



Gender Representation and Decision-Making Process in Deposit Taking SACCOs in Uasin Gishu County, Kenya

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Abstract: *The proposition of this paper is that gender representation is the gist for meaningful development in a country. In this paper we analyzed the effect of gender representation on decision making process in deposit taking Saccos in Uasin Gishu County, Kenya. We argue that despite gender representation being an important aspect in the growth of Saccos, it has been given a low profile in the management of Saccos, thus impacting negatively their growth and achievement. The study used cross-sectional research design and targeted 11 managers and 867 delegates. A sample size of 266 delegates and 11 managers was used. Simple random sampling was used to select delegates, while purposive sampling was used to select the managers. Questionnaires and interview guides were used to collect both quantitative and qualitative. The quantitative data was analyzed by SPSS (version 25) and the findings were presented using frequencies and percentages. Qualitative data was analyzed descriptively and presented in narrations and quotations. The study found that there was a significant positive correlation between gender representation and decision-making in deposit taking Saccos ($r = .387$; $p = .000$). It was concluded that the number of women in decision making organs in deposit taking Saccos leads to improved decision-making process and therefore there is need for improving the number of women in decision making organs in deposit-taking Saccos since the presence of women in Sacco boards was associated with efficiency in decision-making process.*

Keywords: *Gender, Representation, Decision-Making, Deposit-Taking SACCOs, Kenya*

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1. Introduction

Gender representation is an important development objective by itself and is closely related to economic development (Jayachandran, 2015). The importance of achieving gender equity within and outside the household has been reaffirmed in the recently adopted United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Among other targets to be achieved by 2030, the fifth SDG calls for the recognition of unpaid work, equal access to ownership, and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life (Duflo, 2012).

In Saccos gender equity on boards of directors is associated with the growth of Sacco (Post & Byron, 2015). This is attributed to three different reasons that highlight the significance of women on board. First, women are found to have a better business understanding than their male peers, which leads to an increase in the quality of decisions on board. Secondly, firms that have women on board have a good reputation in society, and hence this tends to increase the corporation's performance thirdly, the overall understanding of the business scenario is comprehensively increased by appointing women directors (Ferreira, 2015).

In Norway the law has been effective at increasing the number of women at the very top of the earnings

distribution, but it has not been able to reduce gender gaps overall (Bertrand et al., 2014). Moreover, an influential study by Ahern and Dittmar (2012) shows that the increase in women on boards in Norway imposed a significant cost on the value of firms and stock market returns. Women who benefit from affirmative action are largely qualified to successfully perform the tasks they are appointed to the benefits do not remain within the group of women but spread to the entire economy. If women accumulate more human capital which raises their productivity, these policies may even increase efficiency (Conde Ruiz et al., 2015).

Bertrand et al., (2014) have found that gender quotas for listed companies in Norway have improved the representation of female employees at the very top of the earnings distribution within affected firms, while they had no trickle-down effects and no other significant effects on reducing gender gaps. Owing to women's different communal qualities, female directors have improved compassion towards diverse stakeholders (Endrikat, De Villiers, Guenther & Guenther, 2021). Adams and Funk (2012) find that female directors are more benevolent than male directors. Moreover, female directors are more likely to come from a non-business and community influencer background and, hence, have previous experience in engagement in philanthropic and charitable activities (Schwartz-Ziv, 2017).

2. Literature Review

Aside from research on total board gender diversity, the impact of a female chairpersons on the board of directors, as well as female independent directors and a female presence on key board committees, has received little attention in the past. The board chair is the most powerful position on the board since he or she is responsible for leading the board's leadership qualities, as well as advising and monitoring management (Banerjee et al., 2020). A female chairperson can help a board of directors become more feminine by acting as a supporter (Oliver et al., 2018). Tuliao and Chen (2017) also discovered that chairwomen place a higher value on relationships with various stakeholders and concern for the company's reputation than chairmen.

While the board of directors is in charge of formulating a company's strategies and overseeing its performance, top management is ultimately in charge of putting those strategies and policies into action (McGuinness et al., 2017). Top management traits can influence a firm's strategic decisions and outcomes, according to upper echelons and organizational theories. Several studies anticipate that the presence of female senior executives has an impact on strategic decisions and outcomes due to gender differences. Female CEOs also implement more conservative accounting standards and take a lower degree of risk in bank lending bolstering the argument that they are more ethical and risk averse than their male counterparts (Faccio et al., 2016),

Female CEOs are significantly associated with fewer environmental lawsuits, according to Liu (2018), but only in companies with a lower overall level of female representation on boards. Female CEOs, according to Liu (2021), reduce the likelihood of labor lawsuits against their companies. This conclusion is interpreted by Liu (2021) to suggest that female CEOs have better relationships with their staff than their male counterparts. McGuinness et al., (2017) also discovered that having a female CEO or vice-CEO in China improves a company's environmental scores.

Cooperatives are considered a tested model to bring a balanced socio-economic environment among their members (Fernandez, Lopez-Millan & Pedroza, 2020). The issue of gender is common in every organization, however; in cooperatives, it is an especially sensitive issue because cooperatives aim to provide equal opportunity to all members regardless of gender. Gender awareness in local institutions is increasingly aiming at active participation of women in social and economic activities so that the visibility of their involvement in decision-making processes can be achieved (Rehman, Moazzam & Ansari, 2020).

The SACCO sub-sector is part of the larger cooperative movement in Kenya. There are mainly two broad categories of co-operatives: Financial co-operatives (Savings & Credit Co-operative Societies-SACCOs) and Non-financial co-operatives (includes farm produce and other commodities marketing co-operatives, housing, transport and investment co-operatives). In the recent past Savings and Credit Co-operatives (SACCOs) have witnessed faster growth than other co-operatives. The establishment of SACCO societies Act 2008 places the licensing, supervision and regulation of deposit taking under the armpit of the SACCO Societies Regulatory Authority (SASRA). Through this new legal framework, prudential regulations have been introduced to guide SACCOs' growth and development (Biwot, 2020).

Having both men and women in management and staff allows efficiency in management taking into account the needs of men and women in SACCOs products, procedures and policies. Developing financial products which correspond to the needs of both men and women was used by more people, increasing the turnover of the SACCOs (Abel, 2020). Adapting procedures that are equally favorable for both men and women eases access to SACCOs' services and tends to increase membership. Targeting men and women effectively in mobilization campaigns will attract more members and lead to growth of the SACCOs. SACCOs which target men and women and offer services which respond more closely to their needs, contributes more effectively to local economic development (which is the mission of many SACCOs).

According to Ademba (2019), Kenya SACCOs sector is the largest in Africa and the seventh in the world, with over Kenya sh. 420 billion in assets and the saving portfolio. It is therefore clear that SACCOs are

increasingly becoming a vital component of Kenya's socio-economic development. Currently, most men and women save and take loans from SACCOs as they are members and have greater say over the activities of these financial institutions. It is important that both men and women have equal rights in terms of property ownership in their SACCOs. Gender equality in decision-making is important and is to be viewed in the context of whether women are in the position to make or influence public decisions on the same footing as men. Thus, the current paper investigated the effect of gender representation on decision making process in deposit taking SACCOs in Uasin Gishu County, Kenya.

2.1 Theoretical Perspective

This paper is guided by group diversity theory, which states that diverse teams need to elaborate their informational diversity and avoid intergroup biases in order to positively transform their diversity into effectiveness and innovation within an organization. According to Dobbin and Jung (2011), teams with functional diversity solve issues faster and more effectively than teams with likeminded members working alone. Furthermore, teams with a broad demographic diversity contribute a variety of perspectives to decision-making processes, improving the quality of the decisions made. They go on to say that variety or diversity fosters network connections, diverse creativity, and even innovation, all of which lead to significant synergistic benefits.

3. Methodology

This study was conducted in Uasin Gishu County, Kenya. This county presents a good area whose representation can be generalized as the actual situation in Kenya. By the end of 2018, there were 126 Deposit Taking SACCOs (DTS) in Kenya that had complied with SASRA regulations. This has since risen to 175 registered DTSs in the country by the December of 2020 (Cooperative of Kenya, 2019). In addition, the selection of the SACCOs based on DTSs criteria points to the corporate governance that has been complied with by the deposit taking SACCOs under SASRA regulations.

This study used cross-sectional research design and this allowed the collection of data from the population at a single point in time as pointed out by Wang and Cheng (2020). Cross-sectional research design allows researchers to identify characteristics of their populations at a given time, analyze their evolution over time, and establish some relationships between these features (Zangirolami-Raimundo, Echeimberg & Leone, 2018). In addition, the study used mixed methodology where both quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis approaches were used concurrently.

The population of interest of this study was all the DTS SACCOs in Uasin Gishu County, which had complied with SASRA regulations by end of 2021. There are 11

SACCOs within Uasin-Gishu County which are compliant with SASRA regulations. These SACCOs have 11 managers and a total of 867 delegates who formed the target population of this study. The study focused on managers and delegates of the SACCOs since they were considered to be involved in the decision-making process in SACCOs thus had information which was valid for the research. The sample size for this study was based on Krejcie and Morgan (1970) sample size determination formula. The formula is given as:

Where;

n=Sample size

X^2 =Chi Square for the specified confidence level at 1 degree of freedom= (3.841) from tables

N=Population size

P=Population proportion (.50 in the table)

ME=Desired margin of error (expressed as a proportion=0.05)

$= 3.841 \times 8677 \times 0.5 (1-0.5) / 0.05 \times 0.05 (867-1) + 3.841 \times 0.5 (1-0.5)$

$= 832.53675 / 3.12525$

$= 266$

This study used both probability and non-probability sampling designs. According to Mugenda & Mugenda, (2003), probability sampling gives individuals equal chance of being selected where random sampling is applied. Non-probability sampling refers to where researchers take particular individuals without random assignment. Proportionate sampling was used to select the number of delegates in each SACCO while purposive sampling was used to select the managers of each SACCO in the County.

A well-designed questionnaire with closed-ended questions was used to collect data from the 266 delegates from the 11 SACCOs in Uasin-Gishu County. The closed-ended questionnaires provided quantitative data in the study. The study preferred the use of questionnaires since they are considered to be convenient and efficient when collecting data from a large population (Bartram, 2019). Furthermore, interviews were administered to managers of the 11 SACCOs thus providing qualitative information for this study.

Pre-testing of research instruments was carried out in the neighboring Trans-Nzoia County, which shares similar characteristics as the study area. The researcher selected a total of 30 respondents from SACCOs in Trans-Nzoia County to participate in the pilot study. The results from the pilot study were included in the final instruments' amendments. This helped in improving the content validity as well as questions, format and scales reliability

as per the recommendations of Vogel, & Draper-Rodi, (2017).

In this study, the researcher sought for professional advice on both the construct and content validity of the research instruments. Observations from the research experts in the field of gender was used to enhance the dependability of the research tool before beginning collection of information. To determine reliability of research instruments, the researcher administered the research instruments to a group of respondents from SACCOs in the nearby Trans-Nzoia County, which shares similar characteristics as the study area. The reliability test was carried out on the pilot questionnaires, where each category of the respondents was administered with the prepared questionnaire. Responses were coded into SPSS version 23.1 and Cronbach's Alpha calculated. If the coefficient was at least 0.7 the reliability coefficient was accepted as a good measure. In this study a Cronbach Alpha of 0.81 was obtained showing that the instruments were reliable.

Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, which involves the use of frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviation. In addition,

Pearson Correlation analysis was used to establish the relationships among variables. This was done quantitatively with the aid of SPSS (Version 25) for windows. The raw data was categorized through coding and tabulation. Editing was also done to improve on the quality of the data. Qualitative information from interview schedules was transcribed, thematically classified and arranged before they are reported in narrations and quotations. Presentation of data was done using tables and Figures.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Gender Representation in Sacco Boards

The aim of this paper was to analyze the effect of gender representation on decision making process in deposit taking SACCOs in Uasin Gishu County, Kenya. To obtain this objective, the respondents were first asked to indicate membership in their SACCOs in terms of gender in their SACCO boards and delegates. Table 1 presents the results of the analyzed Information.

Table 1: Gender Representation in Boards

SACCO	Male		Female		Total Board Members
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	
Ainabkoi Sacco	6	85.7	1	14.3	7
Airports Sacco	7	77.8	2	22.2	9
Baraton University	5	71.4	2	28.6	7
Boresha Sacco	11	84.6	2	15.4	13
Mwalimu Sacco	9	75.0	3	25.0	12
Imarisha Sacco	9	69.2	4	30.8	13
Kenya Police	12	92.3	1	7.7	13
Noble Sacco	10	83.3	2	16.7	12
Safaricom Sacco	8	61.5	5	38.5	13
Stima Sacco	8	100.0	0	0.0	8
Unaitas Sacco	5	71.4	2	28.6	7
Total	90	78.9	24	21.1	114

Table 1 shows that out of 7 board members in Ainabkoi Sacco, 6(85.1%) were male while 1(14.3%) was a female and airport Sacco had a total of 9 members and 7(77.8%) were male while 2(22.2%) were female while Baraton Sacco had 7 board members out of which 5(71.4%) were male while 2(28.6%) were female. Boresha Sacco had a total of 13 board members where 11(84.6%) were male while 2(15.4%) were female, Mwalimu Sacco had a total of 12 board members where 9(75.0%) were male and

3(25.0%) were female, Imarisha Sacco had 13 board members where 9(69.2%) were male and 4(30.8%) were female, Kenya police had 13 board members where 12(92.3%) were male and 1(7.7%) was a female, Noble Sacco had 12 board members with 10(83.3%) male and 2(16.7%) female.

Safaricom Sacco had a total of 13 board members out of which 8(61.5%) were male while 5(38.5%) were female and Stima Sacco had a total of 8 board members and all

(100%) were male while Unitas had 7 board where 5(71.4%) were male while 2(28.6%) were female. In total there was a total of 114 board members in the 11 Saccos in the study area with 90 (71.4%) being male while 24(21.1%) were females. This shows that all the boards of SACCOS in the study area is male dominated. Studies by Zehnder (2016) found that the number of women on boards in Africa stood at 13%, 26% in Europe and 9% in Asia, respectively. Similarly, Appiadjei, *et al.*, (2017) in their study discovered lack of women on corporate boards in their study of Ghanaian listed companies on Board gender diversity and performance.

Furthermore, a study in Kenya by Manyaga, Muturi and Oluoch, (2020) discovered that the number of women on boards of listed companies stood at 21 percent, up from 12 percent in 2012 and 18 percent in 2015. Furthermore, according to SASRA (2018), the boards of Deposit Taking SACCOS in Kenya were 83.25 percent male and only 16.75 percent female. In the current study, there were 78.9% male and 21.1% female representation in deposit taking Saccos in Uasin-Gishu County. This scenario points to less involvement of women in corporate affairs and decision making. This is despite the situation in most cases in Kenya where the female Board members held higher academic qualifications than their male counterparts as shown by various studies done. Studies concerning gender representation in SACCOS have revealed that board gender diversity influences performance (Kenani & Bett, 2018; Ruto, *et al.*, 2017; Samuel & Memba, 2016). Moreover, Mwaura, (2019) established that gender balance strategy influenced

performance as it lessened discrimination and enhanced talent recognition and as such there is need to increase on the number of women represented in SACCO boards.

From the results in Table 4.1, only Safaricom Sacco fulfills the third gender rule as required by law under the 2010 Kenyan on the Bill of right Chapter four, Part 2 number 27, which states that the State shall take legislative and other measures to implement the principle that not more than two-thirds of the members of elective or appointive bodies shall be of the same gender. However, in the current study majority of the SACCOS in the study area have not implemented the gender rule. This is in line with the findings of Berry, *et al.*, (2020) who found in their study that Kenya is still struggling with the quota implementation process a decade after the implementation of the constitution which requires two thirds of either gender to be included in all aspects of employment.

4.2 Gender Representation and Decision-Making Process

Similarly, the respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed/disagreed with statements on effect of gender representation on decision making process in deposit taking SACCOS on a scale of 1-5, as Strongly Disagree (SD=1) Disagree(D=2) Neutral (N=3) Agree (A=4) and Strongly Agree (SA=5). Their responses were tabulated and the results are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Responses on Effect of Gender Representation on Decision Making Process

Statement	SD		D		UD		A		SA	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Board members in our SACCO have increased gender diversity thus have improved decisions due to a broader assortment of viewpoints	96	39.5	95	39.1	18	7.4	28	11.5	6	2.5
Including more women our SACCO board has improved communication in the board since women are usually ready to discuss issues affecting management	21	8.6	33	13.6	8	3.3	75	30.9	106	43.6
Gender diversity in the membership of our SACCO board has enabled the board to be more resourceful with more innovations	12	4.9	35	14.4	4	1.6	125	51.4	67	27.6
Including more women on our SACCO board has encouraged high turnover and absenteeism among board members	62	25.5	123	50.6	12	4.9	37	15.2	9	3.7
Board membership in our SACCO fulfills the gender rule	71	29.2	86	35.4	6	2.5	49	20.2	31	12.8
Female board members in our SACCO are more concerned with matters concerning growth of the SACCO	18	7.4	48	19.8	5	2.1	91	37.4	81	33.3

Table 2 shows that 96(39.5%) respondents strongly disagreed with the statement that Board members in their SACCOs had increased gender diversity thus had improved decision making due to a broader assortment of viewpoints, 95(39.1%) respondents strongly disagreed with the statement, 28(11.5%) respondents agreed with the statement and 18(7.4%) respondents were undecided while 6(2.5%) respondents strongly agreed with the statement. The study findings showed majority (76.8%) of the delegates in deposit taking SACCOs in Uasin-Gishu County believed that board members in their SACCOs had not increased gender diversity with an aim of improving decision making process as a result of broader assortments of viewpoints. This shows that women are still underrepresented in most of the SACCOs' boards resulting some decisions not being gender sensitive. Most studies, including those of Odero and Egessa, (2021) and Oludele *et al.*, (2016) amongst other researchers who found that increasing gender diversity in boards of management leads to improved decision making and organization performance.

In addition, 106(43.6%) respondents strongly agreed with the statement that including more women our SACCO

board had improved communication in the board since women were usually ready to discuss issues affecting management, 75(30.9%) respondents agreed with the statement, 33(13.6%) respondents disagreed with the statement and 21(8.6%) respondents strongly disagreed with the statement while 8(3.3%) respondents were undecided on the statement. From the responses, it emerged that a majority (74.5%) of the delegates to Deposit taking SACCOs in Uasin-Gishu County believed that increasing the number of women in SACCO boards would lead to improved communication in the board since women are usually ready to discuss issues affecting management. Women can only have a board impact through communicative interactions, which can later amplify to transform dynamics patterns and, ultimately, board performance (Kakabadse, *et al.*, 2015; Kanadlı *et al.*, 2022). In practice, however, the impact of women directors on board effectiveness varies depending on whether they can successfully raise sensitive issues and challenge their colleagues in a supportive manner. The ways in which women directors interact with their boards can have significant implications for processes and dynamics.

Further, 125(51.4%) respondents agreed with the statement that gender diversity in the membership of their SACCO board had enabled the board to be more resourceful with more innovations, 67(27.6%) respondents strongly agreed with the statement, 35(14.4%) respondents disagreed with the statement and 12(4.9%) respondents strongly disagreed with the statement while 4(1.6%) respondents were undecided on the statement. The study findings suggested that a majority (79.0%) of the study participants reported that gender diversity in membership of the SACCO boards had enabled board members to be more resourceful and innovative. This affects positively the performance of SACCOs since it is acknowledged that organizations that have embraced innovation reap numerous benefits such as increased profits, increased market share, increased company savings and reduced operating costs, generate growth for business enterprises, creates customer value, improves strategy implementation, and improved performance (Oirere, 2015; Stanleigh, 2015).

This study findings supports earlier findings of Odero, *et al.*, (2019) who found out in their study that innovation positively influenced performance of Deposit taking Sacco's and the influence was statistically significant. Additionally, these findings agree with those of Tuan, *et al.*, (2016) and Hassan, Shaukat, Nawaz, and Naz (2013), who conducted research in Hanoi-Vitenam and Pakistan and discovered that process, marketing, organizational, and product innovation influenced firm performance. Similarly, Wangila (2018) found that innovation influenced performance in Nairobi City County while Soi (2016) found that innovation influenced performance in telecommunication firms. According to Kisingu (2017), organizational innovation influences competitive advantage in Kenyan public and private universities. In the current study, having more women as board members in deposit taking SACCOs was associated with innovativeness of the board which results to improved performance of deposit taking SACCOs.

In addition, 123(50.6%) respondents disagreed with the statement that including more women on their SACCO board had encouraged high turnover and absenteeism among board members, 62(25.5%) respondents strongly disagreed with the statement, 37(15.2%) respondents agreed with the statement and 12(4.9%) respondents were undecided on the statement while 9(3.7%) respondents strongly agreed with the statement. The responses pointed out that a majority (76.1%) respondents were in disagreement with the statement showing that including more women to SACCO boards does not affect turnover and absenteeism among other board members. This therefore shows that presence of women in boards of deposit taking Saccos enhanced effectiveness in management. A study by Kim, *et al.*, (2020), predicted a lower sensitivity of CEO turnover to reported performance associated with female representation on boards. The study pointed out that patience and supportiveness exhibited by female board members

facilitated productive communication between a board and its CEO, thereby improving board effectiveness and firm performance.

Moreover, 86(35.4%) respondents disagreed with the statement that board membership in their SACCO fulfills the gender rule, 71(29.2%) respondents strongly disagreed with the statement, 49(20.2%) respondents agreed with the statement and 31(12.8%) respondents strongly agreed with the statement while only 6(2.5%) respondents were undecided on the statement. From the responses, it can be shown that a majority (64.6%) of the SACCO delegates in deposit taking Saccos in Uasin Gishu County believed that their boards fell short of the gender rule. This implies that men were the majority in board membership of the SACCOs in the County. This is in line with studies by Berry, *et al.*, (2020) who found in their study that Kenya is still struggling with the quota implementation process a decade after the implementation of the constitution, which requires two thirds of either gender to be included in all aspects of employment, including appointment of women to board of directors of deposit taking Saccos.

Moreover, 91(37.8%) respondents agreed with the statement that female board members in our SACCO were more concerned with matters concerning growth of the SACCO, 81(33.3%) respondents strongly agreed with the statement, 48(19.8%) respondents disagreed with the statement and 18(7.4%) respondents strongly disagreed with the statement while 5(2.1%) respondents were undecided on the statement. The study findings showed that a majority (70.7%) believed that female board members in their Saccos were more concerned with growth of their Saccos. A study by Ararat *et al.*, (2015) pointed out that women directors exert a positive effect on organizational performance through augmenting board monitoring which enhances performance. Governance is a critical managerial characteristic for businesses and it is directly related to control and monitoring (Yeh & Trejos, 2015). The corporate board, diversity (gender) on the board, and its subcommittees can all have an impact on the efficiency and functioning of corporate governance (Nielsen & Huse, 2010), which are the most pressing issues currently confronting stakeholders, shareholders, and firm managers (PuchetaMartnez *et al.*, 2016). According to the empirical evidence, women may lead differently than men (Kirsch, 2018). Women, for example, are known to be more collaborative, to improve participative decision-making, and to be more ethically responsible, which may reduce board conflicts (Bart & McQueen, 2013). Furthermore, they are known to be more security-oriented more concerned but less power-oriented and more independently, responsible, and diligent in supervising and controlling the firm's audit function, ensuring the quality of the financial statements (Compernelle, 2018).

4.3 Relationship between Gender Representation and Decision Making

The null hypothesis of this study stated that:

H01: There is no significant relationship between gender representation and decision-making process in deposit taking SACCOs in the Uasin Gishu County, Kenya.

The hypothesis was tested using Pearson correlation at 95% confidence level. Table 3 provides the Pearson correlation coefficient between gender representation and decision making in deposit taking Saccos in Uasin Gishu County.

Table 3: The Correlation Coefficient between Gender Representation and Decision Making

		Decision making process
Gender representation	Pearson Correlation	.387**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	243

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

Table 3 shows that there was a significant positive correlation between gender representation and decision making in deposit taking Saccos in Uasin Gishu County ($r = .387$; $p = .000$). This means that at 95% confidence level the r value for gender representation was .387 showing a weak correlation with decision making process in deposit taking Saccos. However, the r value was positive implying a positive correlation which means that improving the number of women in decision making organs in deposit taking Saccos leads to improved decision-making process. Thus, the null hypothesis which stated that there is no significant relationship between gender representation and decision-making process in deposit taking SACCOs in the Uasin Gishu County, Kenya was rejected and the alternate accepted. This shows that increasing the number of women in decision making bodies could positively affect decision making process in deposit taking Saccos. This concurs with the findings of Bear, *et al.*, (2010) which affirmed that there was a positive relationship between the number of women directors and the measures of corporate reputation.

Interviews were further conducted with the managers of the 11 Saccos on gender representation and decision-making process. The results pointed out that despite the low presence of women in key decision-making bodies, their interests were well represented in the Sacco. One of the managers had this to say; “*We have two women in our board and they are actively involved in all the making of decisions in our Sacco.*”

The Saccos which have at least one woman in their board could have efficiencies in decision making process. It is acknowledged that corporations which hold more than three women in key decision-making bodies like the boards, CEOs or management positions perform better in every criterion than those that do not have any women in management. The positive effects of gender diversity can

be seen most prominently in the work environment, values and vision (Martinez-Jimenez *et al.*, 2020).

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 Conclusion

The study concluded that there was a significant positive correlation between gender representation and decision making in deposit taking Saccos in Uasin Gishu County ($r = .387$; $p = .000$). This means that at 95% confidence level the r value for gender representation was .387 showing a weak correlation with decision making process in deposit taking Saccos. However, the r value was positive implying a positive correlation which means that improving the number of women in decision making organs in deposit taking Saccos leads to improved decision-making process.

5.2 Recommendations

The paper recommended that there is need for improving the number of women in decision making organs in deposit taking Saccos since presence of women in Sacco boards was associated with efficiency in decision-making process.

5.3 Further Research

The paper recommends that there is need for studies on gender representation in decision making bodies in other organizations to allow for generalization of the study findings.

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