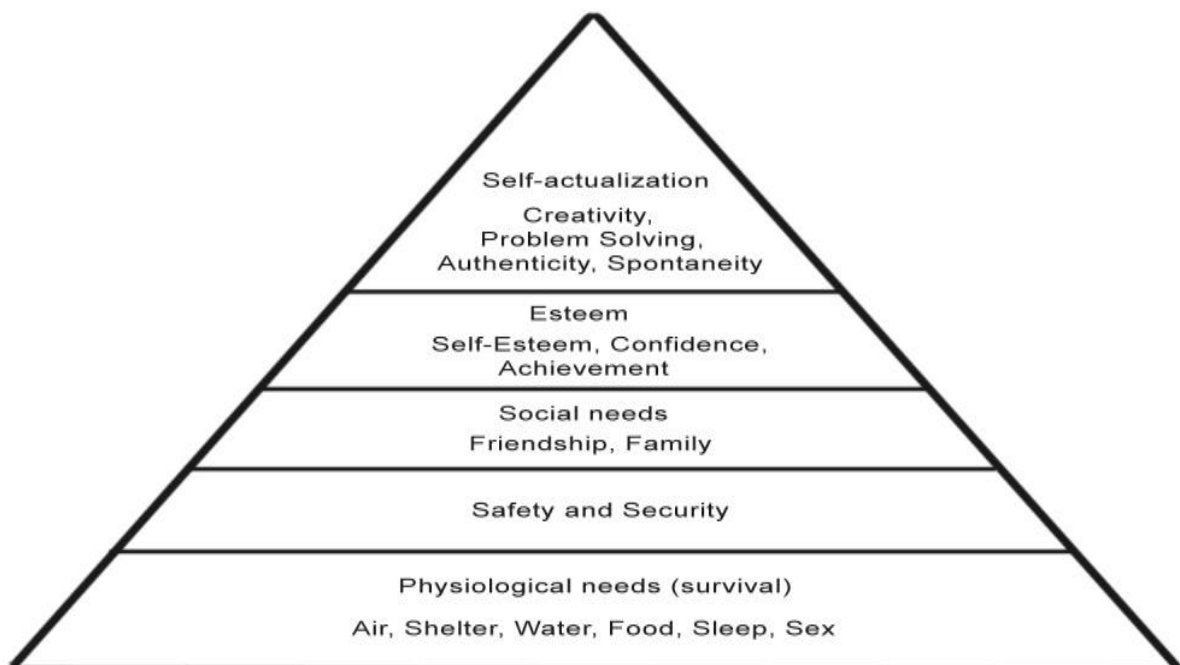


Figure 2.1 Humanistic Theory (Abraham Maslow)

Source: Maslow (1987)

Various criticisms have also been raised about the theory. One of the most significant problems with humanistic theory is that its notions are not sufficiently defined. Some people believe that it is impossible to objectively evaluate subjective concepts such as true and real experiences. According to this line of thinking, an experience that is real for one person might not be real for another. In his theory of personality, Abraham Maslow takes a holistic and phenomenological approach, positing that the goal of human existence is self-actualization. However, such an emphasis on the self, free from dependence on others, seems to foster extreme individualism and elitism, where the only people who have a chance of self-actualizing are those who grow up in the correct environment and are able to meet their basic requirements (Lethbridge, 1986). Some of Maslow's detractors who lean more toward Marxism have a more pessimistic view of the self-actualized human and argue that Maslow is recreating a new form of social Darwinism (Shaw & Colimore, 1988). Human groups are societies of people interacting with each other rather than only interacting with oneself and Maslow's wants. Animal groups are made up of individuals, whereas human groups are societies of people interacting with each other. According to Acevado (2018), theory does appear to indicate an individualistic imperative, which even Maslow concedes has the potential to lead to cynicism and nihilism.

2.1.3 Community Development Theory

Community development Theory was first proposed by Bhattacharyya (1995). Community development, in the context of this idea, refers to the process of building or expanding agency and solidarity within a community. In order to assist groups and communities in the process of developing a feeling of cohesiveness, community developers must sort through competing perspectives and definitions of an issue held by populations that are both ethnically and ideologically diverse. Bhattacharyya contends that community development also involves agency, which refers to the ability of a people to organize the world in which they live.

According to Edelman & Burke (2008) community developers increase the capability of a population by inspiring and instructing others to pursue their own goals and desires, as well as by teaching them new abilities and information. When practitioners support or promote community reflection on the lessons they have learned as a result of their actions, this is an example of agency or capacity building in action. Developing one's

understanding, capacity to create and act, as well as the ability to reflect, is central to the concept of agency.

Community development can be seen of as the act of forming new relationships and expanding existing ones. According to Marre and Weber (2010), the key to achieving solidarity is to develop a thoroughly shared identity and a set of guiding principles. In order to assist groups and communities in the process of developing a feeling of cohesiveness, community developers must sort through competing perspectives and definitions of an issue held by populations that are both ethnically and ideologically diverse.

According to this theory, it is important to strengthen citizens in order to become dispensable in fostering and supporting the youth. This will ensure sustainable development through empowering and developing the youthful population. Conversely, they will contribute positively to the development of the communities that have supported them. As such, community development theory attempts to engage the youth in improving quality of their lives in addition to their own personal development as well as that of their local communities (Beauvais et al., 2001).

Some critics argue that the theory's fundamental flaw is that it does not provide a significant amount of information into change, social dynamics, or current institutions. Sheikheldin and Devlin (2015) assert that community development is a social process that calls for the collaboration of individuals who share a variety of interests, values, and modes of communication in order to bring about social change in a specific location. The young people are only brought together under the guise of an agricultural cooperative group in order to meet their most pressing need, which is unemployment. Conflicts of opinion, discord of action, and outright ethical and operational differences amongst important members in the organizations resulting in conflicts inside the cooperative. As the need is met, hostility and opposition will emerge as a result of these differences.

2.3 Empirical Reviews

This section seeks to link the basis in connection to the relationship between key factors. For most agricultural cooperatives, one must be involved in an activity in the sector to

qualify to be a member. The youth however have little or no experience in farming due to their limited exposure, no land to cultivate and poor access to credit to practice agriculture. Some research has been conducted to establish factors affecting cooperatives membership in communities and some are discussed below.

2.3.1 Socio-Demographic Factors and youth participation

The propensity of young people to participate in community activities is influenced by a number of socio-demographic factors, including the age, the gender, the level of education, and the level of socio-economic status. According to the findings of Jibowo and Sotomi (1996), a statistically significant correlation exists between factors such as age, degree of formal education, and occupation and involvement in youth programs.

Angba (2009), states that educational level is a significant factor in the extent, intensity and pattern of participation. They went on to say that participation rises with a person's degree of education, but that after the level of high school, the rise is greatest in organizations that are not affiliated with any faith. It was also stated that effective participation obviously involves communicative and human relational skills, both of which must be developed. As a result, persons with a higher level of education would be better enabled for participation because their attitude is likely to be positive.

Mwei (2016) suggested that education enables youth to have desirable characteristics that promote them to engage in the implementation of community development initiatives. Education also enables youth to have desirable qualities that promote them to have desirable qualities. The author went on to reaffirm that educated young people have a significant interest in development and are, as a result, more involved in the implementation of community development programs. Educated young people are more concerned with economic empowerment than their less educated colleagues, who are seen as having a significant apathy towards community development. This is because educated young people have access to greater resources. The participation of young people in community development projects is becoming an increasingly important factor in determining the future of a community. Therefore, this indicates that youth should be empowered in terms of their academic achievements as well as their capacity to launch activities that contribute to community development in order to improve existing community development.

Ifenkwe (2020) in his study aimed at analysing the factors that influence farmers membership in agricultural cooperative communities in state of Abia, Nigeria found that income level, age, experience in farming, poverty level, and size of the household had an influence on cooperative membership by farmers.

Adopting Tobit model, Thomas and Fanaye (2018) analysed the factors determining the proportion of membership of women in agricultural cooperatives vs. logit framework to assess the determinants of women membership in agricultural cooperatives in Ethiopia. Results from Tobit regressions indicated that roles played and the manner in which cooperatives are run largely affect proportion of women in cooperatives membership. In the same vein, findings from logit regression illustrate that age and size of households favourably determine women's participation in cooperatives. Meier (2019) employed the model Probit to assess issues influencing membership in cooperatives in Uganda. According to the analysis, individual characteristics such as gender, education, age, and marital status did influence a farmer's resolution to adopt an agricultural cooperative.

In Kenya, Karaya, Onyango, and Amudavi (2013) evaluated women farmers' involvement in women groups in Mwala Division. During the study, primary data was gathered from a sample of 156 participants. Data analysis was carried out using statistical package for social scientists (SPSS) software. Findings were presented by the use of percentages, frequencies, multiple regressions and Spearman's Rank Correlation Coefficient. The results showed that food security in households significantly and positively affected women involvement in development groups.

2.2.2 Economic Factors and Youth Participation

Individuals with different economic factors decide differently on whether to join or not to join cooperatives. This is mainly because the economic aspect is what unifies the members (Divine, 2019). Different studies have showed that persons owning big farm sizes were more willing in joining cooperatives than those owning average pieces of land. Access to credit is also another factor determining farmers' decision to join cooperatives. This is because credit enables farmers produce the required produce since they can acquire the needed, inputs on time and in the required quantities.

Some of the studies that were identified in Africa include a study utilizing the probit regression scrutiny to reveal determinants that affect membership of farmers in agricultural cooperatives in Huye district, Rwanda. The study found that household size, head of family's age, access to credit, location of cooperative premises and level of experience in the agriculture industry factors influenced statistically the membership of farmers in the agriculture cooperatives (Divine, 2019).

As indicated by Wollni and Zeller (2007) farmers gain from taking part in specific markets and cooperatives in Costa Rica. Applying a 2-stage model to analyse marketing decisions of farmers plus impact on the prices offered. Findings showed farmers participating in coffee specialty received better prices as compared to those in traditional channels. In addition, involvement in cooperatives affect positively on the probability that a farmer opts to grow special variety of coffee (Wollni, & Zeller, 2007).

The effect of collective action on small holder agricultural commercialization and incomes level in Kenya study was carried out by Kirui and Njiraini (2018). The technique used to assess the effect of collective action was the propensity score matching method. It assessed the role of household agricultural commercialization together with household agricultural income. Research results indicated that involvement in collective action by farmers was largely as a result of enhanced access to market and improved household welfare arising from increased income (Kirui & Njiraini, 2018).

Research to illustrate the link between farmer groups and access to inputs was done by Saweda and Liverpool-Tasie (2018). They applied "a double hurdle model" to evaluate whether various techniques of fertilizer distribution through groups in a targeted input subsidy program affects an intervention's capacity to expand inputs accessibility among farmers. Research findings illustrated that while farmer groups may enhance the process of identification of farmer and coordination. Moreover, the intra-group factors affect their efficacy of equitably providing members with inputs.

Himberg et al. (2009) evaluated the benefits and drawbacks of forest management participation in Kenya's Taita Hills. They used primary data collected through structured questionnaires. Participatory rural evaluation, SWOT analysis, and

correlation analysis were also used. According to the findings, the main benefits of participation were motivational elements such as the desire to conserve, access to forest products, money, and employment. Men cited income and job as the primary reasons for their involvement in forest management. Conservation of the forest, as well as the values and dependence that people have on the forest, were discovered to be key motivators for community participation. The studies also revealed that fewer young people engaged in forest activities. Water was the single most important reason that both men and women participated in forest management. Men, on the other hand, were more driven to assist in forest management by the prospect of earning a living. However, the study did not look at the factors that influence young engagement.

2.2.3 Institutional Factors and Youth Participation

As defined by North (2019) institutions are humanly devised constraints, comprised conventional confinements such as rules, laws, constitutions), informal constraints such as behavioural ethics, conventions and codes of conduct that form human relations, and their enforcement characteristic. Institutional factors that determine the decision of individuals vary from one place to another but are generally type of land system, availability to training, access to information, location of the cooperative according to studies that have been previously been carried out. Different studies have been done to analyse their influence on decision making and have been found to significantly affect farmer's membership in cooperatives.

A study utilizing the Probit regression scrutiny to reveal issues influencing membership of farmers in agricultural cooperatives located Huye district in Rwanda found that household size, household leader age, access to credit, location of cooperative premises, level of experience in the agriculture industry contributed statistically to factors affecting membership of farmers in the agriculture cooperative (Divine, 2017).

Another research conducted by Jaafar et al. (2017) employed a technique known as “stepwise multiple linear regression analysis” in analysing factors influencing adoption of cooperatives by growers of palm oil in Malaysia. They identified that knowledge of cooperatives, grower's gender, career occupation, community and society participation, commitment, income of the household, management, communication and attitude were

identified as enormously influencing respondents on whether to join cooperatives or not.

A study by Gashaw and Kibret (2018) looked at factors that affect increased cooperative membership of farmers in Bench Maji zone, Ethiopia. The study identified issues such as information and access to media, level of training, level of education, misappropriations of funds, promotion of cooperative marketing and farmer's perception towards cooperatives. Other pertinent factors included commitment of the leaders, lack of trust in the management committees' members, and level of awareness were established to substantially affect farmers' membership in the cooperatives in the study area.

Nugusse, van Huylenbroeck, and Buysse (2013) carried out research on factors influencing rural individuals to enrol in joint cooperatives in the northern part Ethiopia applying the probit model technique. Results indicated that accessing information, special skill, rural association membership, rate of attendance to public meetings and workshops and household head education affected enrolment to cooperatives. In addition, other factors were credit accessibility, availability of training services, school attendance of family members, location of the major market, level of infrastructures, land ownership and size of the farms are key determinants that influence persons from farmlands areas in enrolling to agricultural cooperatives in the area of study.

Research carried out by Divine (2017) on investigating factors influencing farmers decision to join agricultural cooperatives in Rwanda showed that individual farmers generally join agricultural cooperatives due to countless needs such as requirement to get services such as Agri-veterinary, access to markets, benefiting from training openings, and the necessity to cooperate others. Research results also found that lacklustre performance of the agricultural cooperatives, inadequate awareness levels, and inability to afford membership fees were some factors that influenced farmers not to join agricultural cooperatives (Divine, 2017).

2.3 Knowledge Gap

There have been numerous studies on the factors influencing decisions a farmer should make; to join or not join or drop out of cooperatives associated with agriculture in the

rural areas. Majority of variables can be classified into four: economic factors, socio-demographic factors and institutional factors. These factors have been studied and have evolved over the years in an attempt to understanding human behaviour and decisions. Different studies have focused on different setups, communities, industries, geographic locations etc.

The literature review indicates that little work has been done in Kitui County to identify the elements that motivate young people to get involved in agricultural cooperatives. Although some factors were discovered in the literature research to have influenced youth engagement in other places, it is possible that these characteristics may not apply to Kitui County because of regional differences. Furthermore, they have focused on farmers in general leaving out the youth who are an important part of the community, considering they will be the future farmers. This study aimed at focusing on the youth specifically since they possess a great potential to drive the cooperative moment ahead.

Table 2.1 Research Gaps

AUTHOR	RESEARCH TITLE	MAJOR FINDINGS	KNOWLEDGE GAP
(Divine, 2017)	factors influencing whether or not farmers require to join agricultural cooperatives in Rwanda	Results showed that farmers generally join agricultural cooperatives due to countless reasons such as requirement to access agro-veterinary and markets, ability to attend training openings, and the necessity to cooperate with others poor performance of the agricultural cooperatives, lack of awareness, and inability to afford membership fees	Researchers have focused on determinants that influence farmer's opinion to enrol cooperatives. These studies in Kenya however have not been extensively done.
(Meier, 2016)	factors affecting membership in cooperatives in Uganda	Study found that individual characteristics such as gender, education, age, and marital status did influence a farmer's resolution to adopt an	The study however did not show how the factors affect youth in participating in agricultural cooperatives.

		agricultural cooperative.	
(Ifenkwe, 2017)	factors that influence farmers membership in agricultural cooperative communities in Abia state, Nigeria	Study concluded that income, age, farming experience, poverty level, and household size influence membership to cooperatives	The study however did not investigate the factors that affect youth participation in agricultural cooperatives.
(Jaafar et al., 2017)	factors affecting the adoption of cooperatives by oil palm grower in Malaysia	The study found that knowledge of cooperatives, farmer's gender, other occupation, community/society participation, commitment, income of the household, management, communication and perception were identified as enormously influencing respondents on whether to join cooperatives or not.	The study focused on factors that were specific to farmers giving no attention to the youth. This study aims at factoring in the youth since the youth are the future adults and farmers.
(Nugusse, van Huylenbroeck, & Buyse, 2018)	study on determinants of village individuals to enrol in cooperatives in Northern Ethiopia	The finding illustrated that access to information, special skill, membership in rural association, rate of attendance to public meeting/workshop, level of household head education, access to credit, access to training, number of family members in school, distance to main market, availability of infrastructures, farmland ownership and farmland sizes are the key variables that influence persons from the rural areas in	While this study focused the level of youth inclusion and the factors influencing youth participation in the community development initiative, the study however did not investigate the factors that affect youth participation in agricultural cooperatives.

		joining the agricultural cooperative	
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2.5 Conceptual Framework

It is described as concepts (variables) the researcher has operationalized so as to realize the pre-determined objectives (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). This is demonstrated by the Figure 2.2 below, which indicate the 2 types of variables. In this research, the independent variables are demographic characteristics, social, institutional and economic factors. In this part, the relationship between independent and dependent variables is demonstrated.

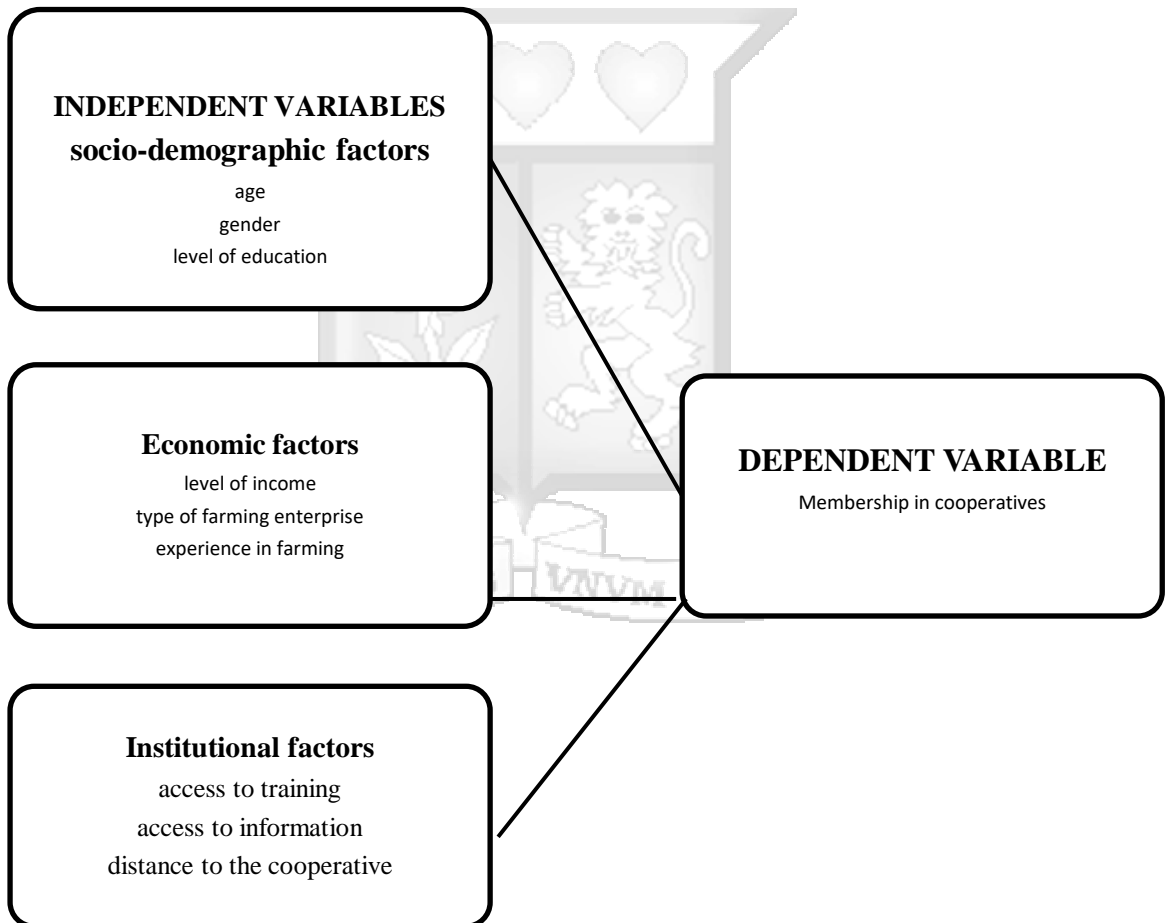


Figure 2.2 Conceptual Framework for Factors Influencing Youth Participation in Agricultural Cooperatives in the Semi- Arid Areas of Kenya

Source: (Researcher, 2023).

The dependent variable is indicated on the right hand side and is membership in a cooperative and the independent variables are socio-demographics factors, economic factors and institutional factors and are shown in depth on the left hand side.

2.6 Operationalization of Variables

The operationalization of study variables were presented in Table 2.2.

Table 2.2 Operationalization of Variables

Independent variable	Measure	Data instrument	Method of analysis
SOCIAL FACTORS			
Age	Years	Questionnaire	Descriptive
Gender	Male/female	Questionnaire	Descriptive
House hold size	Number of people	Questionnaire	Descriptive
Occupation	Dummy	Questionnaire	Descriptive
Level of education	Years	Questionnaire	Descriptive
Marital status	Dummy	Questionnaire	Descriptive
ECONOMIC FACTORS			
Access to credit	Dummy	Questionnaire	Descriptive
Number of labourers	Number of people	Questionnaire	Descriptive
Experience in farming	Years	Questionnaire	Descriptive
Farming enterprises	Dummy	Questionnaire	Descriptive
Farm size	Hectares	Questionnaire	Descriptive
Level of income	Amount -Ksh	Questionnaire	Descriptive
INSTITUTIONAL FACTORS			
Distance to cooperatives	Kilometre	Questionnaire	Descriptive
Access to market information	Dummy	Questionnaire	Descriptive
Access to training	Dummy	Questionnaire	Descriptive
Land tenure	Dummy	Questionnaire	Descriptive

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This section discusses items of discussion namely design of the research, population and procedure for sampling, data collection methods, data analysis, research quality and ethical issues.

3.2 Research Philosophy

A research philosophy is a framework that governs the conduct of research based on concepts about reality and the nature of knowledge (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2009). This study takes a positivist approach, distinguishing between facts and values. Facts are regarded as objective truth, whereas values are regarded as subjective, which can be deceptive and obstruct the quest of truth (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2009). In assessing the factors influencing youth participation in agricultural cooperatives in the semi- arid areas of Kenya with reference to Mwingi, Kitui County, this was deemed an appropriate philosophy as it helped in clarifying the facts regarding the study variables and their interrelations.

3.3 Research Design

A descriptive research design was used in the study. Descriptive research studies are those concerned with describing the features of a certain individual or group. The use of interviews, which entails obtaining information about a phenomenon under research from a sample of the concerned population, is one method of data collection for descriptive studies (Gupta and Gupta (2011). Because the phenomenon under investigation was examining factors that influence youth participation in agricultural cooperatives in semi-arid areas, a descriptive research strategy can be used because it determines and reports issues such as behaviours as they occur in the environment. Descriptive study sought information that described existing phenomena by inquiring about respondents' perceptions, attitudes, behaviour, or values. This strategy was employed in the research because data was obtained using a quantitative close and open ended questionnaire and it was analyzed using statistics. In contrast, the qualitative approach entailed the interpretation of phenomena (Mugenda & Mugenda, 1999).

3.4 Population and Sampling Procedure

Population as described by Mugenda and Mugenda (1999) is “the entire number of individuals or items under investigation in any field of study and have a similar attribute.” In this study, the population that was targeted included all youth (15-35) in the county. This research aimed at assuming that each homestead has one youth so the number of homesteads will be used to deduce the population size. The number of homesteads in Kitui was 243368 in the 2019 national census (KNBS, 2019).

At the same time, sample size was a representation of observations derived from a population by multi staged stratified sampling. Since a population was where a sample is to be derived, it constitutes a diverse group (for our case members and non-members of agricultural cooperatives). The number of participants was calculated using the Taro Yamane formula

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

Where n= sample size

N=population

e=level of precision

$$n = \frac{243368}{1 + 243368(0.05)^2} = 399$$

Hence 400 respondents were used to achieve 95% confidence level. Stratified random sampling technique was used to select the sample.

3.5 Method of Data Collection

As noted by Kothari (2004) collection of data is “the technique of acquiring subjects and gathering information required for research.” However, collection techniques differ in relation to the design of the study. For this study, primary data was gathered using semi-structured questionnaires which targeted the youth who are either or not yet members of any cooperative society. In this regard, participants were tasked with a number of questions both closed and open-ended relating to the participation in agricultural cooperatives. For secondary data, it was gathered through reviewing both empirical and theoretical data from sources such as academic books, journals,

dissertations, magazines and the internet. All respondents were notified in advance for the purposes of getting consent. On the same note, a letter from Strathmore Business School enabled the researcher get permissions to carry out the study and an introduction letter to obtain respondents' consent.

3.6 Research Quality

This study aimed to observe general characteristics of acceptable research. They included validity, addressing a real problem, incremental, cynical, and pegged on a logical rationale among others.

3.6.1 Pilot Testing

Pilot research was carried out prior the main research, to pre-test and validate the questionnaire. In this regard, a pre-test sample representing a 1/10 of the entire sample with the same characteristics was deemed necessary for conducting a pilot study according to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003). In this regard, the researcher chose a pilot group of 10 participants to test the validity and reliability of the research instrument. This was realized by first stratifying the participants according to their locations. Further, the chosen sample was presented with the questionnaires already prepared. As such, the pilot study facilitated the researcher to get acquainted with instrument of study in addition to singling out items that need alteration. Pre-testing the instrument also assisted to approximate the time required to deliver the instrument. Clear understanding of the instrument items to the participants was determined to bolster the instrument's validity and reliability. Queries discovered to be interpreted otherwise during pre-testing were paraphrased to have a similar meaning to all participants. However, participants taking part in the pilot study were not included in the actual study.

3.6.2 Validity of Research Instruments

Validity as illustrated by Mugenda & Mugenda (1999) is "the accuracy and meaningfulness of inferences which are based on the research results." Further, it is described as "the degree to which results got from the data analysis actually represent the phenomenon under study." As highlighted by Borg and Gall (1989) validity denotes to "the level by which a test measures what it is expected to measure. Validity will be enhanced by including the objectives in the questionnaire." Consequently, pre-test research ensured validity as it was done with 10 participants with same background,

using similar research instrument which was applied in the main research. This assisted to determine whether the research tool was capable to measure what is expected to capture.

3.6.3 Reliability of Research Instruments

Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) postulate reliability as “the consistency of measurement over time. In the same vein, whether it gives the same results on repeated trials.” It presents a test of “the degree to which a research instrument yields similar results after repeated trials” (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). A study tool is considered reliable if “it can measure a variable accurately and consistently and get similar findings under the same environment over time.” The “split-half” method was applied to measure the instrument’s reliability. Similar questionnaire was presented to the sample of ten participants, by dividing the sample randomly into 2 halves.

3.7 Analysis of Data

As highlighted by Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) data analysis refers “to categorizing, ordering, manipulating and summarizing data that seeks to answer the research questions.” Qualitative and quantitative analysis of data was utilized in this research. Questionnaires were filled and analysed to evaluate consistency and wholeness. Collected data was gathered, sorted and coded to make sure that the responses were clustered according to the objectives of the research. The research used qualitative content analysis for text data. This research utilized open-ended survey questions to collect text data.

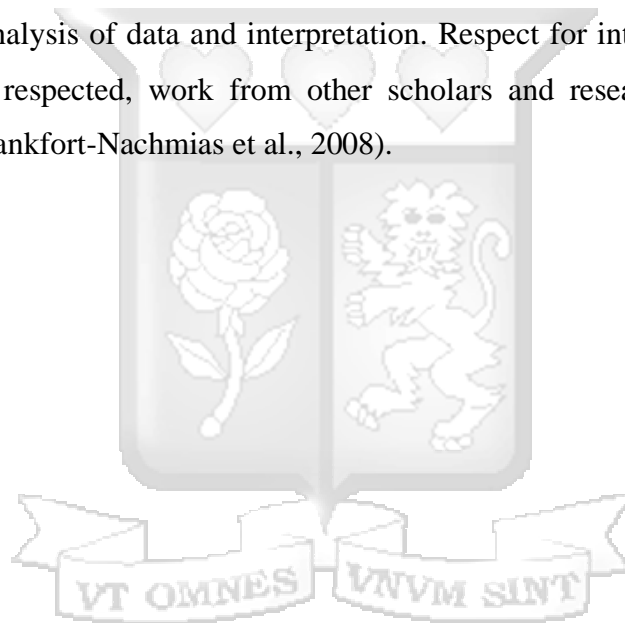
Moreover, descriptive statistics were utilized to analyze quantitative data. It was presented in form of percentages, frequencies standard deviations and weighted means. This entailed detailed description of the items constituting a sample. Inferential statistics such as “Pearson Correlation Coefficient” and regression analysis were applied to determine the connection between the study variables. Analysis was done by use of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).

3.7 Ethical Issues

As demonstrated by Cooper and Schindler (2006) ethics are “fundamental principles and morals that guide human conduct.” Consequently, ethical principles describe

acceptable and unacceptable code of conduct for a researcher. The researcher upheld principles and standards in ethics to ensure that gathered data was handled with highest level of confidentiality and is used for academic work only. This was guided by getting a letter of introduction from the Strathmore Business School to accompany the questionnaire to be administered to participants.

Prior to delivering the questionnaires the researcher sought clearance from concerned authorities including NACOSTI. The researcher explained to the participants the aim of the study and assured them of confidentiality of the data gathered. The researcher observed transparency in collection of data techniques and procedures, data reporting and the results generated. The researcher ensured objectivity during the interview to curb bias in analysis of data and interpretation. Respect for intellectual property was observed and respected, work from other scholars and researchers was cited and referenced (Frankfort-Nachmias et al., 2008).



CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

The aim of this research was to determine the factors that influence the participation of youth in agricultural cooperatives in the semi-arid areas of Kenya specifically in Kitui County. Study objectives were; to establish youth's awareness on the existence of agricultural cooperatives in Kitui County and the extent of their involvement in them; to identify the socio-demographic influencing factors of youth participation in the cooperatives; to identify the economic factors influencing youth participation in the cooperatives in addition to identifying the institutional factors influencing the involvement of youth in the cooperatives. This section provides response analysis from the questionnaire as well as interviews guides.

4.2 Response Rate

This study involved 399 members and non-members of agricultural cooperatives. Out of these, 387 responded. These made a return rate of 97% as shown below in Table 4.1 which was deemed significant for analysis.

Table 4.1 Response Rate

Response	Frequency	Percent
Responded	387	97.0
Non-Responded	12	3.0
Total	399	100.0

(Source: Field Data, 2022)

4.3 Demographic Data

This study sought to investigate demographic characteristics regarding the respondents of the research.

4.3.1 Respondent's Gender

Most participants were males (56.1%) while females were 43.9%. In this regard, all genders in the study were well represented which could avert gender bias. This was also pertinent since a part of the objectives of this research was to examine socio-

demographic factors and their effects on participation in cooperatives. Gender was one of the most important factors affecting participation in cooperatives (Thomas & Fanaye, 2018). This study could thus study gender effectively and its effects on participation in cooperatives. These findings were presented in Figure 4.1.

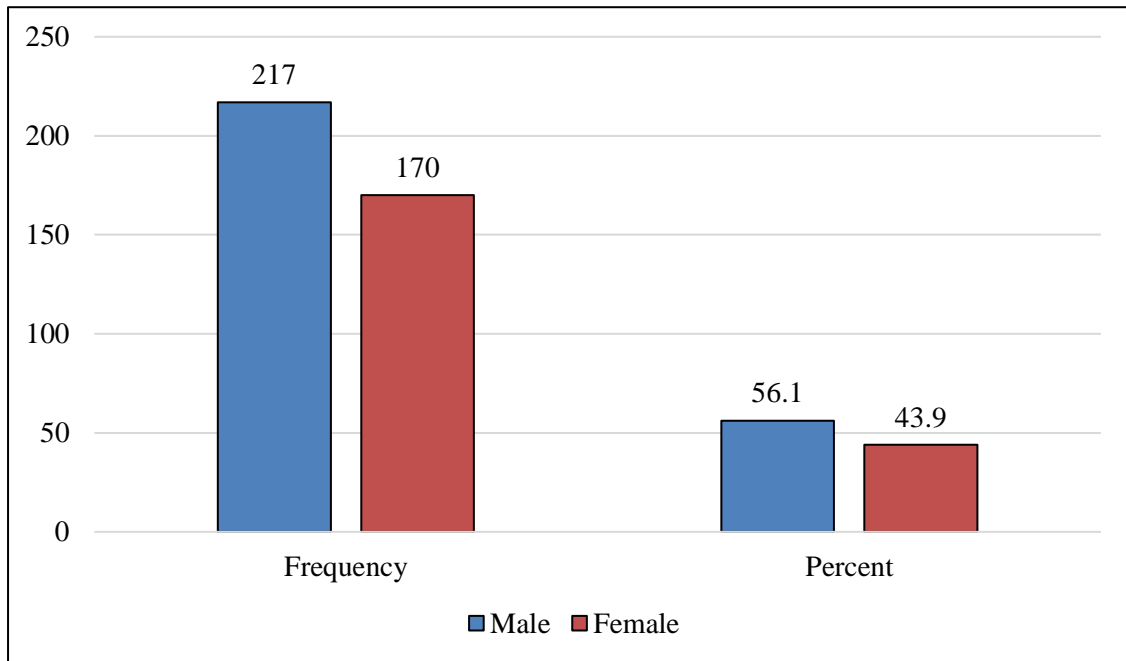


Figure 4.1: Respondents Gender

4.3.2 Respondent's Duration in Learning

The researcher sought to determine the years of learning of the participants. The findings show that the least years of attendance to school was 6 years while the majority had 16 years with the mean learning being 11.2 years. This illustrates that most of the youth had been in school for a significant period. This could enhance their ability to comprehend and make significant contributions to the study constructs as posited by (Farthing, 2017). Results are reflected in Table 4.2 below.

Table 4.2: Learning Duration

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Years of Learning	387	6	16	11.2	2.58

4.3.3 Respondents Marital Status

The researcher sought to examine the marital statuses of the study participants. Findings show that most of them were married (55.8%). These were followed by those who were single at 21.4% as well as those who were divorced at 14.7%. The rest, 8% were widowed. The findings show that most of the respondents were married which could influence their choices of socioeconomic activities due to family obligations which align with the study by Meier (2019) who posits that marital status did influence a farmer's resolution to adopt an agricultural cooperative. These findings were presented in Figure 4.2.

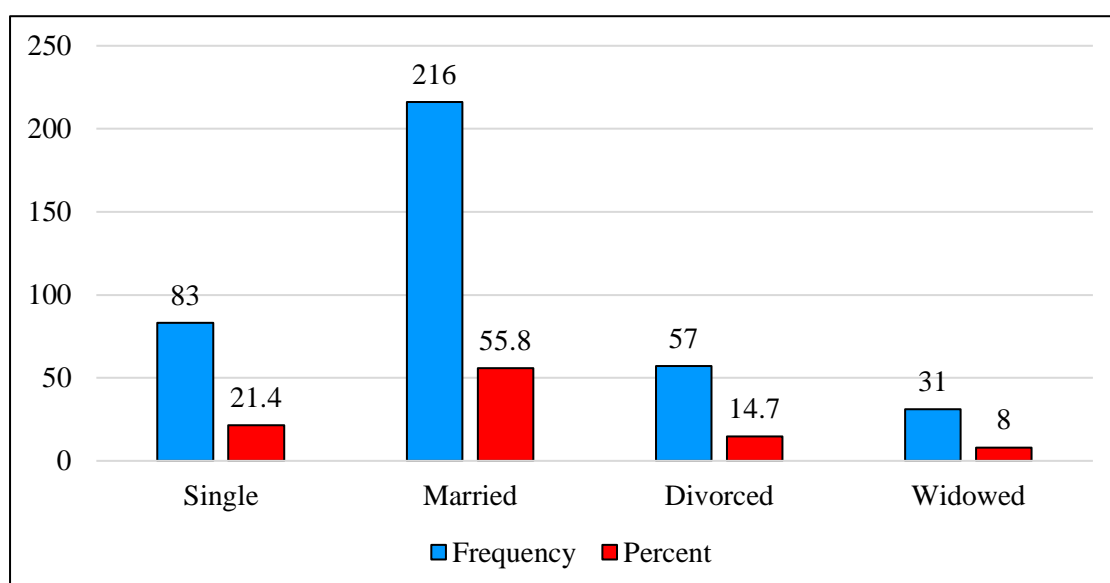


Figure 4.2 Marital Status

4.3.4 Numbers of Household Members and Dependents

The study went on to evaluate the numbers of household members plus dependents. Results were presented below in Table 4.3. The findings show that most of average number of household members was 5 and that of dependents was 3. The least number of household members was 2 while the majority was 8. Although there were some youth with no dependents, the highest number of dependents was 6. The findings are indicative of the fact that most of the youth come from big families and have considerable number of dependents which could motivate them to join cooperative societies as posited by Ifenkwe (2012) who pointed out that household size influenced cooperative membership by farmers.

Table 4.3 Numbers of Household Members and Dependents

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Number of Household Members	387	2.00	8.00	5	1.533
Number of Dependents	387	0.00	6.00	3	1.470

4.4 Youth's Awareness of the Existence of Agricultural Cooperatives

Initial study objective was to determine youth's awareness on the existence of agricultural cooperatives in Kitui County and the extent of their involvement in them. The respondents were asked if they belonged to any cooperative society. Most of the respondents (70.5%) said that they did not belong to cooperative societies. The findings were presented in Figure 4.3.

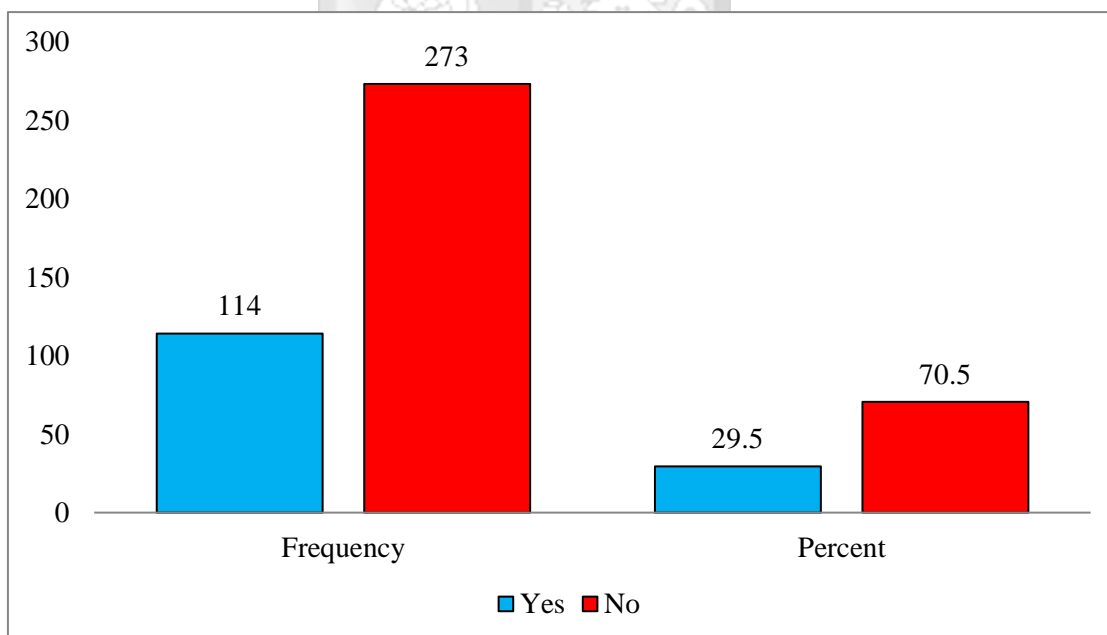


Figure 4.3 Youth's Awareness of the Existence of Agricultural Cooperatives

The foregoing findings were affirmed by the interview participants most of whom said that they were not members of cooperatives. When tasked to illustrate the cooperatives they were part of, most of them said that they belonged to the Mwingi small holders'

cooperative society (20.2%). These were followed by those who belonged to the Mwingi horticulture cooperative society and those who belonged to Kyuso handicraft cooperative society at 18.4% and 14.9% respectively. Those from Mwiwe dairy farmers' cooperative society and Mwingi bee keepers' cooperative society tied at 10.5%. This applied to those from Mwingi farmers' multipurpose cooperative society and Kalanga farmers' cooperative society each at 9.7%. Those from other cooperatives followed at 6.1%. These findings show that the respondents came from various cooperative societies which could present an all-rounded presentation of the study topic. This shows that most youth were aware of the cooperatives in the study area which could motivate them to become members.

Table 4.4 Cooperative Societies

Cooperative	Frequency	Percent
Mwingi small holders cooperative society	23	20.2
Mwingi horticulture cooperative society	21	18.4
Kyuso handicraft cooperative society	17	14.9
Mwiwe dairy farmers cooperative society	12	10.5
Mwingi bee keepers cooperative society	12	10.5
Mwingi farmers multipurpose cooperative society	11	9.7
Kalanga farmers' cooperative society	11	9.7
Others	7	6.1
Total	114	100.00

Participants were required to illustrate when they jointed cooperatives. Most of them opined that they had been members of such organizations for periods ranging between 1 and 12 with membership mean of years being 6 years. This shows that the participants had been member of cooperative societies long enough to understand the subject under investigation.

Table 4.5 Years of Membership

Descriptive Statistics	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Years	387	1.00	12.00	6	2.533

The respondents were asked to indicate their reasons for joining cooperative. Most of them (76.3%) said that they had become members due to the expected benefits. This was followed by those who had followed others (15.8%). The least had done so since it was compulsory to join (5.3%). The least (2.6%) had done so for other reasons such as it was good to belong to a cooperative and potential future benefit. These findings show that expected benefits played a key role in guiding the likelihood of respondent to participate in the study.

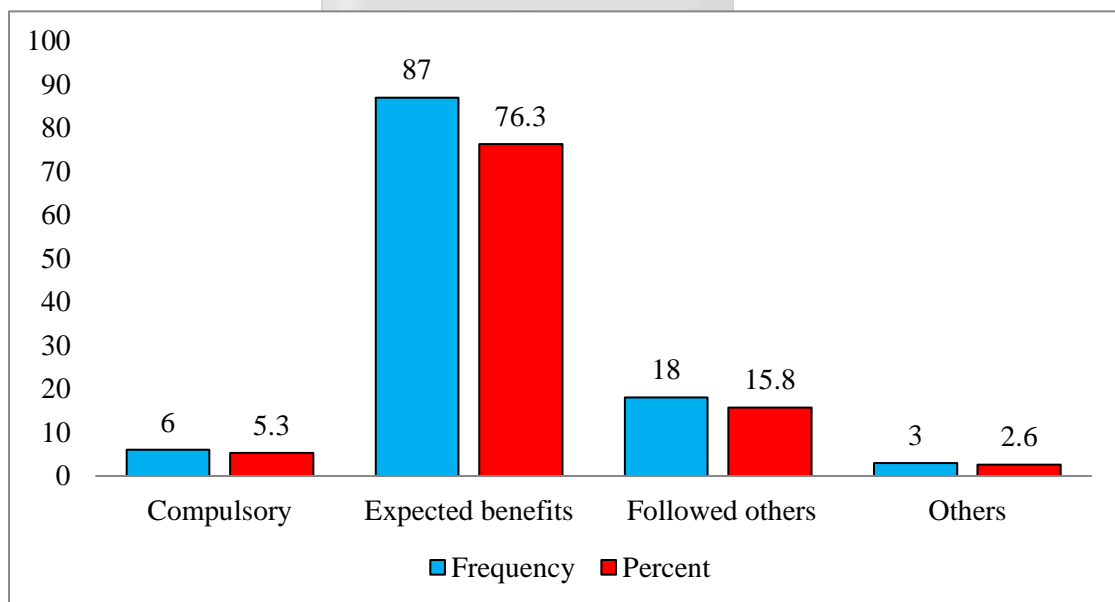


Figure 4.4 Reasons for Joining Cooperatives

4.5 Socio-Demographic Factors Influencing Youth Participation in Cooperatives

The second study objective was to identify the socio-demographic factors affecting youth involvement in the cooperatives. The Levene statistic was used test if awareness level, economic factors and institutional factors affected participation in cooperatives based on various socio-demographic factors. Levene statistics shows that gender did not have statistically significant effects on Youth's awareness on the existence of

agricultural cooperatives in Kitui County ($p>0.05$). The various economic factors influencing youth participation in the cooperatives affected both genders similarly ($p>0.05$). However, gender differences existed ($p<0.05$) in the manner in which institutional factors influenced the involvement of youth in the cooperatives. This could be explained by the fact that different genders are affected by issues such as trust and relationships as well as social groupings which could affect their choice.

Table 4.6 Influence of Gender on Youth Participation in Cooperatives

Homogeneity Test of Variances				
	Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
Youth's awareness on the existence of agricultural cooperatives in Kitui county	1.045	1	385	.307
Economic factors influencing youth participation in the cooperatives	1.946	1	385	.164
Institutional factors influencing the involvement of youth in the cooperatives	10.529	1	385	.001

Levene test shows that there were statistically significant differences in awareness levels of existence of cooperatives based on age ($P<0.05$). There were also differences in impacts of institutional and economic factors on involvement in cooperatives in Kitui County ($p<0.05$) for youth of different ages. This could be due to differences in experiences about the importance of being members of cooperatives among persons of different ages. In this regard, the age of farmers could influence their propensity to join cooperative societies. Results were shown below in Table 4.7.

Table 4.7 Influence of Age on Youth Participation in Cooperatives

	Homogeneity Test of Variances			
	Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
Youth's awareness on the existence of agricultural cooperatives in Kitui county	2.730 ^a	26	358	.000
Economic factors influencing youth participation in the cooperatives	2.496 ^b	26	358	.000
Institutional factors influencing the involvement of youth in the cooperatives	6.173 ^c	26	358	.000

a. Formations indicating one case are ignored in computing the test of homogeneity of variance for Youth's awareness on the existence of agricultural cooperatives in Kitui county.

b. Clusters with only one case are ignored in computing the test of homogeneity of variance for Economic factors influencing youth participation in the cooperatives.

c. Formations having only one case are ignored in computing the test of homogeneity of variance for Institutional factors influencing the involvement of youth in the cooperatives.

Nevertheless, years of schooling did not have statistically significant effects on youth's awareness of existence of agricultural cooperatives in Kitui County ($p > 0.05$). No statistically notable differences were observed in the effects of economic and institutional factors in the participation in cooperatives based on age ($p > 0.05$). This means that irrespective of learning, behaviours towards membership to cooperative societies was similar.

Table 4.8 Influence of Years of Schooling on Youth Participation in Cooperatives

	Test of Homogeneity of Variances			
	Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
Youth's awareness on the existence of agricultural cooperatives in Kitui county	.219	6	380	.971
Economic factors influencing youth participation in the cooperatives	.239	6	380	.963
Institutional factors influencing the involvement of youth in the cooperatives	1.855	6	380	.087

Marital status had statistically significant differences on awareness of the existence of agricultural cooperatives in Kitui County ($p < 0.05$). Statistically notable differences between the effects of economic and institutional factors and participation were observed in cooperatives based on marital statuses ($p < 0.05$). This shows that people of various marital statuses made decisions on how to join cooperatives differently. Family

obligations could thus motivate persons to participate in cooperatives in different ways. Cooperatives should thus leverage on the marital statuses of farmers to enhance membership to cooperatives. These results were illustrated in Table 4.9 below.

Table 4.9 Influence of Marital Status on Youth Participation in Cooperatives

Test of Homogeneity of Variances				
	Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
Youth's awareness on the existence of agricultural cooperatives in Kitui county	6.085	3	383	.000
Economic factors influencing youth participation in the cooperatives	6.753	3	383	.000
Institutional factors influencing the involvement of youth in the cooperatives	21.939	3	383	.000

Levene test also shows that there were also differences in the awareness of cooperatives based on household size ($p < 0.05$). Economic and institutional factors also had different effects on participation in cooperatives in Kitui County for youth from different household sizes ($p < 0.05$ for both variables). This could be due to the fact that families could have different effects on propensity to participate in agricultural cooperatives. These findings were indicated in Table 4.10 below.

Table 4.10 Influence of Family Size on Youth Participation in Cooperatives

Test of Homogeneity of Variances				
	Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
Youth's awareness on the existence of agricultural cooperatives in Kitui county	2.930 ^a	6	379	.008
Economic factors influencing youth participation in the cooperatives	4.417 ^b	6	379	.000
Institutional factors influencing the involvement of youth in the cooperatives	3.842 ^c	6	379	.001

a. Groups with only one case are ignored in computing the test of homogeneity of variance for Youth's awareness on the existence of agricultural cooperatives in Kitui county.

b. Groups with only one case are ignored in computing the test of homogeneity of variance for Economic factors influencing youth participation in the cooperatives.

c. Groups with only one case are ignored in computing the test of homogeneity of variance for Institutional factors influencing the involvement of youth in the cooperatives.

Furthermore, there were also differences in the awareness of cooperatives based on number of dependents ($p < 0.05$). Economic and institutional factors also had different effects on participation in cooperatives in Kitui County for youth with different numbers of dependents ($p < 0.05$ for both variables). This could be due to the fact different levels of burden from dependents could affect the tendency of youth to participate in cooperative societies. Cooperatives could thus be a route for enhancing better livelihoods for families. These results were illustrated in Table 4.11 below.

Table 4.11: Youth Participation in Cooperatives

Test of Homogeneity of Variances				
	Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
Youth's awareness on the existence of agricultural cooperatives in Kitui county	2.822	6	380	.011
Economic factors influencing youth participation in the cooperatives	2.622	6	380	.017
Institutional factors influencing the involvement of youth in the cooperatives	3.988	6	380	.001

4.6 Economic Factors Influencing Youth Participation in the Cooperatives

The third study objective sought to identify the economic factors influencing participation of youth in the cooperatives. Resultant findings are presented in the below section. Firstly, the respondents were asked if the cooperative helped you to get access to selected services or benefits. The findings show the cooperatives had joined cooperatives due to benefits such as improved households' livelihood welfare (36.8%). They had also done so to access credit and input at 19.3% and 17.6% respectively. The fact that SACCOs were important during times of emergency was another important reason (12.3%). Other reasons were minimal burden or risk of access to technical guidance and training as well as the benefit of higher prices at 7.9% and 6.1% respectively. These findings show that associated benefits were crucial motivators of participation in cooperative societies. Result findings were demonstrated in Table 4.12 below.

Table 4.12: Reasons for Participating in

Reason	Frequency	Percent
Improved household's livelihood welfare	42	36.8
Access to credit	22	19.3
Access to input	20	17.6
Crucial in time of emergency	14	12.3
Minimal burden/risk of access to technical guidance and training	9	7.9
Increased prices	7	6.1
Total	114	100.0

Those who were not members of cooperatives were asked to indicate the reasons for their failure to join cooperatives. Most of them opined that they were still thinking about it (41.8%). This was followed by those who said that leadership was bad (17.9%) which could lead to loss of savings. The next important reason was high membership fees and high requirements at 12.4% and 12.1%. Lack of clear understanding about how cooperatives function followed at 11.4%. The remaining 4.4% said that the cooperative was very far from them. These findings show that the most important reasons for not joining cooperatives were indecision, bad leadership in cooperatives and failure to understand the reason for joining cooperatives.

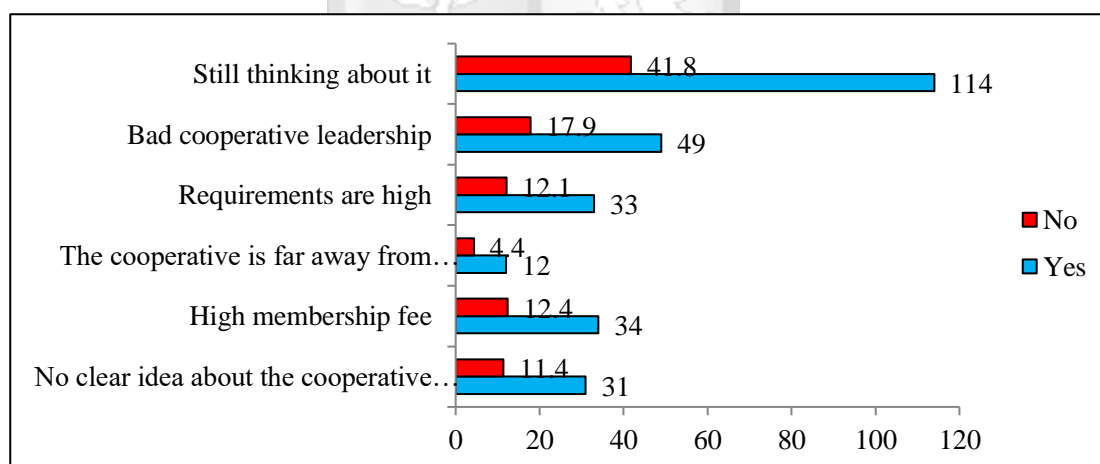


Figure 4.5 Reasons for Not Joining Cooperatives

The respondents were asked if there were any losses, they would associate with not being a member of any cooperative. Most participants (87.3%) responded affirmatively. The reasons given were poor market prices, inability to source for inputs and credit in time as well as lack of support from the cooperatives. The findings were presented in Figure 4.6.

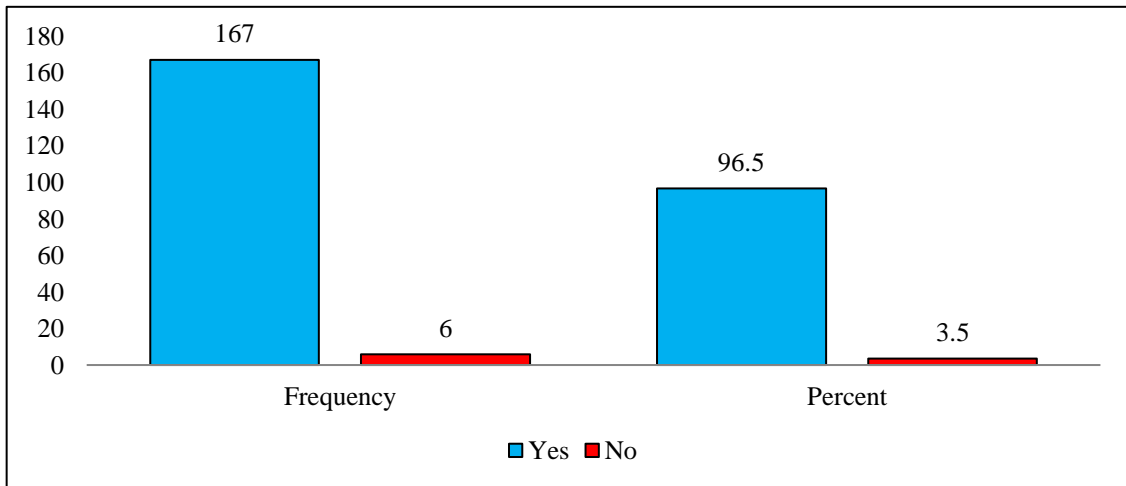


Figure 4.6 Losses of Not being Members

The study went on to evaluate the occupations of the participants. The results as presented in Table 4.13 show that more than half of the respondents were in agriculture (51.2%). This was followed by those who were in business at 28.9%. Those employed were 6.5% while those in other enterprises made up 13.4%. This shows that most of the people were in agriculture which is typical of people living mostly in rural areas. These findings support the premise that farming and agriculture is the foundation of Kenya's economy, contributing directly 24 percent of the annual GDP plus 27 percent in indirect contribution.

Table 4.13 Occupation of Respondents

What is your occupation		
	Frequency	Percent
Business	112	28.9
Employed	25	6.5
Agriculture	198	51.2
Others	52	13.4
Total	387	100.0

The study went on to investigate the agricultural activities practiced by the participants and their own land. Results show that majority of the persons practiced mixed farming on pieces of land averaging 11.4 acres. This was followed by those keeping livestock who were working on pieces of land averaging 7.7 acres. The others were growing

crops on lands averaging 5.3 acres. These findings show that the respondents were involved in numerous economic activities and in large pieces of land. This means that they could be easily in need of credit as shown in Table 4.14.

Table 4.14 Agricultural Activities Practiced

Activity (e.g., Crops, livestock)	Land attributed (acres)			
	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.
Crops	2	16	5.3	5.34
Livestock	5	11	7.7	6.97
Mixed Farming (Crops & Livestock)	3	23	11.4	5.78

The research further sought to find out the main purpose of your agricultural practices. Results as presented in Table 4.15 below indicate that the most of the participants were using the crops for income purposes (81.7%). This was followed by those who did for other purposes such as own food (subsistence farming). The findings further show that those doing so for tradition and leisure were minimal at 14.5% and 2.8% respectively. These findings show that agriculture was mostly motivated by the need to obtain income. This is important since it could motivate farmers to join cooperative societies in pursuit of credit.

Table 4.15 Main Purpose of Your Agricultural Practices

What is the main purpose of your agricultural practices?		
	Frequency	Percent
Tradition	11	2.8
Income	316	81.7
Leisure	4	1.0
Others (specify)	56	14.5
Total	387	100.0

The respondents were asked if they had ever been in need of credit and if such credit was accessible to them. Most of them (80.6%) said that they had been in need of credit. The results concur with the research by Divine (2014) that shows that need for credit affected farmers decision to join cooperatives. However, only 78.3% had access to such credit which agrees. The report that affirms that lack of access to credit was a major

challenge in Kenya. These findings show that the need for credit was not matched with accessibility of credit as shown in Table 4.16 below.

Table 4.16: Need and Accessibility of Credit

Have you ever been in need of credit?			Is credit accessible to you?	
Response	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Yes	312	80.6	84	21.7
No	75	19.4	303	78.3
Total	387	100.0	387	100.0

The researcher sought to evaluate the kinds of credit services available. Findings show that informal credit was more available (72.4%) while formal credit followed at 27.6%. Most of the available informal credit was available from merry-go-rounds (Chamas), table banking, and borrowing from agrovets among others. These findings further affirm that there were major challenges related to lack of access to credit facilities among farmers.

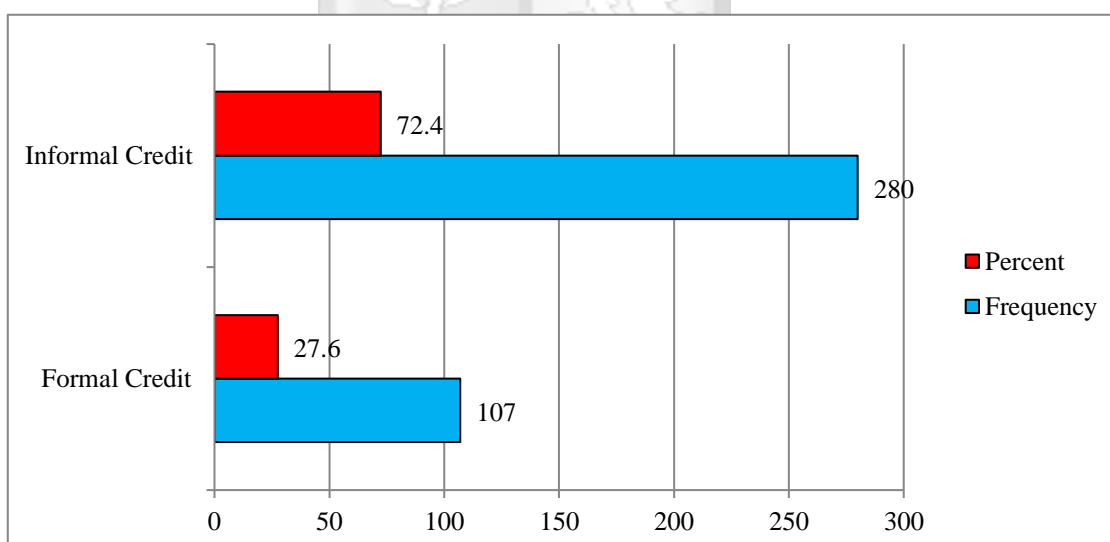


Figure 4.7 Available Credit Services

Participants were tasked to reveal the institutions they accessed credit and the kind of credit so received. The findings show that most of the formal credit was from microfinance institutions (46.9%) followed by cooperatives at 35.4% and banks at 17.7%. For formal credit most of it was from chamas (informal organized groups) and

private enterprises at 60% and 40% respectively. Looking at frequencies, the most preferred source of credit were microfinance institutions (45) followed by cooperatives (34) and chamas (27). The next important groups were banks (18) and private lenders (17). Overall, these findings show that the formal credit was the most preferred. These findings are indicative that access to formal credit was limited in the study area which further affirms findings from the GOK (2017) report.

Table 4.17 Sources of Formal and Informal Credit

Institution	Informal credit		Formal credit	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Cooperatives	0	0.0	34	35.4
Bank	0	0.0	17	17.7
Microfinance	0	0.0	45	46.9
Chamas	27	60.0	0	0.0
Private Enterprises	18	40.0	0	0.0
Total	45	100.0	96	100.0

4.7 Institutional Factors Influencing Youth Participation in the Cooperatives

The fourth study objective was to determine the institutional factors affecting the involvement of youth in the cooperatives. First and foremost, participants were requested to reveal whom they sold their agricultural produce. Most of them (77.5%) said that they sold to traders. These were followed by those who sold to cooperative at 15.8%. The rest (6.7%) sold to others outlets such as friends, family and institutions (schools and organizations among others). These findings show that cooperatives were yet to position themselves as major sales outlets for farmers which signify low level of uptake of cooperative services irrespective of the advantages associated with cooperatives. The findings were presented in Figure 4.8.

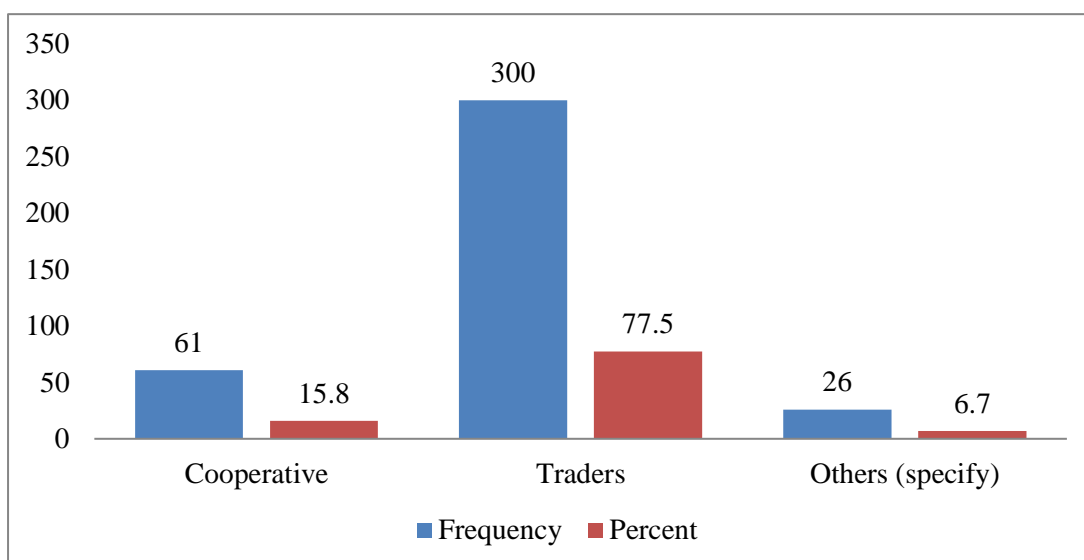


Figure 4.8 Places Traders Sold Produce

The study went on to find out where farmers got market information from. Results shown in Table 4.18 below illustrate that the more than half of the farmers (51.2%) got market information from the local market. This was followed by those who got information from neighbours and those who got it from newspapers at 17.3% and 10.1% respectively. Those who got information from radio/TV and those who got from cooperatives were 10.1% and 8% respectively. The least got information from social media and community leaders at 3.6% and 2.1% respectively. Cooperatives were yet to position themselves as good sources of market information. This could limit membership as well as their appeal as sales outlets.

Table 4.18 Source of Market Information

Source	Frequency	Percent
Local market	198	51.2
Neighbours	67	17.3
Newspapers	39	10.1
Radio/TV	31	8
Cooperative	30	7.8
Social media	14	3.6
Community leaders	8	2.1
Total	387	100

Participants were requested to disclose the quantities of produce they produced and how much they made in average in 2021 and 2022. The findings show that the most produced crops were maize and beans with an average of 1000 kg and 500 kg being produced. Due to drought and scanty rains, most of maize fetched 44,000 Kenya shillings (KES) in the previous year (2021) and 41,000 KES (2022). The amount of cowpeas produced were 430Kg, fetching 43,000 KES and 41000 KES in 2021 and 2022 respectively. The farmers also made income from an average of 8 cows, 15 goats, 12 sheep and 45 chickens.

The amount of money produced from cows was 240,000 KES and 228,000 in 2021 and 2022. The amount from goats was 30000 KES and 26,000 KES in 2021 and 2022 respectively. For sheep, the amount was 25,000 KES and 24,000 KES respectively. From chicken, the farmers obtained 9000 KES and 8,700 KES in 2021 and 2022. Results as presented in Table 4.19 below illustrate that farmers obtained erratic amount of income from farmers. This was mostly due to bad prices and erratic rainfall among others. Cooperatives could however play critical roles in boosting the prices associated with sale of crops.

Table 4.19 Quantity Produced and Amount Fetched from Crops

Item(crop or livestock)	Average Quantity produced	Amount fetched per farmer	
		Last year Mean (Ksh)	This year Mean (Ksh)
Maize (kilos)	1000	44,000	41,000
Beans (kilos)	500	33,000	31,000
Cowpeas	430	43,000	41,000
Cows (No.)	8	240,000	228,000
Goats (No.)	15	30,000	26,000
Sheep (No.)	12	25,000	24,000
Chicken (number)	45	9,000	8,700

The respondents were asked how far they travelled to access their preferred buyer. The findings show that the farthest place to get to was to cooperatives at 9.4 km. This was followed by distance to traders (3.8 km). Other buyers were nearer to reach since they

were less than 2 kms away (1.7km) away and some came to the farms to buy. These findings were presented in Table 4.20. These findings show that the collection points of cooperatives were the farthest. This could affect the propensity of farmers to sell to cooperatives. It was important for them to create more collection points for enhanced ease of distribution.

Table 4.20 Distanced to Preferred Buyers

Buyer	Distance (km) Mean	Std. Dev.
The cooperative	9.4	3.47
The traders	3.8	1.15
Other buyers	1.7	1.63

The study went on to find out the level to which selected factors influenced their preferred buyers. This was on a scale of 1 to 3 where: 1= small extent; 2= moderate extend; 3= large extent. The findings show that the most important reasons for choosing cooperatives were payment date, trust, relationships and other reasons (M=3). This was followed by price, credit, distance, quality and risk of being cheated (M=2). Results were demonstrated in Table 4.21 below.

Table 4.21: Cooperative

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Payment date	387	2.00	3.00	3	0.42
Trust	387	1.00	3.00	3	0.53
Relationship	387	2.00	3.00	3	0.42
Others	387	2.00	3.00	3	0.45
Price	387	1.00	3.00	2	0.64
Credit	387	1.00	3.00	2	0.65
Distance	387	1.00	3.00	2	0.75
Quality	387	1.00	3.00	2	0.81
Risk of being cheated	387	1.00	3.00	2	0.70

Regarding traders, the findings went on to show payment date, trust, price, relationships, credit, distance and quality and risk of being cheated all of them at M=3. Other factors were the least (M=2). Results were depicted in Table 4.22.

Table 4.22 Other Traders

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Payment date	387	2	3	3	0.44
Trust	387	2	3	3	0.44
Credit	387	1	3	3	0.56
Distance	387	1	3	3	0.58
Quality	387	1	3	3	0.57
Risk of being cheated	387	1	3	3	0.59
Price	387	1	3	2	0.68
Relationship	387	1	3	2	0.61
Others	387	1	3	2	0.83

For other buyers, the most important factors were payment date, relationship, credit and distance (M=3). These findings were trust, price, quality, risk of being cheated and others (M=2). These findings show that the most important factors for the cooperatives, traders and other buyers were payment date, trust and relationships.

Table 4.23: Others

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Payment date	387	2	3	3	0.44
Relationship	387	1	3	3	0.57
Credit	387	1	3	3	0.59
Distance	387	1	3	3	0.45
Trust	387	1	3	2	0.68
Price	387	1	3	2	0.62
Quality	387	1	3	2	0.68
Risk of being cheated	387	1	3	2	0.63
Others	387	1	3	2	0.64

4.8 Inferential Statistics

Pearson and regression analyses were undertaken to examine the interrelations between the study variables. The findings were presented in the following sections.

4.8.1 Correlation between Youth Awareness and Participation in Cooperative Societies

Pearson correlation was done to examine relations between the various variables and the dependent variable. Results show that there were positive correlations between

participation of youth in agricultural cooperatives (the dependent variable) and youth's awareness on the existence of agricultural cooperatives in Kitui County ($r=0.716$, $p<0.05$). These findings are illustrated in Table 4.24 below.

Table 4.24: Correlation between Youth Awareness and Participation in Cooperative Societies

Correlations		Participation of youth in agricultural cooperatives
Youth's awareness on the existence of agricultural cooperatives in Kitui county	Pearson Correlation	.716**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	387

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

4.8.2 Correlation between Demographic Factors and Youth Participation in Cooperative Societies

Pearson correlation was done to examine relations between the various demographic variables and the dependent variable. The findings show that only marital status had positive correlation with participation of youth in agricultural cooperatives (the dependent variable) ($r=-0.129$, $p<0.05$). The other factors sex, age (years), years of learning, number of household members and number of dependents did not have statistically significant correlation with participation in agricultural cooperative ($r=-0.129$, $p>0.05$). The findings were presented in Table 4.25.

Table 4.25: Correlation between Demographic Factors and Youth Participation in Cooperative Societies

Correlations		Participation of youth in agricultural cooperatives
Sex	Pearson Correlation	-.002
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.963
	N	387
Age (Years)	Pearson Correlation	-.047
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.361
	N	387
Years of Learning	Pearson Correlation	.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.996
	N	387
Marital Status	Pearson Correlation	-.129*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.011
	N	387
Number of Household Members	Pearson Correlation	-.017
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.733
	N	387
Number of Dependents	Pearson Correlation	.094
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.064
	N	387

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The findings from regression analysis show that only number of household members and number of dependents ($p < 0.05$) affected youth participation in cooperative societies.

4.8.3 Correlation between Economic Factors and Youth Participation in Cooperatives

Pearson correlation was done to examine relations between the various variables and the dependent variable. Results show that there were positive correlations between Participation of youth in agricultural cooperatives (the dependent variable) and; economic factors influencing youth participation in the cooperatives ($r = 0.883$, $p < 0.05$). As such, the economic factors affected the membership of the youth to cooperatives. These findings are illustrated in Table 4.26 below.

Table 4.26: Correlation between Economic Factors and Youth Participation in Cooperatives

Correlations		Participation of youth in agricultural cooperatives
Economic factors influencing youth participation in the cooperatives	Pearson Correlation	.883**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	387

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The findings from regression analysis show that economic factors influenced the involvement of youth in the cooperatives ($r=0.883$, $p<0.05$). This buttresses the findings from Pearson correlation.

4.8.4 Correlation between Institutional Factors and Youth Participation in Cooperatives

Pearson correlation show that there were positive correlations between participation of youth in agricultural cooperatives (the dependent variable) and; institutional factors ($r=0.729$, $p<0.05$). These findings are illustrated in Table 4.27 below.

Table 4.27: Correlation between Institutional Factors and Youth Participation in Cooperatives

Correlations		Participation of youth in agricultural cooperatives
Institutional factors influencing the involvement of youth in the cooperatives.	Pearson Correlation	.729**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	387

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Regression analysis further showed that institutional factors had statistically significant correlation with involvement of youth in the cooperatives ($p<0.05$). This means that institution related attributes could influence the propensity of respondents to join cooperative societies.

4.8.5 Regression For all Factors

The study sought to examine the level to which participation in agricultural cooperatives could be predicted by the independent variables. Model summary as show in Table 4.28 shows that the independent variables jointly could explain 82.9% of the variability in participation of youth in agricultural cooperatives. The model was considered very strong.

Table 4.28 Model Summary

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.910 ^a	.829	.825	.41954

a. Predictors: (Constant), Institutional factors influencing the involvement of youth in the cooperatives, Years of Learning, Number of Household Members, Marital Status, Sex, Age (Years), Economic factors influencing youth participation in the cooperatives, Youth's awareness on the existence of agricultural cooperatives in Kitui county, Number of Dependents

Analysis of variance as shown in Table 4.29 shows that all the independent variables could statistically and significantly predict participation of youth in agricultural cooperatives ($F=202.809$, $P<0.05$). The study also carried out t-test to examine the relationship between each independent variable and participation in agricultural cooperatives.

Table 4.29 Analysis of Variance

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	321.276	9	35.697	202.809	.000 ^b
	Residual	66.357	377	.176		
	Total	387.633	386			

a. Dependent Variable: Participation of youth in agricultural cooperatives

b. Predictors: (Constant), Institutional factors influencing the involvement of youth in the cooperatives, Years of Learning, Number of Household Members, Marital Status, Sex, Age (Years), Economic factors influencing youth participation in the cooperatives, Youth's awareness on the existence of agricultural cooperatives in Kitui county, Number of Dependents

Table 4.30 presents regression coefficients. The findings show that none of the demographic factors (sex, age, and years of learning and marital status) could statistically significantly predict participation of youth in agricultural cooperatives ($p > 0.05$). However, number of household members and number of dependents did ($p < 0.05$). This shows that the obligations of the youth at family level affected their tendency to participate in agricultural cooperatives which agrees with Ifenkwe (2012) who pointed out that household size influenced cooperative membership by farmers. Furthermore, the study established that economic factors and institutional factors influenced the involvement of youth in the cooperatives ($p < 0.05$). However, awareness of the existence of agricultural cooperatives did not influence the participation of the youth in such cooperatives ($p < 0.05$).

Table 4.30 Regression Coefficients

Model	Coefficients ^a			t	Sig.
	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	.116	.261		.443	.658
Sex	.009	.044	.005	.214	.831
Age (Years)	.001	.002	.008	.369	.712
Years of Learning	.002	.008	.004	.185	.853
Marital Status	-.014	.026	-.011	-.531	.596
Number of Household Members	-.307	.063	-.470	-4.891	.000
Number of Dependents	.316	.065	.469	4.849	.000
Youth's awareness on the existence of agricultural cooperatives in Kitui county	.145	.114	.087	1.264	.207
1 Economic factors influencing youth participation in the cooperatives	.784	.038	.645	20.438	.000
Institutional factors influencing the involvement of youth in the cooperatives	.310	.109	.197	2.837	.005

a. Dependent Variable: Participation of youth in agricultural cooperatives

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSIONS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This section discusses the summary which concurs with the objectives of the study. It also presents conclusions of the study. This chapter also illustrates the recommendations as well as fields for further study.

5.2 Summary of the Findings

5.2.1 Youth's Awareness of the Existence of Agricultural Cooperatives

Initial study objective was to determine youth's awareness on the existence of agricultural cooperatives in Kitui County and the extent of their involvement in them. The respondents were asked if they belonged to any cooperative society. Most of the respondents said that they did not belong to cooperative societies. This shows that there was low level of membership to cooperatives which agrees with the findings by Fischer (2011) who established that there was low level of membership to cooperative societies in Kenya among the youth despite numerous efforts to foster the success of these groups.

The foregoing findings were affirmed by the interview participants most of whom said that they were not members of cooperatives. When tasked to illustrate the cooperatives they were part of, these findings show that the respondents came from various cooperative societies which could present an all-rounded presentation of the study topic. This shows that most youth were aware of the cooperatives in the study area which could motivate them to become members. These findings corroborate the study by Gashaw and Kibret (2018) that linked awareness to farmers' cooperative membership.

Participants were required to illustrate when they jointed cooperatives. Most of them opined that they had been members of such organizations for periods ranging between 1 and 12 with membership mean of years being 6 years. This shows that the participants had been member of cooperative societies long enough to understand the subject under investigation. These findings align with the study by Julien and Brunelle (2017) that

underlines the importance of time in organization in understanding its operations and attributes.

The respondents were asked to indicate their reasons for joining cooperative. Most of them said that they had become members due to the expected benefits. This was followed by those who had followed others. The least had done so since it was compulsory to join and those who did so for other reasons. These findings agree with Fisher (2011) who underlines the importance of benefits as a motivating factor for participation in cooperatives.

5.2.2 Socio-Demographic Factors Influencing Youth Participation in Cooperatives

The second study objective was to identify the socio-demographic factors affecting youth involvement in the cooperatives. The Levene statistic was used test if awareness level, economic factors and institutional factors affected participation in cooperatives based on various socio-demographic factors. Levene statistics shows that gender did not have statistically significant effects on Youth's awareness on the existence of agricultural cooperatives in Kitui County. The various economic factors influencing youth participation in the cooperatives affected both genders similarly. However, gender differences existed in the manner in which institutional factors influenced the involvement of youth in the cooperatives. This could be explained by the fact that different genders are affected by issues such as trust and relationships as well as social groupings which could affect their choice. These findings partially align with the study by Jaafar et al. (2017) who posited that gender, enormously influencing respondents on whether to join cooperatives or not.

Levene test shows that there were statistically significant differences in awareness levels of existence of cooperatives based on age. There were also differences in impacts of institutional and economic factors on involvement in cooperatives in Kitui County for youth of different ages. This could be due to differences in experiences about the importance of being members of cooperatives among persons of different ages. These findings corroborate a study by Divine (2014) which posits that household leader age was a significant factor statistically in influencing membership of farmers in the agriculture cooperative. In this regard, the age of farmers could influence their propensity to join cooperative societies.

Nevertheless, years of schooling did not have statistically significant effects on youth's awareness of existence of agricultural cooperatives in Kitui County. No statistically notable differences were observed in the effects of economic and institutional factors in the participation in cooperatives based on age. This means that irrespective of learning, behaviours towards membership to cooperative societies was similar. These findings disagree with the study by Selhausen (2016) that linked education to adoption of an agricultural cooperative.

Marital status had statistically significant differences on awareness of the existence of agricultural cooperatives in Kitui County. Statistically notable differences between the effects of economic and institutional factors and participation were observed in cooperatives based on marital statuses. This shows that people of various marital statuses made decisions on how to join cooperatives differently. Family obligations could thus motivate persons to participate in cooperatives in different ways. These findings buttress those by Selhausen (2016) that shows that marital status did influence a farmer's resolution to adopt an agricultural cooperative. Cooperatives should thus leverage on the marital statuses of farmers to enhance membership to cooperatives.

Levene test also shows that there were also differences in the awareness of cooperatives based on household size. Economic and institutional factors also had different effects on participation in cooperatives in Kitui County for youth from different household sizes. This could be due to the fact that families could have different effects on propensity to participate in agricultural cooperatives. Ifenkwe (2012) also found that income household size influenced cooperative membership by farmers which corroborates the findings of this study.

Furthermore, there were also differences in the awareness of cooperatives based on number of dependents. Economic and institutional factors also had different effects on participation in cooperatives in Kitui County for youth with different numbers of dependents. This could be due to the fact different levels of burden from dependents could affect the tendency of youth to participate in cooperative societies. These findings align with the findings which show that family size can influence access to cooperative

societies as posited by Ifenkwe (2012). Cooperatives could thus be a route for enhancing better livelihoods for families.

Pearson correlation was done to examine relations between the various demographic variables and the dependent variable. The findings show that only marital status had positive correlation with participation of youth in agricultural cooperatives (the dependent variable). The other factors sex, age (years), years of learning, number of household members and number of dependents did not have statistically significant correlation with participation in agricultural cooperative. These findings partially agree with the study by Meier (2016) that shows that individual characteristics marital status influenced a farmer's resolution to adopt an agricultural cooperative. The findings from regression analysis show that only number of household members and number of dependents affected youth participation in cooperative societies. These findings further agree with the study by Ifenkwe (2012) who pointed out that household size influenced cooperative membership by farmers.

5.2.3 Economic Factors Influencing Youth Participation in the Cooperatives

The third study objective sought to identify the economic factors influencing participation of youth in the cooperatives. Resultant findings are presented in the below section. Firstly, the respondents were asked if the cooperative helped you to get access to selected services or benefits. The findings show the cooperatives had joined cooperatives due to benefits such as improved households' livelihood welfare. They had also done so to access credit and input. The fact that SACCOs were important during times of emergency was another important reason. Other reasons were minimal burden or risk of access to technical guidance and training as well as the benefit of higher prices. These findings show that associated benefits were crucial motivators of participation in cooperative societies. The study also agrees with the study by Divine (2014) that show that access to credit was an important motivating factor in access to credit.

Those who were not members of cooperatives were asked to indicate the reasons for their failure to join cooperatives. Most of them opined that they were still thinking about it. This was followed by those who said that leadership was bad which could lead to loss of savings. The next important reason was high membership fees and high

requirements. Lack of clear understanding about how cooperatives function followed. The other respondents said that the cooperative was very far from them. These findings show that the most important reasons for not joining cooperatives were indecision, bad leadership in cooperatives and failure to understand the reason for joining cooperatives. This is in line with the study by North (1990) that posits that institutional limitations could thwart participation in cooperatives.

The respondents were asked if there were any losses, they would associate with not being a member of any cooperative. Most participants responded affirmatively. The reasons given were poor market prices, inability to source for inputs and credit in time as well as lack of support from the cooperatives. This is in line with the study by Wollni and Zeller (2007) that shows that prices as well as the leverage created by cooperatives affected membership to cooperatives.

The study went on to evaluate the occupations of the participants. The results show that more than half of the respondents were in agriculture. This was followed by those who were in business. The remaining respondents were in either other enterprises or employed. This shows that most of the people were in agriculture which is typical of people living mostly in rural areas. These findings support the premise that farming and agriculture is the foundation of Kenya's economy, contributing directly 24 percent of the annual GDP plus 27 percent in indirect contribution (ASDS, 2010-2020).

The study went on to investigate the agricultural activities practiced by the participants and their own land. Results show that majority of the persons practiced mixed farming on pieces of land averaging 11.4 acres. This was followed by those keeping livestock who were working on pieces of land averaging 7.7 acres. The others were growing crops on lands averaging 5.3 acres. These findings show that the respondents were involved in numerous economic activities and in large pieces of land. This means that they could be easily in need of credit. These findings are in line with a report by KNBS (2019) that affirms that mixed farming as well as other farming methods is the agricultural mainstays in Kitui County.

The research further sought to find out the main purpose of your agricultural practices. Results indicate that the most of the participants were using the crops for income

purposes. These findings are in line with those by Ifenkwe (2012) that show that income was an important factor influencing cooperative membership by farmers. This was followed by those who did for other purposes such as own food (subsistence farming). These findings agree with Karaya et al. (2013) that illustrated that food security in households is largely and positively influenced by participation of women in development groups such as cooperatives. The findings further show that those doing so for tradition and leisure were minimal. These findings show that agriculture was mostly motivated by the need to obtain income. This is important since it could motivate farmers to join cooperative societies in pursuit of credit.

The respondents were asked if they had ever been in need of credit and if such credit was accessible to them. Most of them said that they had been in need of credit. The results concur with the research by Divine (2014) that shows that need for credit affected farmers decision to join cooperatives. However, not all of them had access to such credit which agrees with a GOK (2017) report that affirms that lack of access to credit was a major challenge in Kenya. These findings show that the need for credit was not matched with accessibility of credit.

The researcher sought to evaluate the kinds of credit services available. Findings show that informal credit was more available while formal credit followed. Most of the available informal credit was available from merry-go-rounds (Chamas), table banking, and borrowing from agrovets among others. These findings further affirm that there were major challenges related to lack of access to credit facilities (GOK, 2017) among farmers.

Participants were tasked to reveal the institutions they accessed credit and the kind of credit so received. The findings show that most of the formal credit was from microfinance institutions followed by cooperatives. For formal credit most of it was from chamas (informal organized groups) and private enterprises. Looking at frequencies, the most preferred source of credit were microfinance institutions followed by cooperatives and chamas. The next important groups were banks) and private lenders. Overall, these findings show that the formal credit was the most preferred. These findings are indicative that access to formal credit was limited in the study area which further affirms findings from the GOK (2017) report.

5.2.4 Institutional Factors Influencing the Involvement of Youth in the Cooperatives

The fourth study objective was to determine the institutional factors affecting the involvement of youth in the cooperatives. First and foremost, participants were requested to reveal whom they sold their agricultural produce. Most of them sold to traders. These were followed by those who sold to cooperative. The rest sold to others outlets such a friends, family and institutions (schools and organizations among others). These findings show that cooperatives were yet to position themselves as major sales outlets for farmers which signify low level of uptake of cooperative services irrespective of the advantages associated with cooperatives as posited by Fischer (2011).

The study went on to find out where farmers got market information from. Results illustrate that the more than half of the farmers got market information from the local market. This was followed by those who got information from neighbours and those who got it from newspapers. Those who got information from radio/TV and those who got from cooperatives followed. The least got information from social media and community leaders. Cooperatives were yet to position themselves as good sources of market information as posited by Divine (2014). This could limit membership as well as their appeal as sales outlets.

Results illustrate that farmers obtained erratic amount of income from agricultural activities. This was mostly due to bad prices and erratic rainfall among others. Cooperatives could however play critical roles in boosting the prices associated with sale of crops as pointed out by Kirui and Njiraini (2013).

The respondents were asked how far the travelled to access their preferred buyer. The findings show that the farthest place to get to was to cooperatives at 9.4 km. This was followed by distance to traders (3.8 km). Other buyers were nearer to reach since they were less than 2 kms away (1.7km) away and some came to the farms to buy. These findings show that the collection points of cooperatives were the farthest. This could affect the propensity of farmers to sell to cooperatives as pointed out by Divine (2014) who found out that distance was a statistically significant factors influencing

membership of farmers in the agriculture cooperative. It was important for them to create more collection points for enhanced ease of distribution.

The study went on to find out the level to which selected factors influenced their preferred buyers. The findings show that the most important reasons for choosing cooperatives were payment date, trust, relationships and other reasons. This was followed by price, credit, distance, quality and risk of being cheated. These results corroborate the findings by Gashaw and Kibret (2018), Divine (2014), Nugusse et al. (2013) as well as Gashaw and Kibret (2018) that underline the importance of these factors in decision to join cooperatives.

Regarding traders, the findings went on to show payment date, trust, price, relationships, credit, distance and quality and risk of being cheated all of them. Other factors were the least. These results agree with a study by Gashaw and Kibret (2018) as well as Divine (2014) that shows the important of trust and relationships on membership to cooperatives.

For other buyers, the most important factors were payment date, relationship, credit and distance. These findings were trust, price, quality, risk of being cheated and others. These findings show that the most important factors for the cooperatives, traders and other buyers were payment date, trust and relationships. These findings show that relationships were important predictors of whether to join cooperatives or not as posited by Gashaw and Kibret (2018) and Divine (2014) among others.

Pearson correlation was done to examine relations between the various variables and the dependent variable. Results show that there were positive correlations between participation of youth in agricultural cooperatives (the dependent variable) and youth's awareness on the existence of agricultural cooperatives in Kitui County. These findings agree with the study by Divine (2017) that show that lack of awareness was an important determinant of participation of youth in agricultural cooperatives.

These findings align with the study by Divine (2019) members which shows that economic factors influence membership in cooperative societies. These findings also

agree with the study by North (2019) that shows that institutional factors influence membership to cooperative societies. However, awareness of the existence of agricultural cooperatives did not influence the participation of the youth in such cooperatives.

Pearson correlation was done to examine relations between the various variables and the dependent variable. Results show that there were positive correlations between Participation of youth in agricultural cooperatives (the dependent variable) and; economic factors influencing youth participation in the cooperatives. As such, the economic factors (Wollni & Zeller, 2007) affected the membership of the youth to cooperatives. The findings from regression analysis show that economic factors influenced the involvement of youth in the cooperatives.

Pearson correlation shows that there were positive correlations between participation of youth in agricultural cooperatives (the dependent variable) and; institutional factors. As such, the institutional factors (Wollni & Zeller, 2007) affected the membership of the youth to cooperatives. Regression analysis further showed that institutional factors had statistically significant correlation with involvement of youth in the cooperatives. These findings also agree with the study by North (2019) that shows that institutional factors influence membership to cooperative societies.

5.3 Conclusion

The factors under investigation have significant impact on youth participation in the cooperatives. This was demonstrated by positive and statistically significant relationship between participation of youth in agricultural cooperatives (the dependent variable) and youth's awareness on the existence of agricultural cooperatives in Kitui County ($r=0.716$, $p<0.05$); economic factors influencing youth participation in the cooperatives ($r=0.883$, $p<0.05$) and institutional factors influencing the involvement of youth in the cooperatives ($r=0.729$, $p<0.05$). It can thus be summarised that the level to which the youth were aware about cooperatives, perceived that they could obtained economic benefits as well as the institutional attributes of cooperatives affected the membership of the youth to cooperatives. This participation was also segmented differently youth of different socio-demographic characteristics. Enhancing the

participation of the youth should thus take cognizance of these factors affecting their participation.

5.4 Recommendations

Based on the literature reviewed, the theoretical foundation of this study as well as the findings obtained, the following recommendations were made.

5.4.1 Practice Recommendations

It is imperative for agricultural cooperatives to come up with strong marketing interventions that enhance youth awareness of cooperative societies. It is also important to enhance the economic benefits accrued through cooperatives such as better prices, access to inputs and credit in addition to extension services to motivate more youth to join cooperatives. Cooperative institutions should also enhance customer relations to spur trust and good rapport with the youth so as to increase membership. Cooperatives should also partner with other institutions to enhance access to credit among other benefits. There should be effort by cooperatives to enhance collaboration with county and national governments to enhance extension services about the importance of joining cooperative societies.

5.4.2 Policy Recommendations

The research recommends the requirement for mechanisms and policies to be in place to continuously reform cooperatives to enhance their appeal to the youth. Policies on the adoption of modern internet-based communication mechanisms to reach the youth more should be formulated. Policies on how to strategically position cooperatives to changing market dynamics should also be put in place. Policies should also be put in place to expand financing of cooperative societies to increase the amount of funding available to farmers.

5.5 Recommendations for Further Research

Based on the study results, it is pertinent to initiate research that compares cooperatives based on various sectors. Studies focused on other parts of the Kenya should also be explored for comparative purposes. In-depth singular studies on each of the variables under investigation in this current study would also suffice.

5.6 Study Limitations

Various limitations were met in this research. One of them was the reimbursement mentality where participants want to be paid. This limitation was overcome through confiding with the participants that the results were meant for academic purposes only. Some of the participants were unwilling to provide information with some not filling the questionnaires completely. This limitation was overcome by creating sufficient time to collect data. More questionnaires were also deployed to deal with attrition.



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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: LETTER TO RESPONDENT

Dear respondent,

I am a student at Strathmore University Business School Pursuing Master of Management in Agribusiness. I am undertaking a research titled: “factors influencing youth participation in agricultural cooperatives in the semi- arid areas of Kenya: case study of mwingi, Kitui county as part of my post graduate degree requirements. You have been identified as one of the respondents for this study. Kindly provide honest responses to the items in this questionnaire. The findings of this study will be purely for academic purposes and will be treated in strict confidence. Your answers will be confidential and used exclusively for this research. You do not have to give your name.



APPENDIX II: QUESTIONNAIRE

This questionnaire is designed to collect data to establish factors influencing youth participation in agricultural cooperatives in Kitui County, Kenya. The data shall be used for academic purpose only and it will be treated with the confidentiality it deserves. The respondents are highly encouraged and persuaded to respond to the statements in this questionnaire in the most truthful and objective way possible. Your participation in facilitating this study will be highly appreciated.

Socio-demographic factors

1. Name (optional):
2. Sex : Male [] Female []
3. Age:
4. Marital status: Single [] Married [] Others(specify) []
5. Years of education?
6. Number of household members?
7. Number of dependents?

Economic factors

8. Occupation
 - Business []
 - Employed []
 - Agriculture []
 - Others(specify)
9. What agricultural activities do you practice and their respective land

No.	Activity(e.g. Crops, livestock)	Land attributed(acres)
1		
2		
3		
4		

10. What is the main purpose of your agricultural practices?
 - Tradition

- Income []
 - Leisure []
 - Others(specify) []
11. Have you ever been in need of credit? []
12. Is credit accessible to you?
- Yes [] No []
13. What kind of credit services is available?
- Formal Credit: [] Informal: []

14. From which financial institution do you receive credit

Institution	Informal credit	Formal credit
	♥ ♥ ♥	

Institutional factors

15. Are you a member of any cooperative society
- Yes [] No []
16. To whom do you sell your agricultural produce
- Cooperative []
 - Traders []
 - Others(specify) []

17. Where do you get market information?

- Neighbours []
- Local market []
- Newspapers []
- Radio/TV []
- Social media []
- Cooperative []
- Community leaders []
- Government agents []
- Others(specify) []

18. What quantities do you produce per year and how much do you make in average?

no.	Item(crop or livestock)	Quantity produced	Amount fetched	
			Last year	This year
1				
2				
3				
4				

19. How far do you travel to access your preferred buyer?

- The cooperative []
- The traders []
- Other buyers []

20. Do these factors influence your preferred buyer

The cooperative

	To a small extend	To a moderate extend	To a large extend
Payment date			
Trust			
Price			
Relationship			
Credit			
Distance			
Quality			
Risk of being cheated			
Others			

Traders

	To a small extend	To a moderate extend	To a large extend
Payment date			
Trust			
Price			
Relationship			
Credit			
Distance			
Quality			
Risk of being cheated			
Others			

Other buyers(specify)

	To a small extend	To a moderate extend	To a large extend
Payment date			
Trust			
Price			
Relationship			
Credit			
Distance			
Quality			
Risk of being cheated			
Others			

APPENDIX III: INTERVIEW GUIDE

21. Do you belong to any cooperative?

Yes [] No []

22. Which cooperative do you belong to?

- I. Mwingi small holders cooperative society
- II. Kyuso handicraft cooperative society
- III. Mwiwe dairy farmers cooperative society
- IV. Mwingi horticulture cooperative society
- V. Mwingi bee keepers cooperative society
- VI. Mwingi farmers multipurpose cooperative society
- VII. Kalanga farmers' cooperative society
- VIII. Others (specify)

23. When did you join the cooperative? []

24. Why did you join the cooperative? []

- Compulsory []
- Expected benefits []
- Followed others []
- Others(specify) []

25. Has the cooperative helped you to get access to any of the following services or benefits?

- Improved households livelihood welfare []
- Important in time of emergency []
- Reduced burden/risk of access to technical advice and training []
- Higher prices []
- Access to input []
- Access to credit []
- Other (specify) []

Non-members

26. What is the reason for not joining the cooperative

- No real benefits []
- No clear idea about the cooperative function []
- High membership fee []
- The cooperative is far away from household home []


- Requirements are high []
- Bad cooperative leadership []
- Still thinking about it []
- Other (specify) []


27. Are there any losses you would associate with not being a member of any cooperative?

- Yes (specify) []
- No. []




APPENDIX IV: RESEARCH PERMIT


REPUBLIC OF KENYA


**NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR
SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION**

RefNo: **758248** Date of Issue: **25/April/2022**

RESEARCH LICENSE




This is to Certify that Miss.. FLORENCE MAWIA KAVINDU of Strathmore University, has been licensed to conduct research in Kitui on the topic: FACTORS INFLUENCING YOUTH PARTICIPATION IN AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVES IN THE SEMI-ARID AREAS OF KENYA for the period ending : 25/April/2023.

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APPENDIX V: ETHICAL LETTER

RHInn0 Ethics - SU-IERC1346/22 - 1 of 1 - Date Issued: 2022-07-05

Strathmore University Institutional Scientific and Ethical Review Committee (SU-ISERC)



Final Decision

This is to certify that the application for ethics clearance submitted by:

Principal Investigator: Ms. KAVINDU, FLORENCE MAWIA

Reference number: SU-IERC1346/22

For Study: ""

Was reviewed and received the following status: ""done""

The SU-ISERC wishes you all the best with this research understanding, may it bring social value.

05 July 2022 12:31:24

A solid dark blue rectangular bar redacts the signature area at the bottom of the letter.

FACTORS INFLUENCING YOUTH PARTICIPATION IN AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVES IN THE SEMI- ARID AREAS OF KENYA A CASE STUDY OF MWINGI, KITUI COUNTY

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