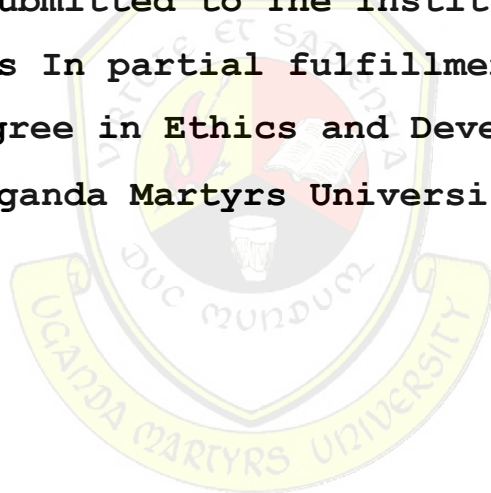


**ASSESSING THE IMPACT OF VILLAGE SAVINGS AND LOAN ASSOCIATION
IN THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN IN MATANY SUB-
COUNTY, NAPAK DISTRICT, KARAMOJA REGION**

**A Dissertation Submitted to The Institute of Ethics and
Development Studies In partial fulfillment for the Award of
the Bachelor's Degree in Ethics and Development Studies of
Uganda Martyrs University**



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Dedication

I dedicate this study to all the people who contributed towards my academic voyage. In a fantastic and extraordinary way, I prefer dedicating it to my wife Mrs Nakee clementina, my children Lomilo Aaron lokorikori, Teko Silaz Namerithia, brothers and sisters Mr Muya John Bosco wapamoe, Ilukol Prassede, Lochoro Betty, Lomongin Christin Dialimeda and KeemJane Frances as a sign of love for them. Friends Loukae Paul Kidon, Angella Godfrey, Lochap John Ediakodeny Hon Stella Namoe Nyomera, Mr Arukol Paul and all those that have trusted, appreciated and respected my abilities. My supervisor Dr Denis Musinguzi and my academic advisor Dr John Crisestom Katongole.

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Acronyms

CBs	Commercial Banks
EGs	Enterprise Groups
FINCA	Foundation for International community Assistance
FOWODE	Forum For women on Democracy
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IFPR	International Food Policy Research Institute
MEC	Market Enterprise committee
MFAEOW	Micro Finance and Empowerment of Women
MFIS	Micro Finance Institutions
PRIDE	Promotion of Rural Initiatives and Development Enterprise
SACCO	Savings and Credit Cooperative Societies
SCGs	Specific Savings and Credit Groups
VSLA	Village Savings and Loans Associations
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNMD	United Nations Millennium Declaration
UNFF	Uganda National Farmers Federation

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to establish the relationship between credit schemes and financial accessibility in Matany Sub County, Napak District. It sought to find out the activities implemented by the VSLA; establish how these activities have contributed towards women empowerment in Matany Sub-County Sub County; and the challenges faced in the VSLA.

The researcher used case study design which described the process and characteristics of socio-economic empowerment, activities like managerial skills, trainings such as record keeping, challenges like loan defaults payment and grace periods and collateral security.

Findings of the study revealed that the establishment of village savings and loans association had played a positive role on the socio-economic empowerment of women as well as improvement of peoples standards of living thus it enhanced the development of a rural setting as per the case of Matany Sub-County

The study recommended that in order to attain full development and financial accessibility in Matany Sub-County, the government should facilitate the uneducated people with adult literacy services, the VSLA should develop more loans for people who are lacking security and hedge against credit risk through proper credit rating and allowing members to form core groups which would act as security.

Finally Akai-aikeny VSLA should value more inclusion of the needy like the widows, teenagers and the divorced.

CHAPTER ONE

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

Village Savings and loan association is a forum for solidarity and empowerment of women providing them a space and voice to negotiate and participate as equals both within the family and the society. However Zeller et al (1997) suggested that there was a common perception in developing literature that the increased participation of women in savings and credit activities or economic attainment was to empower women by helping them to access and utilize better health services, decision making in the community, Women's access to full participation in the socio- economic and political aspects in which they lived. This was controlled by the amount of discrimination against Women in any given society which was determined by such factors as culture, religion, current waves of conservation, or liberation and the rate of economic growth. In some societies, Women were accorded relatively equal opportunities with men while in some societies they were taken to be inferior for example in Matany sub-county, Napak District. micro-credit Institutions focused on the special constraints and copied strategies that rose from Women's multiple social roles.

In designing the programs it was noted that significant differences in national and regional economic circumstances and the degree of access of Women to full participation in the economy were important in determining the impact of micro-credit on Women. In countries where women were accorded equal opportunities with men, the impact was realized. In countries where they were discriminated, it was hard to realize the impact.

There was no doubt that micro-credit institution providers had been successful in reaching the women, given the challenging social cultural conditions in which the women lived. However the nature of the credit availed to women influenced its impact on them. Multi-faceted credit which comprised of trainings, savings mobilization and provision of credit, had far reaching impact on empowerment. Credit was a double-edged tool, which can impact on the women either positively or negatively. It left the women either more empowered or disempowered. To the women credit meant a debt, and a debt could destroy as easily as it could build. It was essential to assess the extent to which credit had promoted social-economic empowerment of women in Matany sub-county Napak district.

Mayoux (1995) explained that many women's organizations in developing countries had included village savings and loans associations both as the way of increasing women's income and brought women together to address wider gender issues, access to finance through group savings and lending to members allowed women to become increasingly involved in economic activities such as piggery keeping, animal keeping, craft work, bee-keeping and small retail businesses like beer selling, market vendors and so many others. Therefore, these economic activities were entry points or channels of communication and vehicles by which women met their needs.

Uganda is mainly an agricultural country with over 80% of its population engaged in agriculture. Women contributed 70% of the total agricultural labor force and performed many of domestic tasks of family caring and maintenance. Their workload typically ranged between 12-18 hours per day. The food produced was mainly for household use and therefore generated no income. None of these activities are remunerated. This left very limited time for the women to engage in income generating activities for their personal development. Despite these contributions, the women had little or no control over productive resources. Most of the productive resources were owned and controlled by men. According to the ministry of Gender and community Development report 1995, only 8% of the women had leasehold and 7% actually owned land.

Since 1986, the government had tried to engender all its programs towards promotion of women equality with men through gender mainstreaming. For example under local government administration, 30% of all the local council positions and seats in parliament were reserved for women. This structure had encouraged participation of women in articulating issues that affected them and their children and to support full participation of women in the economy, the 1995 constitution of the republic of Uganda, promoted gender equality to support women empowerment.

In Uganda, the initiative was called the village savings and loans association (VSLA), which was started by the Uganda National Farmers Federation in 1997 with the support from the Swedish cooperative center. The idea was to improve access to fund for the poor farming communities in the country. I think part of the consequence to under development in Uganda especially in Matany sub-county, Napak district was that we had not tapped on extremely important resources and we had not appreciated the role of women as one of the initiators of their own development by hindering them take part in the decision

making processes.

Women in Matany Sub-County spearheaded by Moru Emmanuel and Loukae Paul Kidon started the initiative as Akaai-aikeny village savings and loans association on the 1st /01/2010 based on the traditional saying (Kapei ikipederi) meaning together we can, in that a combined effort was essential and important to split a bone. They further stated that the initial monthly saving per member was ten thousand shillings (10,000) membership paid once and five hundred (500) shillings for welfare per week for each member. Members now secured loans at an interest rate of 5% and 10% for other members of the community in case of emergency loans respectively. The highest one can borrow slightly lower than his/her total savings. In case of default on payment, we took it as "compensation" or he/she gave some property as a security for example land or house. Therefore, the researcher intended to assess the impact of village savings and loan association on the socio-economic empowerment of women under the key empowerment variables of increased economic situation, increased wellbeing of women and their families, greater role in decision-making, increased ownership of property, increased self-esteem, confidence levels and reduction on dependence on men in Matany Sub-County.

1.2 Background to the Study

According to the United Nations Millennium Declaration of 2000, the establishment of village savings and loan association (VSLA's) had been identified as a significant strategy in addressing the alarming levels of poverty and marginalization that had accompanied global development.

Maluccio and Flores (2005) argued that constant appeals African leaders made to the foreign governments and foreign investors to come and invest in their countries showed how Uganda suffered from high economic dependency syndrome. This had contributed to economic

'underdevelopment'. Despite this, some Ugandans had made attempts to improve their standards of living, by uniting into different groups such as village savings and loans association.

Meanwhile article 33(4) of the constitution of the republic of Uganda stated "women shall have the right to equal treatment with men and that right shall include equal opportunities in political, economic and social activities." Although it was stated that women were given a minimum of 1/3 of the political seats this was still not equal opportunity. Some organizations still discriminated women during recruitment thinking they could not move faster, ride bicycles or motorcycles stay out of office for a long time during their maternity leaves.

In a bid to empower women and fight poverty a number of micro-credit institutions had sprang up which provided credit to the women with an aim of empowering them. However in their struggle to do so, the impact was felt with the support of strong poverty alleviation and general economic growth policies. The micro-credit institutions designed their programs which focused on the special constraints and copied strategies that rose from women's multiple social roles.

Komakech (2005) reported on the International year of micro-credit, July, 7, 2005 in the New Vision that: Micro-credit had blossomed since early 1990's, when development agencies gave small loans to poor enterprising women to help alleviate rural poverty. Women provided a virgin resource using small loans and largely created an impact by exploiting women's previously neglected productive role. Therefore since much had not been researched by scholars, the researcher intended to assess the impact of village savings and loan association on social-economic empowerment of women in Matany sub-county, Napak district.

Bangladesh had been acknowledged as a pioneer in the field of micro-credit. Yunus (2012), Professor of Economics in Chicago University of Bangladesh, was an initiator of an action research project and posted informal finance, tagged governance, loan contract, property rights and village savings and loan association on October 24th. 2012. Grimness Bank. In Bangladesh, the Chars Livelihood Program (CLP), a seven-year initiative (2004-2010) aimed at assisting 55,000 extremely poor people in northern Bangladesh. The CLP, an asset transfer program was the primary intervention, provided cash and productive assets to all participating households. The program recognized that many clients did not access formal savings or insurance products to smooth their consumption patterns, thus caused them to rely on harmful copied strategies including the drawdown of productive assets (Panetta & Kate, 2010).

In Sub-Saharan Africa, there were those studies that showed mixed impact. For example, benefits for the poor but not for the poorest for example Cope stake et al. 2001, or helping the poor to better manage the money they have (Rutherford 1996:2) but not directly or sufficiently increasing income, empowering women etc. Husain et al. 2010 argued that money spent on VSLAs could be better used for other interventions, like supporting large labor-intensive industries for job creation and there was literature that argued that a single intervention like micro-credit was much less effective as an anti-poverty resource than simultaneous efforts that combined micro-credit, health, education, etc. (Lipton 1996). Other researchers had also alluded to negative impact, such as the exploitation of women, unchanged poverty levels, increased income inequality, increased workloads, high interest rates and loan repayment, created dependencies, and barriers to sustainable local economic and social development Adams & Von Pischke 1992; Bateman & Chang 2009; Buckley 1997; Copes takes 2002; Goetz & Sen Gupta 1996; Kabeer 1998; Rogaly 1996)

In East Africa-Ethiopia, Tanzania, Rwanda, Eritrea, Kenya and Uganda Village Savings and Loans Associations contributed immensely to household incomes as well as attained people's basic needs like shelter, food, clothing, medical care, education. In Ethiopia, there were few significant differences in the use of copied mechanisms between established clients, incoming clients and community controls with regard to food. Prevalence of consumption of seed crop was similar among established clients and community controls at 17.1% and 19.2% respectively, while incoming clients had a significantly lower rate of seed crop consumption at 11.4% Doocy et al. (2005) Evidence from Tanzania suggested that participation in the Village Savings and loans association with a significant positive increased meal quality, with an increase in consumption of meat and fish (Brannen 2010)

In Uganda the program for alleviation of poverty PEAP (1997) was introduced as a rural credit and training program to provide loans to the rural poor both individuals and groups. The primary aim of financing on sustainable basis, income generating micro projects identified and managed by the poor themselves in their rural setting. It also vigorously encouraged loans recovery in order to build a revolving fund intended at eradicating poverty among the poor. Furthermore increased the ability of the poor to raise their own income and improve on the quality of life PEAP (2001).

Uganda National Farmers Federation (UNFFE) being the largest nongovernmental organization established in January 1992 with one of its sole objectives of increasing farmers accessibility to income opportunities and agricultural information started the village savings and loan association initiative with the support from the Swedish cooperative center, Most of the micro-credit institutions targeted Women clients as their primary beneficiaries, they targeted 630 savings groups and today the initiative has grown to 662. The

figures here showed that the total number of people who had joined the groups, 1,055 were women represented at the rate of 67.5% of the total number, while men were 5,075 represented by 32.5%. However, much as the poverty eradication policies, strategies had been initiated and implemented, poverty still remained rampant due to lack of women empowerment to increase the earnings, Absence of social support that created a feeling of isolation and exclusion, powerlessness, deprivation of human basic rights and a feeling of hopelessness and no future.

Mayoux (1995) in her article "Access to empowerment", Gender issues in micro-credit reported that availing women with micro-credit programs resulted in to their economic empowerment, increased wellbeing of their families, wider social and political empowerment although Women are disproportionately represented among the world's poor. In the 1995 Human Development report, United National Development Program reported that women were 70% of 1.3 billion people living on less than one dollar per day.

Harold Koontz (2010) suggested that Management was essential in groups formed to accomplish aims they could not achieve as individuals and ensured the coordination of individual efforts. Even though there was peculiarity of association movements being controlled by their members, there was need for education on aims, principles and improvement of standard of living of each. Proper financial management was necessary for financial self-sufficiency.

Women's access to full participation in the socio-economic and political aspect of life was controlled by the amount of discrimination against Women in any given society, which was determined by such factors as culture, religion, current waves of conservation or liberation, limited empowerment and the rate of economic growth was low. Usually the existent of cultural norms

defined what rights, roles, responsibilities, movements and choices a Women had, including how much authority they exerted in the family decision-making process, assets they own and even how they spent their time. Hence in designing programs that supported Women empowerment, micro-credit Institutions focused on the special constraints and copied strategies that rose from Women's multiple social roles to improve their standards of living through encouraging them to save for the future.

In designing the programs it should be noted that significant differences in national and regional economic circumstances and the degree of access of Women to fully participate in the economy, Components such as socio-economic and environmental pillars of sustainable development were improved especially when formulating government development strategies that were important in determining the impact of micro-credit empowerment on Women. In countries where women were accorded equal opportunities with men, the impact was realized compared to where they are discriminated, it was hard to realize the impact, sustainable development had emerged as the guiding principle for long-term global development which Consisted of three pillars of sustainable development. World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987

Women in Matany Sub-County started the initiative has Akaai-aikeny village savings and loan association on the 1st /01/2010 based on the traditional saying (Kapei ikipederi) meaning together we can, in that a combined effort/force was essential and important to split a bone. They further stated that the initial monthly saving per member was ten thousand shillings (10,000) membership paid once and five hundred (500) shillings for welfare per week for each member. Members secured loans at an interest rate of 10% and 5% for ordinary members in case of emergency loans respectively. The highest one borrowed slightly lower than his/her total savings. In case of default on payment, they

took it as "compensation" or he/she gave some property as a security for example land or house. An emergency loan involved smaller amount payable in a month at an interest rate of 5%.they had associate members that included son, daughter and a husband of the family group. These did not save monthly, but pay 10, 000 as membership fee and then access loans at 10% interest rate with a principal member as guarantor (New Vision, Wednesday, Jan/30/2013).

In Uganda, The economic performance of women had been neglected, marginalized, sidelined as this was caused by low empowerment, traditional or cultural factors. Since 1986 with the current government of National Resistance Movement (NRM), women had been put on board in several aspects such as education, economic and politics among others. However, women in rural areas especially at household level of Matany Sub County in particular were still facing the challenges of improving their socio-economic activities as a result of low empowerment and insufficient funds. Several initiatives such as Forum for Women in Democracy, Change Agent Association, savings and cooperative societies had been put in place to improve their livelihoods in eradicating poverty and fighting for their constitutional rights.

1.3 Statement of the problem

In general, households in Napak District were characterized by low levels of income and lack of empowerment. This situation for instance accounts for high levels of illiteracy and poor standards of living witnessed in September 1999 more than 30% of the household heads had not attained education due to inadequate school fees. Women had been restricted in their movements because of traditional perceptions of family and society which hindered women's participation in economic activities outside or away home (Mayoux, 1995). Although women empowerment was often tagged to access micro-credit, it was not clear to what extent micro-credit empowers the women thus left many people

persistently to remain poor. This poses a question whether accessing women with micro-credit resulted into their empowerment? Therefore, the researcher intends to assess the impact of village savings and loans associations on the socio-economic empowerment of women in improving their livelihoods at household level, find out whether the credit disbursements to the poor had helped them in generating income that made them self-reliant, It also wants to investigate the effectiveness of the loan policies being used in administering loans by village savings and loan associations.

1.4 Main objective

The main objective to the study is to assess the impact of Village savings and loan association on the socio-economic empowerment of women in Matany Sub County.

1.5 Specific objectivities

The study sought to achieve the following objectives:

- i) To find out the activities implemented by village savings and loans association towards its members.
- ii) To examine the extent to which village savings and loans association have empowered women in Matany Sub-County.
- i) To find out the challenges affecting the effectiveness of the village savings and loans associations.
- ii) To investigate ways in which the village savings and loans associations improve women empowerment.

1.6 Research questions

- i) What income generating activities have been implemented by VSLA in Matany Sub-County?
- ii) How have these income generating activities bring about women empowerment in Matany Sub-County.
- iii) What challenges have been faced by the VSLA in Matany Sub-

County

iv) How VSLA members have tried to solve the challenges.

1.7 Scope of the study

This project was centered on the impacts of village savings and loan association on the socio economic empowerment of women at household levels in Matany sub-county as far as improving their livelihoods was concerned especially women of Akai aikeny village savings and loans association. Akaai-aikeny was located in Matany Sub County, Bokora County, Napak District in the northern province of Uganda, Karamoja region which started on the 1st /January/2010 as self-help group. The initiators were women whose target was to eradicate poverty, and improve their standards of living. The group operated on a local basis until it was registered in November 2011 as a village savings and loan association whose inauguration took place on 12th February 2012.

The researcher chose the time period to enable him find out how village saving and loans association had been carried on amidst the too much government interventions through programs such as the National Agricultural Advisory Services (NAADS) and Peace Recovery and Development Programs (PRDP).it's this period that corresponded to an increased number of civil wars, dry spells of harsh climate cases which were believed to have a roused inadequate food supply, unemployment and disease outbreak in the area therefore made women engage in village savings and loan association as a means of poverty eradication among women in Matany sub county, Napak District.

1.8 Significance of the study

The prime significance of the study was to add to the limited and scarce literature about village savings and loans association's schemes and their effect on the rural economies especially in the eradication of poverty through credit extensions to the poor.

To enable financial institutions and policy makers recognize their roles in uplifting poor rural standards of living by instituting workable policies.

The recommendations provided guidelines to the management and policy implementers of micro-credit institutions as regards the clients through the strength, weaknesses, opportunities and threats analyses of the village savings and loan associations.

The findings of this study were useful to the management of the Non-Government Organization (NGO) promoters and information was useful in promoting other village savings and loans associations in other rural areas.

The study helped future researchers and scholars to be availed with related literature on this topic. This helped them to identify gaps in research and look for ways of mitigating them.

To the researcher, the study was an academic research and linked up the theoretical concepts studied in class to the practical aspects in the field and related his experience with the real world.

It was anticipated that the results of this study provided documented evidence on the milestones made by the Village Savings and Loan Association on the 3rd Millennium Development Goal (MDG): promoting Gender equality and women empowerment in improving their standards of living in rural areas especially Matany Sub County with specific focus on Napak District. Moreover, the researcher hoped that the study provides opportunities for development practitioners and existing micro-credit institutions targeting the rural poor to make

informed decisions on how best to empower the rural women. This enabled the development practitioners to establish Workable models that ensured sustainable women empowerment towards ensuring household food security. The researcher hopes the study had contributed to the existing body of knowledge on socio-economic protection and empowerment models by the government targeting the rural poor.

Finally, the researcher looked forward to the study in offering suggestions for improvement of Village Savings and Loans Association and recommended areas that demanded further inquiry. The Researcher had little literature on assessment of the impacts of Village Savings Loan Association on socio-economic empowerment of women at household level especially in Matany Sub-County. This study therefore was intended to provide information on the actual impact of the various components of VSLA's on women empowerment in improving socio-economic standards of living in Matany Sub County according to the World Banks Model.

1.9 Delimitations of the study

The study focused only on Village Savings and Loans Associations as a form of Micro-credit that sought to empower women. The study only assesses the village savings and loans associations on the socio-economic empowerment of women at household levels in Matany sub-County. Majority of the Village Savings and Loans Associations members were women and since they played a major role in ensuring the improved livelihoods therefore the study was limited to them.

The study also benefited from the fact that there existed reports by CARE Uganda on the Village Savings and Loans Associations Program. There was also government statistics on gender disparities and poverty induces that informed the study. The researcher had also

chose to undertake this study in Matany Sub-County, Napak because the district was located in the rural setting with massive focus and resource investment undertaken to facilitate community driven development, women empowerment, and food security projects.

1.10 Limitations of the study

This study was limited by the fact that very little literature existed on the milestones made by the Village Savings and Loans Associations in empowering women towards improving VSLA activities. This was over solved by keenly perusing through literature on women empowerment.

Another limitation was that it was not possible to link all the milestones made on women empowerment towards ensuring human basic needs in the study area to Village Savings and Loans Associations since there were other micro-credit initiatives that promoted women's Well-being. This was solved by limiting the questions to VSLA and ensured that the milestones were not a contribution of other micro - credit initiatives.

1.11 Justification of the study

The research commenced 2015 because of too much zeal to assess the impact of Village savings and loan association in socio-economic empowerment of women in improving their livelihoods at house hold levels in Matany Sub County. In that, this aspect at the time was distorting the tremendous investments by the government and the active members that appropriate measures were administered in favor of their improvement and growth as it was served as a stable source of income to the members thus, improvement on the socio-economic empowerment of women and economic development of Uganda's economy at large.

Figure i: Conceptual framework

Conceptual Framework

Independent variable

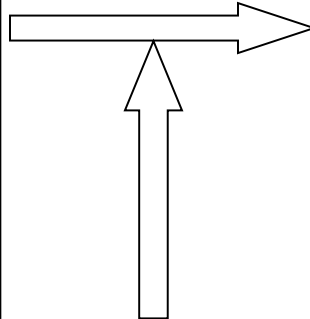
VSLA

- Opportunity for savings
- Trainings on managerial skills
- Loans on affordable interest
- Empowerment in terms of inputs like saving, record keeping

Dependent Variable

Women empowerment

- Assets
- Income increase
- Decision making
- Basic needs



Intervening variables

- Government policy
- Political interference
- Cultural factors

According to the conceptual frame work when there are small scale businesses like opportunity to save, trainings, loans at affordable interest, empowerment in terms of input people earn income, increase on their assets, increase savings through large quantity of sales and there was also improved standards of living through employment opportunities. However other intervening variables like government policy, unfavorable government policies, cultural factors and others also affected village savings and loans associations both negatively and positively depending on the way it's handled. At the same time the positive saving attitude plays a very important role because it affected access to loans of the association members in the rural setting. But above all it was assumed that people in the rural areas of Matany Sub-County developed a positive attitude towards village

savings and loan associations and manual work because without their sustained effort, the savings and productivity remained low. It was assumed that these factors combined improved women's socio-economic standards of living, went a long way to improve the livelihoods of the rural people in Matany Sub-County.

1.12 Conclusion

According to conceptual framework, the researcher presented that village savings and loans associations for women created opportunities to participate into various economic /income generating activities at household level in Matany Sub-county.

1.13 Definition of key terms

Impact according to Martin O Reilly impact was defined as any change, positive or negative, that results from an intervention in context of this study impact referred to the positive and negative changes in the lives of the people and the community that result from the village savings and loan association in that if women were empowered through capacity building to impart on them managerial skills like saving culture, record keeping they were able to secure loans to obtain their basic needs like food, shelter, health care education therefore improvement of their standards of living thus since women lack empowerment on securing loans the researcher intended to assess the impact of village savings and loans association on the socio-economic empowerment of women in Matany Sub-County.

Micro-credit refers to small scale financial services primarily credit and savings provided to people who operate small enterprises; that are normally not served by the convectional financial market. Micro-credit included lending money and other resources other than money for example business and entrepreneurship development, business counseling and credit in kind for example goats, cows and seeds then

if all these things were used sustainably therefore the poor especially women in rural areas like in Matany Sub-County could meet their needs thus an indicator to sustainable development.

Development This is the determination of the best techniques for applying a new device or process to production of goods and services for example if women were given chance to control their finances, make decisions over resource, trained on managerial skills, encouraged on the saving culture under village savings and loans association then sustainable development can be achieved in Matany Sub-county.

Savings According to Peter C. Lubwama's article (2012), Savings represent "The intelligent use of the economic resources that a member possesses to provide for needs that may present themselves in the future.

Village Savings and Loans Association Refers to a group of people who save together and take small loans from those savings. They were trained on how to save, how to make loans, how to manage funds and personal development of the village savings and loans association as per aka-aikeny was managed by the chairperson of the association.

Empowerment is defined by the International Development Department Research as a process of generating and building capacities to exercise control over life conditions individually or collectively. Empowerment includes economic independence, having decision-making power, capacity building on management of their funds, saving culture, increased living standards, property ownership, increased self-esteem and confidence levels. (Karl, 1995)

Women's empowerment related to micro-credit was an intervention. Micro-credit programs for women had been promoted over the years not

only a strategy for poverty alleviation but also for women's empowerment Mayoux, (1996). However, the complexity of empowerment itself and inter linkages with policies made conventional research methodologies extremely cumbersome. Mayoux (1995) had made an attempt to propose frameworks and participatory methodologies for integrating empowerment concerns into ongoing programme learning.

Women Empowerment Refers to expansion in women's ability to make economic choices and implement them for sustainable development, hence not depending on the husband for example on decision making, training on managerial skills like record keeping, this had been conducted by Change Agent Association to the members of Akai-aikeny village savings and loans association which had improved the smooth running of the association.

Grass roots Refers to the community members in the society or an organization which are or not benefiting in the association.

Entrepreneur Someone who exercises initiative by organizing venture to take benefit of an opportunity and as the decision maker decides what, how, and how much of a good or services would be produced. Entrepreneur supplies risk capital as a risk taker monitors and controls the business activities. The entrepreneur was usually a sole proprietor, a partner or the one who owned the majority of the shares in an incorporated venture.

According to economist Alois, (1950) entrepreneurs are not necessarily motivated by profit but regard it as a standard for measuring achievement or success.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter reviews literature related to the Village Savings and Loans Association Methodology, women's involvement in it and how the village savings and loan associations have improved socio economic empowerment of women at the household level. It discusses VSLA Methodology as micro finance, women's empowerment, influence of VSLA as a form of micro finance for women's empowerment, also reviews the contribution of village savings and loan association towards women.

2.1 The activities performed by VSLA

The costs of bringing micro-credit services to Africa is often considered prohibitive because of the abundance of sparsely populated areas, the higher rates of illiteracy and HIV/AIDS, all of which serve to increase credit risk and transaction costs. The village savings and loans association (VSLA) model overcomes many of these obstacles and promises to reach the very poor and rural population better than formal, centralized micro-finance institutions. It essentially enables the poor to become their own bankers (CARE, 2004).

The village savings and loans association (VSLA) is an Accumulating Savings and Credit Association (ASCA), which requires no external borrowing by, or donations to, the loan portfolio it is entirely self-sufficient. Its work, therefore, falls within the informal sector. It differs from a Savings and Credit Cooperative Organization (SACCO) in that it only receives little external funding from government, non-governmental organizations in form of grants and

loans; only training, and it is or not formally registered with the government, which allows it to operate with less formal book-keeping and thus be more users friendly for illiterate members. The village savings and loans association (VSLA) allows variable savings, unlimited savings withdrawal, and loans with variable terms and flexible repayment conditions. A single association consists of 15 to 50 people who save a small amount every week (Allen & Staehle, 2007). After several months, the savings shares accumulated by the group become large enough to launch the loan function. All members have the right to take out a loan regardless of the number of shares they have contributed, but can only take out a loan equal to at most three times the value of their shares. Most loans are short-term, generally around one month, at an interest rate determined by the group, usually 5 or 10 percent per month, this is low compared to money lenders who often charge up to 30 percent per month, but slightly higher than Non-Governmental Organizations and Micro Finance Institutions, which generally charge less than 4 percent per month (Mutesasira, 1999). However, the Village Savings and Loans Association (VSLA) fines borrowers for late loan repayment as this may aggravate any underlying crisis the household may be facing. It is assumed that the embarrassment of being late is sufficient penalty (Allen & Staehle, 2007). On a date chosen by the members, usually after about a year, the savings and accrued interest are divided among the members in proportion to each individual's savings. This event, known as an "auction audit," is usually scheduled so as to occur when members are most likely to need money, such as at the start of the school year or before a major holiday, in order to encourage the use of savings to meet pressing needs and discourage their use for unnecessary expenditures. After the disbursement of funds, the groups normally re-form immediately and start a new cycle of savings and lending (Training Guide...2004).

Economic power means access to income, assets, food, markets and decision making power in the economic activities. Social power means access to certain bases of individual production such as financial resources, information, knowledge, skills and participation in social organizations. Political power means the access of individual household members to the process by which decisions, particularly those that affect their own future, are made. Psychological power means the individual's sense of potency, which is demonstrated in self-confident behavior and self-esteem.

Rowlands (1995) describe it as "a process whereby women become able to organize themselves to increase their own self-reliance, to assert their independent right to make choices and to control resources which will assist in challenging and eliminating their own subordination". Schuler & Hashemi (1994)

Through micro-credit programs, poor women are targeted to get them out of the poverty. In this regard, Microcredit Summit Campaign Report (2011) stated that of the 128.2 million poorest clients reached at the end of 2009, 81.7 percent or 104.7 million are women. The growth in the number of very poor women reached has gone from 10.3 million at the end of 1999 to 104.7 million at the end of 2009. This is a 919 percent increase in the number of poorest women reached from December 31, 1999 to December 31, 2009. The increase represents an additional 94.4 million poorest women receiving micro loans in the last 10 years." So, the focuses of the microfinance programs have been deeply concerned to the women. While on other hand few scholars working in the same line stated that the micro credit schemes of different banks, NGOs and other organizations reduced poverty, increased mobility and strengthened networks among women who were previously confined to their homes among other following researches are more important. Schuler & Hashemi, 1994; Hashemi & Morshed, 1997; Chowdhury & Alam, 1997; Carr et al., 1996

2.2. The Contribution of VSLA to women empowerment

Village Savings and loan association is a forum for solidarity and empowerment of women providing them a space and voice to negotiate and participate as equals both within the family and the society. However Zeller et al (1997) suggests that there is a common perception in developing literature that the increased participation of women in savings and credit activities or economic attainment will empower women by helping them to access and utilize better health services and facilities.

Pattanaik(2003) also finds it that Village Savings and loan associations are continuously striving for a better future for tribal women as participants, decision makers and beneficiaries in domestic, economic, social and cultural spheres of life. The focus on women's empowerment and the great number of Village Savings and loan association in India are an implicit acknowledgement that women are unable to pursue their interests in relation to men (Jakimow and Kilby 2006). These interests of women may vary in nature they could relate to economic, social, cultural, legal and/or political issues. Quite the same distinction can be made in terms of the dimensions of empowerment. Interestingly enough, in relation to women's interest and to different dimensions of empowerment, the main focus of Village Savings and loan association in India seems to be on empowerment in the economic sphere, relating to resources and liquid assets. But empowerment goes further than that: it is also about control over ideology changing beliefs, values and attitudes (Pradhan 2003) about increased self-awareness, ability to organize and self-determination (Oxfam 2005).

According to some authors the rationale is that economic empowerment will have a trickle-down effect and bring about empowerment on the

other levels (Holvoet 2005, Berglund 2007, and Kumar 2006), while according to others this will definitely not be the case (Jakimow and Kilby 2006; Batliwala 2007; Fernando 1997). For instance, Kumar states that economic participation will give power to women's status in households and communities and create opportunities for them to be (more) involved in decision-making processes. Moreover he argues that by just coming together in a group, women 'find strength and move towards further knowledge and awareness. This process leads to further empowerment' (2006, 20:62) In addition Holvoet (2005, 76) emphasizes: 'it is believed that opening up microfinance services to women may induce a process of economic, social and political empowerment, altering underlying social and gender relations'.

These statements are all opposed by Jakimow and Kilby (2006), who argue that with the fixation on savings and credit only boundaries that are related to economic activities are pushed back and that, although there is often indeed a certain degree of empowerment for women with regards to an increase in the choices that become available to them, this only subsists within the existing system. The established social structures that are responsible for women's lesser status, like patriarchy, are not questioned nor challenged and no transforming changes are being made through these village savings and loans associations other than on the economic level.

Batliwala (2007) even argues that the enormous focus on village savings and loans associations as an instrument for empowerment turned out to be nothing more than an actual downsizing empowerment strategy, also changing the notion of what empowerment entails. According to her, and likewise to Parthasarathy (2005), we are deriving from an older idea on empowerment where it was seen as a social-political and transformative process, a quest for autonomy that focused on power as the main operating concept within empowerment and that challenged not only patriarchy but also the

identity markers such as class, race, ethnicity, caste and religion which caused the lower status and positions of women in developing countries. However, we have come to a situation where empowerment merely serves neo-liberal economic ends and where the once powerful idea and practice of women's empowerment degenerated into a set of largely apolitical, technocratic and narrow interventions that create nothing close to the radical transformation envisioned by early women's movement leaders hence the title of her article taking the Power out of empowerment by focusing on economic empowerment not only the original transformative notion of empowerment is being downplayed, also the notion of what a village saving and loans association encloses has shifted. Women's group activities related to economic development are often called village saving and loans association, while they are actually more specific savings and credit groups (SCGs). Village saving and loans association are originally closely related to the social-political and transformative ideas of empowerment.

Financial services provided on a timely basis are a way for poor people to turn many small savings into large lump sums that enable them not only to protect against risks, but also to take advantage of investment opportunities when they present themselves (Rutherford 1999).in the mix of factors necessary for a successful enterprise. Therefore, credit enables women to initiate, sustain and expand their businesses, increase their projects like poultry, piggery as well as increasing of agricultural production and increase productivity in society. It should be noted that members would neither gain anything from the society nor progress unless they themselves work hard nor devote themselves to their association. This is in line with what Jack Dublin states: There is nothing really miraculous about what the VSLA does. All it does is to help the members to make the best of what they already have. It cannot provide anything in the way of money, honesty, or willingness to work for people who have neither

the possessions nor the potential for things...But by demonstrating what happens when people work together in the association with a well thought plan, the association can help people put their savings to work for them and to develop their abilities to manage their association.

In the wider community, women's ability to generate income and control assets may increase their social interactions, provide them greater standing in the community, and enhance their ability to offer hospitality, call on help from neighbors, and offer help when called upon, borrowing have helped women to create and build up assets of their own at household level through access to financial services. (Kabeer 1998.6, Albee Alana 1994)

The transfer of resources in terms of credit does not only give the poor access to resources but also to economic empowerment and increased self-reliance. However, Roth (1997) urges that credit is only one ingredient in the mix of factors necessary for a successful enterprise. Access to loans provides a security or fallback position if difficulties are encountered. Access to emergency or consumption loans can enable households or individuals to meet unexpected demands for cash without having to sell or pawn key income generating assets or withdraw children from school (Barnes 1996).

Access to voluntary savings accounts may lead to shifts from non-interest bearing cash savings to interest bearing savings. Voluntary savings also may lower the risk of savings; increase the absolute amounts saved, and enable lump sum expenditures that otherwise would not be possible. It may increase women's capacity to control savings and other assets (Barnes 1996).

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2.4 Challenges faced by VSLA

In Matany Sub-County, despite the simple access to financial services, the women who are the poorest of the poor are not always guaranteed of reducing poverty in the household because of their lack of decision-making abilities within the family. Men still control household resources and economic wealth. Some women are denied access to the financial services and they have no say on the family earnings even when they have contributed to it (Deugd, 2002 cited in Skartlatos, 2004). This raises a question "does women empowerment increase access to financial services and increase in household income necessarily translate into poverty eradication among the households in Matany Sub-County, Napak district. Despite their vitality in helping the poor households to meet their social, economic and cultural needs, Micro-credit mechanisms lack proper credit delivery mechanisms, financial and administrative systems to manage potential fraud at group level, which threatens sustainability of the Micro credit (Micro Save Africa, 1991).

A number of the informal financial systems are fraught with high risks of default and mismanagement of funds due to the absence of written records, rules and regulations and loan agreements.

Consequently, short terms loans are given to the members; with limited repayment period ranging from one to three months. This puts a lot of pressure on the beneficiaries to generate adequate income to save and payback the loan within a short time (Wright & Mutesasira cited in Micro Save Africa, 2001).

Micro-credit could be helping 90% the poor households to eradicate poverty. Apparently their contribution to poverty eradication seems not be evidently noticed and registered as a result little documentation has been done on their contribution to household poverty eradication. This limits adoption of the good practices, implementation of corrective measures to enrich the methodologies, as well as focusing specifically on improving the quality of services delivered to the beneficiaries.

The literature reviewed gives an overview of poverty, both at international and national levels, the types micro-credit Institutions, how they try to address the problem of poverty and challenge the face as they address poverty issues. Unlike the formal Micro-credit sector, little was known about the informal micro finance services available, the category of beneficiaries, and how the benefits translated into household poverty eradication. Such issues were of great interest during this study.

White et al. (1992) argues that there is obviously a positive association between micro-credit and women's empowerment which identifies that micro-credit program has a positive impact on women empowerment; the largest part of the existing studies promotes a vision that micro-credit contributes towards women's empowerment through capacity building such as trainings of the managerial skills like saving, record keeping.

Zaman (2001) reported that 19 micro-credit institutions played

valuable roles in reducing the vulnerability of the poor, through asset creation, income and consumption smoothing, provision of emergency assistance, empowering and emboldening women by giving them control over assets, increased self-esteem and knowledge. Several recent assessment studies had also generally found positive impact in this connection. A primary function of offering women credit in this way is to enhance their economic status, that enables women to earn extra income through which they can gain greater financial autonomy Malik & Luqman, (2005),

Excitement around the empowerment potential of improving women's access to credit is not new. Since the 1990s, micro-credit has been heralded by some as a "magic bullet for women's empowerment" a claim which has been a source of much debate (Goetz & Gupta 1996; Johnson & Rogaly 1997; Kabeer 1998, 2001, 2005b; Mayoux 2005). Based on research into the impact of credit programs in Bangladesh, advocates have argued that women's access to credit strengthens their bargaining power within the household, improves their perception of self-worth and can lead to a long-term decrease in domestic violence (Hashemi et al., 1996, Kabeer 1998, 2001, 2005b).

Critics, by contrast, have claimed that women's loans are often controlled and invested by male relatives, while women borrowers bear the liability for repayment (Goetz & Gupta 1996). In cases where men invest loans badly, this can undermine household survival strategies, forcing women to mobilize repayment funds from resources which would otherwise be used for consumption or saving purposes (ibid) or in some cases to borrow more money from other sources, thus falling into vicious cycles of debt. According to this analysis, loans to women do little to alter their subordinate position within the household and may lead to heightened levels of violence against women due to conflicts over loan repayments. Disagreement over the benefits of micro-credit programs in terms of women's own empowerment and their

contribution to broader development goals is partly due to different ways of measuring impact. For example, the assumption that micro-credit is a successful and empowering strategy for women have often been based on an assessment of financial indicators.

The logic was that if women are able to repay their credit with interest every month, it follows that they must be running effective small businesses and managing their domestic finances and providing for their families both empowering processes. However, others have argued that financial indicators do not capture the social context in which these activities are taking place, nor do they tell us who is making decisions about expenditure within households or controlling use of credit. In response, there is a movement towards culturally relevant social indicators that can capture how and if women's access to credit has a positive impact on their lives (Brody et al eds. 2005; Copestake et. al., 2005).

Analysts drawing connections between women's economic access and empowerment can learn much from these insights, which could and should be applied to impact assessments of women in the waged and informal sectors. It has been observed that access to finance has given women a new-found confidence with many becoming leaders in their community. Women have also increased their purchasing power, obtaining goods formerly owned only by men, and enhanced their level of decision-making power within the household. In Uganda for example, women members of Banking on Change groups have become increasingly empowered over the last three years; indicators show that they are better able to influence their spouse's decisions (from 29.8 to 39.7 per cent), and exert a stronger influence in making important decisions in the community (from 22 to 28 per cent). Women's control over financial resources also increased from 65.5 to 70 per cent and gender-based violence against women reduced from 22.3 to 17.9 per cent. Other countries implementing the Banking on Change project show

similar trends (Training Guide...2004).

The most extensive study in Uganda was the Women's Empowerment Strategic impact inquiry (SII), which was completed in 2006. The study, finds in terms of short term economic empowerment, village savings and loan associations (VSLA) women benefit more than non-VSLA members from increased savings, greater food security, health, and increased education expenditures. 75 percent of women have increased their savings since joining VSLA group. VSLA women's households experience greater food security compared to non VSLA households. More VSLA households also report a great improvement in the quantity and quality of meals over the last 3 years, compared to non-VSLA households. Thirty-four percent of VSLA households report improved family health over the last three years compared to 22 percent of non-VSLA households. About twice as many VSLA households (57.3 percent) as non-VSLA households (30.4 percent) report an improvement in the education status of family members over the past three years. A higher proportion of VSLA households (79.9 percent) have made expenditures on education over the last 12 months, than have non-VSLA households 65.2 percent (CARE, 2012).

In Sub Saharan Africa, for example, studies have shown that women play a crucial role in many aspects of crop production. While men are often responsible for land clearing, burning and sloughing, women specialize in weeding, transplanting, post-harvest work and, in some areas, land preparation. Both take part in seeding and harvesting. Moreover, Sub-Saharan and Near Eastern women play a major role in household animal-production enterprises. They tend to have the primary responsibility for the husbandry of small animals and ruminants, and also take care of large animal systems - herding, providing water and feed, cleaning stalls and milking. In all types of animal production systems, women have a predominant role in processing, particularly of milk products, and are commonly

responsible for marketing (FAO, 2005).

In many countries, women are also responsible for fishing in shallow waters and in coastal lagoons, producing secondary crops, gathering food and firewood, processing, storing and preparing family food, and fetching water for the family. In many African countries women provide: 33% of the workforce, 70% of the agricultural workers, 60-80% of the labor to produce food for household consumption and sale, 100% of the processing for basic food stuffs, 90% of household water and fuel wood, 80% of food storage and transport from farm to village, 90% of the hoeing and weeding work, 60% of the harvesting and marketing activities (FAO, 2005).

Agricultural development is a complex process and a challenging one as well. Rural women farmers play a vital role in food production and food security. They account for 70% of agricultural workers, 80% of food producers, and 100% of those who process basic foodstuffs and they undertake from 60% to 90% of the marketing (Fresco, 1998). Four of ten agricultural workers in the world are women (U.N., 1986). Women take part actively in farming activities and in processing farm products, in addition to their domestic and reproductive responsibilities. It is often stated that women are responsible for more than half the world's food production overall and produce up to 60 to 80% of basic foodstuff in Africa (Fresco, 1998). The role women play in agriculture and the rural society is fundamental to agricultural and rural development in sub-Saharan Africa.

Mijindadi (1993) and Benjamin (1998) estimated that women are responsible for 70% of actual farm work and constitute up to 60% of the farming population in Nigeria. Very recently, Yahaya (2002) recorded that 76% of women from Oyo and Bauchi State are actively involved in farming activities or are engaged in their husband's farms. In Nigeria women supply most of the needed labor in

agricultural activities and this is the most important factor of production to farmers, as it is needed at the stages of agricultural production. Even women in seclusion (Purdah) generate substantial income through food crop processing (Yahaya, 2002). It has been reported by different authors that inadequate information about the improved technologies was one of the constraints in agricultural production. Women do not have adequate access to agricultural information and innovations (Saito & Surling, 1993).

Folasade (1991) emphasized that lack of separate land for women and Agricultural interventions are most likely to affect nutrition outcomes when they involve diverse and complementary processes and strategies that redirect the focus beyond agriculture for food production and toward broader consideration of livelihoods, women's empowerment, and optimal intra-household uses of resources. Successful projects are those that invest broadly in improving human capital, sustain and increase the livelihood assets of the poor, and focus on gender equality. Women are crucial in the translation of the products of a vibrant agriculture sector into food and nutritional security for their households. They are often the farmers who cultivate food crops and produce commercial crops alongside the men in their households as a source of income. When women have an income, substantial evidence indicates that the income is more likely to be spent on food and children's needs. World Bank, (2007b).

In rural areas the availability and use of time by women is also a key factor in the availability of water for good hygiene, firewood collection, and frequent feeding of small children. In sub-Saharan Africa transportation of supplies for domestic use fetching fuel wood and water is largely done by women and girls on foot. In Ghana, Tanzania, and Zambia women expend most of their energy on load-carrying activities involving transport of fuel wood, water, and grain for grinding. Fields dedicated to food crops are often farther from home than those related to cash crops. Because women must also

perform domestic tasks, they must spend a considerable amount of time traveling between their home and the fields. This is a burden, together with other domestic and uses of resources. Successful projects are those that invest broadly in improving human capital, sustain and increase the livelihood assets of the poor, and focus on gender equality (World Bank, 2007b).

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Women are the key to food security for their households Quisumbing et al., (1995). Agriculture has an additional impact on food security through its impact on health. For example, poorly managed irrigation infrastructures may become a breeding ground for mosquitoes, and excessive use of groundwater for irrigation may compromise water sources needed by women to ensure good hygiene practices and clean food preparation, without which children suffer more frequently from diarrhea and compromised growth. Poverty is a major driver of poor standards of living like low income per capita, unemployment but the two are not always linked. Poorer households headed by women have demonstrated that they often succeed in providing more nutritional food for their children than those headed by men (Kennedy & Peters, 1992). This demonstrates the importance of gender-based knowledge and roles with regard to village savings and loan association. Men who lack knowledge about saving culture may not be able to translate money saved to other activities to gaining basic needs like food, shelter, medical care and health to improve their living standards in Matany Sub County.

2.5 Summary of knowledge gaps

This chapter reviewed literature related to the assessment of impact of Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLAs) on socio-economic empowerment of women towards improving their livelihoods in Matany Sub County however although the savings is increasing still people have a challenge of achieving empowerment to the fullest. The study therefore looked at how this played out in the context of Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLAs) to enhance the women's ability to be empowered.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter explores and presents the framework for the data collection and analysis of the study, discusses a comprehensive depiction of how essential village savings and loan association contributing towards socio-economic empowerment of women in Matany Sub-County according to authors in the previous chapter. Data was sourced, processed, analyzed interpreted and presented to fulfill the research objectives.

3.1 Research design

According to Bryman and Bell (2003), research design is an arrangement of condition of collection and analysis of data in a manner that aims to combine relevance to the researcher by writing the hypothesis and its operational implications to the final analysis of data. This study was conducted using a case study design that involved empirical findings of particular phenomenon in its real state form by using various sources of evidence. Therefore, for the purposes of determining the objectives of the study, both qualitative and quantitative approaches were used which enabled a researcher obtain reliable information.

Quantitative research approach was used which gave a focus on the variables so as to establish the impact of village savings and loans association on the socio-economic empowerment of women at household level with particular reference to Akaai-aikeny, and gave a comprehensive analysis of the variables using the dimensions. Qualitative research approach was used as the researcher understood

the behaviors of the individuals in a socio-economic context. This research included an array of interpretive techniques which described, decoded, translated and came to terms with the meanings. (Cooper et al., 2006: 196) Nevertheless, the triangulation method which was the combination of both qualitative and quantitative research designs was used by the researcher to come up with numerals and even go beyond them to seek better information from the respondents.

3.2 Area and study population

The study was conducted in Matany Sub-County, Napak district which was formed in July 2010 and it was roughly 20 kilometers from Napak District General Head Quarters Administration offices. Prior it was known as "Bokora" county which was formally part of Moroto district. The area had a population estimated to be 219,427 during the 2002 national census, and the annual population growth rate was estimated to be 2.8 percent Uganda National Bureau of Statistics, (2002) with this statistics it was estimated that population in 2009 was approximately 266,222 and 289,217 by 2012. To add on this, the area was inhabited primarily by Karamojong tribe. I chose this area of study because it was located in a rural setting generally inhabited by the rural farmers with different economic activities ranging from scale farming activities to small scale non farming activities.

3.3 Population of the Study

The study population consisted of rural farmers, some of which are those that benefited from Village Savings and Loan Association program. Rural farmers, ex-officials from Change Agent Association, government officials (Community Development Officer and Parish chiefs) and opinion leaders to establish how effective their initiative was in improving people's livelihoods. The above groups were selected because they carried out savings and loans practices which improved their livelihoods in Matany sub-County and the

researcher believed that those people were better informed about micro-credit issues.

3.4 Sampling techniques

The researcher used purpose sampling technique since the purpose of the study was determined by specific group members of Akai-aikeny association and the topic was very sensitive. Therefore the researcher used the stratified sampling to group the population into homogeneous subsets that share similar characteristics that gave him relevant information as far as the study was concerned.

3.5 Sample size

The researcher obtained a population size of 80 from which a sample of 73 respondents were selected from the population and interviewed using focus group discussion and other data collection tools. from The sample 45 rural farmers of 3 village savings and loans associations which include Akai-aikeny, Afro-united and Nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ respectively were selected out off 3 VSLAs registered with Matany Sub-County, 15 farmers were selected per each village savings and loans associations in which 10 were males and 5 females in each association and were interviewed using focus group discussion,9 executive members that was 03 per VSLA which included 2 males and 1 female were interviewed using a questionnaire,4 government officials such as 1 community Development officer,03 parish chiefs were interviewed using questionnaire and 05 ex-officials from change Agent Association which involved 3 males and 2 females and opinion leaders 10 which included 6 males and 4 females were interviewed to obtain the reliable information as per the study.

Table 1: Showing Population, Sample Size, Sampling Techniques and Tools used in the field.

Sample Area (VSLAs)	Sample Size	Techniques	Tools
Akai-aikeny, Afro-united, Nativity	45	Random	Focus group discussion

VSLAs			
Executive	9	Random	questionnaire
Ex-officials	5	Stratified	interviews
Gov't officials	4	Purposive	questionnaire
Opinion leaders	10	Random	interviews
Total	73		

3.6 Data collection methods/ procedures

In these methods of carrying out research, the researcher's data was based upon the use of qualitative and quantitative research tools. This was due to the nature of the data that the researcher collected. Primary data for this study was collected using various self-administered questionnaires and in depth interview questionnaires or focus group discussion for group members and other respondents respectively.

3.6.4 Self-administered questionnaires

The self-administered questionnaires included structured questions which were geared towards assessing the impact of village saving and loan association in socio-economic empowerment of women in Matany sub county. The questionnaires were in both the local language of the area (Ngakarimojong and English) since some of the respondents were more comfortable in using their local language. It also helped the researcher's bias as firsthand information was gathered from primary respondents and it also helped in obtaining large information from a wider area within a short period of time that made comparisons of answers possible. It was less expensive and required less skill to administer.

3.6.6 Focus group discussions

This group consisted of 45 rural farmers and guided by the researcher

as a (facilitator), enabled talking freely and spontaneously about themes considered important to the investigation. The group was selected from the target group whose opinions and ideas were of interest to the researcher. A pretest was carried out by the researcher to determine their qualifications and interest for the discussion.

3.6.5 Interviews

The researcher collected data through face to face interaction with a targeted population by use of structured or unstructured questions, for this research both approaches were deemed appropriate to the researcher. Unstructured interview allowed respondents to freely discuss and gave their comments on issues raised to increase the existing information to the information already got from the questionnaires. The method was characterized by flexibility of questioning or conversation as there was no following of pre-determined questions as opposed to structured interviews where both interviewer and interviewees were restricted to specific issues raised in the structured questionnaires. Through the structured and unstructured interviews the researcher interviewed 54 males and 19 females within a period of 2 weeks.

3.6.6 Documentation

This was a major source of secondary data used by the researcher. Internal documents used comprised a sample of loan files in the association, brochures, internal publications etc. On the other hand external documents included relevant texts, journals, newsletters, publications from the associated organizations like Bank of Uganda (BOU), Change Agent Association (CAA).

3.6.7 Pilot testing

A pilot study was used as a "small scale version or trial run in preparation for a major" (Polit, Beck, & Hingler, 1993). The researcher therefore pre-tested the tools on 19 randomly selected women participating in VSLAs; this comprised 26 % of the sample size. The pilot test addressed a number of logistical issues. As part of the research strategy the following factors were resolved prior to the actual study: checked that instructions were comprehensive, survey tools and eliminated any ambiguity, reliability and validity of the instruments, statistical and analytical process to determine if they are efficacious.

3.6.8 Validity of the research instrument.

The validity of the instruments was ascertained by the pilot test. This ensured that the instructions were clear and all possible responses to questions were captured. Content validity of measuring instrument was the extent to which it provided adequate coverage of the investigative questions which guided the study (Mugenda, 2008). In this study, content validity was determined by consulting research supervisor within the university. The Researcher reviewed the instruments and sought opinions of the University supervisors to recommend for improvements and verify whether the instruments adequately addressed the objectives of the study and answered the research questions.

3.7 Data management and analysis

Data was analyzed, presented both qualitatively and quantitatively. Qualitatively, data was analyzed by use of narrative analysis. Quantitatively, data was manually analyzed and the generated information was entered into excel computer packaged to generate figures and tables for clear interpretations.

3.7.1 Editing

It was done immediately after data collection. The completed interview response schedules were carefully scrutinized while noting the relationship between the given answers and the questions that were asked ensured accuracy, uniformity, consistency with other facts gathered comprehensibility of the research and this facilitated coding and tabulation.

3.7.2 Coding

Kothari, (2004) defined Coding as the process of assigning numerals or other symbols to answers so that responses were put into a limited number of categories or classes. This possesses the characteristic of exhaustiveness that is to say; there was a class for every data item and also that of mutual exclusivity which made specific answers placed in one and only one cell in a given category set. All this was

done according to the different research methods, instruments and tools into meaningful categories for the purpose of bringing out important patterns.

3.7.3 Tabulation

Tabulation was used after assembling the mass of data. It was necessary for the researcher to arrange the same in some kind of concise and logical order since it facilitated the process of comparison, summation of items and the detection of errors along with omissions. Tabulation was done by use of a computer program/an electronic device called Microsoft excel.

3.7.4 The Data Analysis

Under this study the researcher analyzed both qualitative and quantitative data which was summarized in both tabular and narrative form. In qualitative data, he sorted and categorized the data in themes, that is to say, according to the following questions: the activities implemented how the activities had empowered women, contributions of VSLA, challenges faced by association and ways to mitigate the challenges. Here, the researcher collaborated, explained and discussed the data obtained while comparing the information obtained from different methods and tools.

3.8 Quality Control Methods

The researcher ensured methodological reliability and validity. In this case reliability meant that the findings were consistently the same if the study was carried out again. Gads by (2003)

3.8.1 Reliability

According to Joppe (2000) reliability was the extent to which the results were consistent overtime and an accurate representation of the total population under study and the results were reproduced under similar methodology then the research instruments were considered to be reliable and the researcher tested for reliability

using test and pretest thus found the alpha value, this was because it was simple to construct a highly reliable scale easy to read and completed for participants therefore the researcher kept the collected information as valid and reliable as possible where the data was void of bias as much as possible.

3.8.2 Ethical consideration

The researcher demonstrated not only expertise and diligence, but also honesty and integrity. This was done to recognize and protect the rights of human subjects. The rights to self-determination, anonymity, confidentiality and informed consent were observed. No bribes were involved to acquire information, asked permission from the supervisor and the researcher did not force out information from the respondents and was used for study purpose to ensure confidentiality.

3.8.3 Limitations

The researcher was limited by time allocated for the research. Some respondents were busy at their work and therefore gave less attention to the researchers questionnaires. This slowed down the process of research and the deadline for finishing research could not be met. However, the researcher requested for more time from the Director of the institute which enabled him to finish the research successfully.

Language barrier was a problem as some of the respondents did not understand English thus misinterpreted the instructions therefore the researcher was to interpret, translate the questionnaires in the local language to obtain the right data wanted.

The respondents faced problems of some methods chosen especially documentation, thus inaccurate data since some respondents didn't follow standard formats of maintaining financial records. To avoid

all this, the researcher had to ask additional questions to come up with realistic data required.

The researcher faced financial constraints to cater for stationery, transport to meet various respondents, feeding, Internet and computer services and curb up the problem he lobbied financial support from relatives and friends to facilitate the research process.

3.8.4 Delimitations of the study

The study benefited from the fact that there existed reports by CARE Uganda and Change Agent Association on VSLAs. There were also government statistics on gender disparities and poverty indices that informed the study. The researcher chose area of study in Napak because the District was one of the United Nation habitat model towns with massive focus and resource investment undertaken to facilitate community driven development, women empowerment, and food security projects.

3.8.5 Conclusion and Suggestions

Like almost all development programs, village savings and loan association program was not free from short comings like gender inequalities, inadequate Technical Knowledge, limited Institutions, lack of motivation, Limited mobilization therefore for it to achieve fully, the technical training was provided on a range of activities with a view to build institutions that made economic activities sustainable. mainstreaming empowerment questions like proper planning, implementation, evolution throughout the Village Savings Loans Associations procedures ensured the Development processes which involved linkages with other organizations challenging gender inequality at different levels and a rethinking of current 'best practice that gave women freedom to take their own decision-making processes.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter summarized the presentations and discussions of findings with reference to the impact of socio-economic empowerment of women in improving their livelihoods at household levels in Matany Sub-County. It included analysis of the background information and the study's objectives.

4.1 Background information

The background information comprised of the sex, the age group, the marital status, the level of education and occupation of the respondents.

4.1.2 The Sex of the respondents

The researcher was interested in the sex of the respondents to distinguish how many males and females were involved in the saving process which was established as seen in the figure below.

Figure 2: A figure showing the sex of the respondents

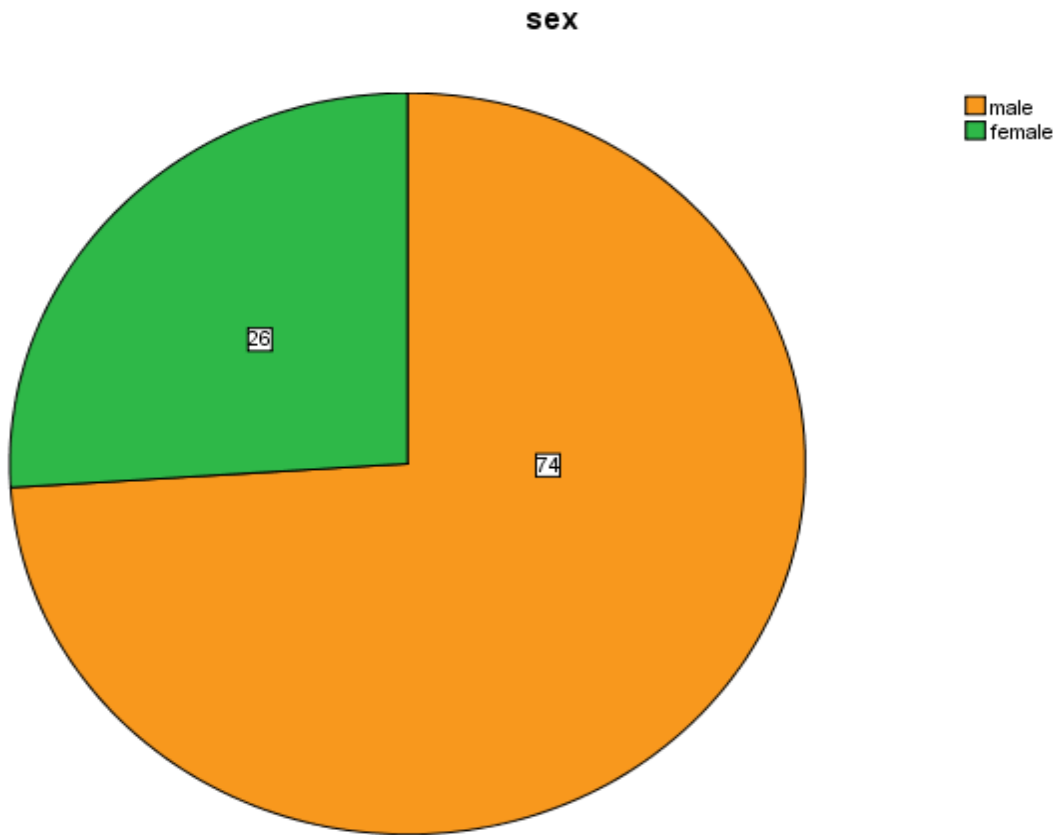
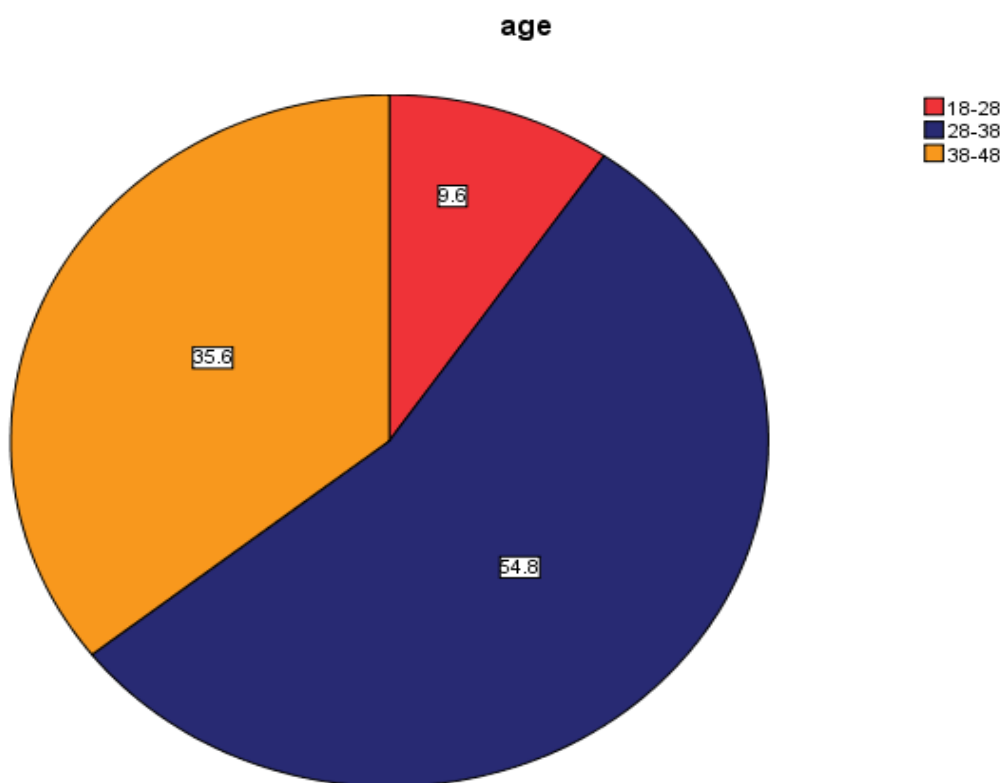


Figure 2 above shows that according to the research 74% of the respondents were male and 26% were female which meant that more males were involved in village savings and loan association in Matany Sub-County as compared to the female. This indicates that there are more male farmers than female farmers.

4.1.3 The age of the respondents

The researcher was interested in the age of the respondents. The findings are shown in the figure below.

Figure 3: A Figure showing the age of the respondents



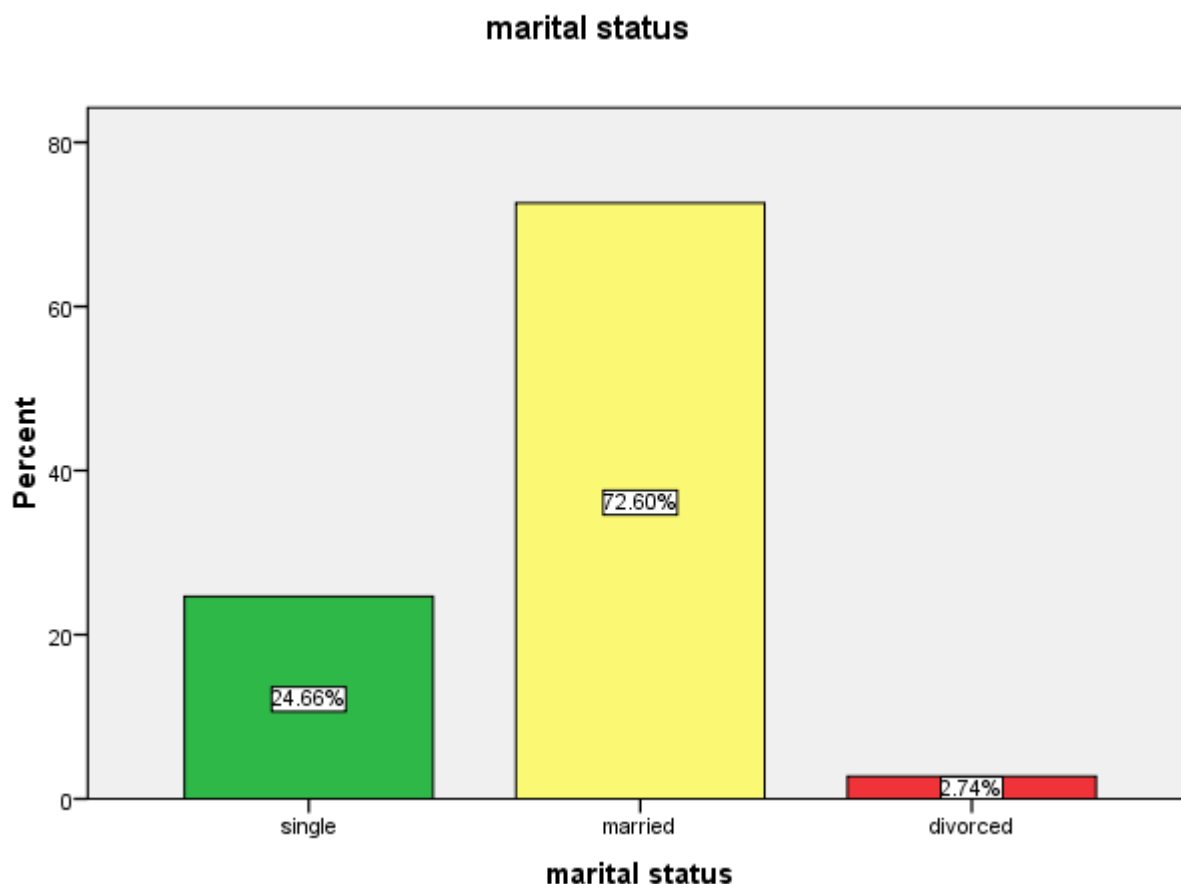
Source: Research survey data, 2015 (Interview guide).

Figure 3 shows that according to the research 9.6% of the respondents in Matany Sub County who saved under the association fell under the age group of 18-28, 54.8% are between ages of 28-38 while 35.6% were between the ages of 38-48. Most of the respondents were between the age of 28-38 which meant that in that age bracket people had a lot of ambitions and they were very energetic were they made sure they accomplished their goals to the end of destiny.

4.1.4 The Marital status of the respondents

The marital status was one of the major concerns of the researcher and the findings are shown below.

Figure 4: A figure showing the marital status of the respondents



Source: Research survey, 2015.

Figure 4: shows that most of the respondents were married with a percentage of 72.6% followed by single with a percentage of 24.7% and lastly the ones who were divorced at the rate of 2.7%. The findings above as regards to marital status indicated that most respondents were in their prime age of saving. This provided an opportunity for the researcher to scoop out the necessary information needed as regards to the study under investigation hence created room for reliability.

4.1.5: The Level of education of the respondents

The researcher was interested in the educational level of the respondents and the results are as shown below.

Table 2: The level of education of the respondents

Level of education	Frequency	Percentage
Never attended school	33	45.2
Primary	38	52.1
Secondary	2	2.7
Total	73	100.0

Source: Research survey data, 2015

Table 5 above shows that 45.2 never attended school, 52.1% attained primary education, 2.7% attained up to secondary level. Most of the respondents attended at least up to primary level due to the fact that Matany Sub-County was in the rural setting with both literate and illiterate people and due to limited funds to facilitate them to join higher Institutions of learning made them to drop out of school hence an empowered.

4.1.6: The occupation of the respondents

The researcher was interested in the occupation of the respondents and the findings are shown below.

Table 3: The occupation of the respondents

Occupation	Frequency	Percentage
Farming	32	43.8
Small Businesses	41	56.2
Total	73	100.0

Source: Research survey data, 2015 (Interview guide).

According to table 3 above, most of the respondents were involved in small businesses with a percentage of 56.2% and others were in farming with the percentage of 43.8%. This made most of them to join the savings and loans association in order to develop their businesses to the highest levels possible.

4.2 The Income generating activities

The researcher wanted to find out the income generating activities implemented by the village savings and loans association and the findings are as shown below.

Table 4: Responses on whether income generating activities had been implemented by the association.

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	41	56.2
Agree	32	43.8
Total	73	100.0

Source: Research survey data, 2015 (Interview guide).

According to table 4, 56.2% of the respondents strongly agreed that they had other income generating activities besides savings while 43.8% of the respondents agreed that they had other income generating activities apart from the savings. This is attributed to awareness and the sensitization received from Micro-credit institutions, meetings at Sub-County level that were organized contributed to the empowerment of the women. The Government officials like community development officer (CDO) and Parish chiefs on the other hand observed that there was a positive progress as regards to the program given showed big turn up during the sub-county level sensitization/training meetings. They further blamed a section of

some members who did not want to participate in training and ended up condemning the program for sidelining. This is never the less in line with what members portrayed that village savings had played quite an important role in improving household incomes. this was in line to the related literature that an emergency loan involves smaller amount payable in a month at an interest rate of 5%.they had associate members that include son, daughter and a husband of the family group. These do not save monthly, but pay 10, 000 as membership fee and then access loans at 10% interest rate with principal member as guarantor (New Vision, Wednesday, Jan/30/2013).

4.2.1 The external assistance towards the development of the association

The researcher was interested on whether there was any external assistance towards the development of the association and the findings are shown below.

Table 5: Responses on whether there is any external assistance towards the development of the association

Response	Frequency	Percentage
<i>Strongly agree</i>	30	41.1
<i>Agree</i>	42	57.5
<i>Not sure</i>	1	1.4
<i>Total</i>	73	100.0

Source: Research survey data, 2015 (Interview guide).

Table 5 above shows that 41.1% of the respondent strongly agreed that there was some external assistance provided towards the development

of the association, 57.5% agreed while 1.4 only were not sure about it. The presentation therefore was attributed to the mobilization and sensitization programs on VSLAs by Government officials, Micro-credit institutions like Change Agent Association. According to the findings, the programs were carried out to inform the community on a wide range of opinions in line to savings to adapt knowledge on saving culture for instance during a meeting, members said that savings had surely helped them to increase the household incomes.

4.2.2 The Books of Account in the association

The researcher was also interested in knowing whether there were some books of accounts for the association and the responses in the table below show the findings.

Table 6 Responses on whether the association had a saving box, record book and ledger book

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	29	39.7
Agree	44	60.3
Total	73	100.0

Source: Research survey data, 2015 (Interview guide).

Table 6 above shows that 39.7% of the respondents strongly agreed that the association had books of account while 60.3% agreed. This shows that use of books of account was very crucial in the operation of the association because they contained all the details of what took place in the association. Respondents conclusively reported that from the client’s perspective, learning to save and having a safe place to keep savings was one of the principles that benefited the program to enhance security hence yardstick to measure their economic progress and was often a source of great pride to women who had never had their own working capital.

4.2.3 Training of the VSLA members on women empowerment

The researcher was interested in knowing whether there was training of the VSLA members on women empowerment and the findings are presented in the table below.

Table 7: Responses on whether there was any training of the VSLA members on women empowerment

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	30	41.1
Agree	43	58.9
Total	73	100.0

Source: Research survey data, 2015 (Interview guide).

The table 7 shows that 41.1% of the respondents strongly agreed that there was training of the members while 58.9% agreed showing that the majority were involved on trainings and this was attributed to the ever present Government officials who were always on the move to sensitize the members about the importance and good ways of saving for the future.

4.3 The contribution of the VSLA towards women empowerment

The researcher was also interested in finding out whether women empowerment had increased household incomes of the members and the findings are below.

Table 8: Responses on whether women empowerment had increased household incomes.

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	33	45.2
Agree	40	54.8
Total	73	100.0

Source: Research survey data, 2015 (Interview guide).

Table 8 above shows that 45.2% strongly agreed that women empowerment had increased household incomes while 54.8% agreed. This was as a result of the good work the association had done in raising on the level of incomes of the women through accumulated savings, lobbying from Micro-credit institutions and external assistance from other Organizations thus prompted the association's expansion.

4.3.1 Improvement in managerial skills and increase in assets of women at household level

The researcher was interested in knowing whether the managerial skills had led to the increase in the assets of women at household level and the results are shown below.

Table 9: Responses on whether improvements in managerial skills have led to increased assets of women at household levels

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	26	35.6
Agree	47	64.4
Total	73	100.0

Source: Research survey data, 2015 (Interview guide).

Table 9 above shows that 35.6% of the respondents strongly agreed that there was an improvement in the assets of the women at household levels due to managerial skills while 64.4% agreed that the received managerial skills like record keeping, accounting and The respondents attributed this to the benefits that came with proper interventions of the Change Agent Association, Government programs like Community Driven Fund, Youth Fund which were aimed at improving peoples' livelihoods towards increasing household incomes.

According to the findings VSLAs received funds annually from the Government in regard to VSLA program which did not benefit all the farmers in the community based on the standards of selection. A few who received funds were educated on how to manage and increase their household income this meant increased outputs but also performance meant doing the work as well as being mindful about the results achieved.

4.3.2 Women empowerment and improvement in decision making

The researcher was interested in knowing whether the women empowerment led to the improvement in the decision making of women at household level and the results are shown below.

Table 10: Responses on whether women empowerment has led to improvement in the decision making of women

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	38	52.1
Agree	35	47.9
Total	73	100.0

Source: Research survey data, 2015(interview guide).

Table 10 above shows that 52.1% of the respondents strongly agreed that women empowerment has led to improvement in the decision making of women at household levels while 47.9% agreed. The above field findings showed the majority of the respondents were involved in the decision making processes. This was in line to what one of the female respondent by names Atim Magdalen lamented that they were able to participate in the association and community decision making process than their husbands being the grantors of their loans, they were able to own their property, involved in keeping funds as treasurers, this enabled them to be the initiators of their own development since these provided quick alternatives to increased household incomes.

4.4 Challenges faced by the VSLA.

4.4.1 Limited benefits to members besides other community members

Table 11: Response on whether the benefits are only limited to the members of the association besides other community members

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	27	37.0
Agree	42	57.5
Disagree	4	5.5
Total	73	100.0

Source: Research survey data, 2015 (Interview Guide).

From the table 11 above, 37.0% of the respondents strongly agreed, 57.5% agreed and 5.5 disagreed .The above field findings showed that the majority of the respondents agreed that benefits were limited to the members thus hindering the expansion of the association such as poor governance like poor managerial skills, negative attitude towards saving culture influenced by the cultural beliefs and conflict of interest among the members were geared towards limited savings of the association which were solved by mobilizing,

sensitizing the members on the importance of saving for the future, transparency and accountability, quick repayment of loans , cooperation, They could therefore argue the government of Uganda to revise its policies in regards to associations so as to ensure incentives and tax holidays were provided to improve people's standards of living and boost the economic growth and development of the country at large.

4.4.2 Poor attitude of saving culture as one of the challenges.

The researcher was interested in knowing whether poor attitude of saving culture was a challenge.

Table 12: Responses on whether poor attitude of saving culture in women was one of the challenges faced by VSLA in implementing income generating activities to household.

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	33	45.2
Agree	38	52.1
Not sure	2	2.7
Total	73	100.0

Source: Primary data, 2015 (interview guide)

According to the findings in table 11 above, 45.2% of the respondents strongly agreed, 52.1 agreed and 2.7 not sure. The presentation above indicated that the majority of respondents agreed that poor attitude was a challenge faced by the VSLA and this was attributed by the respondents to failure by government officials to deliver services in time like they delay release funds to facilitate the smooth running of the associations programs yet resources were provided by government were meant to benefit the rural farmers however the leaders according to the findings turned the resources to their own benefits at the expense of the rural poor farmers as witnessed in the

funds released by the president during international youth day hosted by Moroto District to facilitate youth livelihood programs, it was again the big leaders in Napak, Matany Sub-County like Youth Councilors and chairpersons who wrote proposals to benefit their own projects than poor farmers. The majority had been promised but left in dilemma with nothing therefore the program had a lot of loopholes as members in charge had not been honest in service delivery. Much supposed to be given was not given to the community hence majority of the members had been left with bad attitude as regards to the program since they had given up.

4.3 Limited resources and overwhelming demand as one of the challenge

The researcher was interested in knowing whether limited resources was one of the challenges faced by the village savings and loans associations and the findings are shown below.

Table 13: Responses on whether limited resources and overwhelming demand from the community was a challenge towards VSLA program in implementing income generating activities to household levels.

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	28	38.4
Agree	45	61.6
Total	73	100.0

Source: Primary data, 2015 (Interview Guide).

According to the findings, 38.4% of the respondents strongly agreed, 61.6% agreed. The majority of the respondents agreed to the statement that limited resources verses overwhelming demand from the community was a challenge of VSLA service implementation towards increasing household income and as a tool of poverty reduction. Lead farmers attributed this to scarce resources in the community as witnessed by long dry spells of sunshine, long drought, persistence raids,

increased unemployment and escalating corruption among district officials at the expense of rural farmers and the implementation of the programs to alleviate poverty was delayed. This had resulted into inefficiency and poor service delivery because of unethical behavior hence affected people's livelihoods at household level in Matany Sub-County.

4.4 Corruption as a big challenge in the implementation of income generating activities to household levels

Table 14: Responses on whether corruption in VSLA was a big challenge in the implementation of income generating activities to household levels

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	29	39.7
Agree	41	56.2
Not sure	3	4.1
Total	73	100.0

Source: Primary data, 2015 (extracted from the interview guide)

Table 14 above shows that 39.7% of the respondents strongly agreed while 56.2% agreed and 4.1 were not sure. The above field findings showed the majority of the respondents out cry of escalating corruption that included embezzlement and mismanagement of public funds in many multiple programs meant to uplift the lives of the rural farmers in the area. This was a case in point were some executives of pole pole youth group were given two million five hundred thousand only to benefit the youth in kololo village but the money ended being distributed among the District community development officer, LCV youth councilor and two association executive members for their own personal tendencies then where was the trust and also association funds were embezzled when the box was

broken in absence of other members, this was attributed to poor leadership skills and loan default by most members of the association therefore caused decline in the association income hindering its expansion since 2010. They had set up consolidated, comprehensive policies and strategies to curb up with the increasing syndrome by pushing defaulters to the courts of law.

4.5 Measures to eliminate the general challenges

The researcher was interested in measures that were put in place to eliminate the general challenges which were really hindering the progress of the association and the findings are presented below

Table 15: Responses on whether measures had been put in place to eliminate the general challenges

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	23	31.5
Agree	50	68.5
Total	73	100.0

Source: Primary data, 2015 (Extracted from interview guide)

Table 15 above shows that 31.5% strongly agreed that there were some measures that had been put in place to eliminate the general challenges in the association while 68.5% agreed. Therefore the majority reflected that the association had put in place some measures to solve the existing challenges which included rules and regulations to be followed like being present whenever the meeting was conducted, policies that indicate amount contributed by each individual for saving, regular audits, monitoring and evaluation by the Government officials, Anti-corruption unit.

4.6 Recommendations to improve the general VSLA services in the process of socio-economic empowerment of women at household levels.

The researcher was interested in knowing whether there were some recommendations that had been implemented to improve the general services in the process of socio-economic empowerment of the women at household levels.

Table 16: Responses on whether recommendations had been put in place to improve the general VSLA services in the process of socio-economic empowerment of women at household levels

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	26	35.6
Agree	45	61.6
Not sure	2	2.7
Total	73	100.0

Source: Primary data, 2015 (Extracted from interview guide)

According to the presentation in the table 16 above, 35.6% of the respondents strongly agreed that there were recommendations to deal with the challenges, 61.6% agreed while only 2.7% were not sure about it.

The recommendations in the association included the following; There was mobilization and sensitization of the members of the community about the importance of VSLA program towards increasing household's income.

There was need for government to increase on the funds injected in these income generating activities to supplement on the association's budget to enhance its efficiency and effectiveness in various activities implemented in Matany Sub-County. There was need to ensure strict monitoring and evaluation by government on funded projects especially the projects that were meant to benefit the rural farmers to ensure proper service delivery.

Supervision of income generating activities before funds were delivered for any project and implementation, there was need to plan and determine the beneficiaries in a given locality. This is of paramount importance in that it caters for all the members of the community and revolving fund since the program is meant for all the people. VSLA policy campaign was recommended in order for the village savings and loans association policies to be more familiar and popular to the people, popularization using different avenues like media, church, and other public meetings.

Integrated budgets were also recommended for the purpose of transparency and accountability in order to have the information readily available to the farmers and the community at large therefore there was need to involve different stakeholders in budgeting process of the VSLA activities at all levels and promotes equal participation among members despite of gender, race, religious affiliation. This would help in narrowing down chances of misuse and abuse of resources.

4.6 Conclusion

In conclusion the research aimed on the assessment of VSLA on socio-economic empowerment of women, activities implemented by the VSLA included training members on managerial skills like record keeping, accounting, and decision making which led to increased incomes, assets, decision making process thus improving people's standards of living. However despite the great contributions, the VSLA also faced a lot of challenges like poor governance on management of resources, poor attitude towards saving due to cultural dogma considering women as kitchen dwellers and inferior to their counter parts the males, increased corruption, and limited resources to save hindered the growth and expansion of the VSLA. Nevertheless the VSLA put across some recommendations to curb up the above challenges like regular attendance of meetings, monitoring and evaluation to measure the performance of the VSLA, regular audits to solve corruption issues and constant lobbying to create partnership with other associations and financial institutions. Therefore although there were constant strides in the improvement geared towards women's socio-economic empowerment at household level much is still desired and unless women's efforts are appreciated as the initiators of their own development, women's empowerment and development at large remains a dream.

CAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter comprised of the summary of the findings, conclusions and the recommendations which should be put into practice in order to improve the saving culture of the members so as to ensure the improvement of village savings and loan association on the socio-economic empowerment of women at household levels in Matany Sub-County.

5.1 Summary of the study findings

The study was guided by four research questions among which included; establishing the activities implemented by VSLA towards increasing household incomes which included capacity building, improvement in the saving culture, relationship between the VSLA and women empowerment, challenges and ways of mitigating the challenges which are discussed below.

5.1.1 The activities implemented by the VSLA

The researcher discovered that most stakeholders and shareholders of the association were engaged in capacity building programmes on managerial skills like record keeping, stocktaking, accounting and finance, marketing , saving, farming, retailing which enabled farmers to acquire the daily basic needs and this was reflected in that members were motivated in their venture thus went an extra mile to maximize the profits of the business hence increase in income since going an extra mile meant being a head of other farmers dealing in

the same business in that members were confident and determined to maintain their association to the final destination. Due to self drive members found themselves taking several consolidated, comprehensive policies, strategies and measures like proper planning, regular attendances, regular deposits, regular meetings per weekend, established follow up and organizing committees which improved the position of their village savings and loan association.

The researcher discovered that improvement in managerial skills increased assets due to self motivation. When one is self motivated they encourage themselves to do their work appropriately and as required or even better and as a result there was efficiency and effectiveness thus proper quality output and expansion of the association. However the benefits driven from loans did not benefit all the members equally. The study had revealed that fairly richer individuals benefited more than the solidarity group who are poor.

The researcher found out that empowerment increased cost savings in that every member was willing to save without any force which helped in achieving reasonably strong financial position. Its good policy in administration of loans and recovery measured coupled with capable management executives had attracted from financial institution.

The researcher found out that women empowerment led to the improvement in the decision making of women not only in the family but also in the community in that they developed leadership skills and behavioral change thus enabled them to be independent in their decisions, own their property like land, led others because they were self driven.

The 3rd research question dealt with finding out the challenges facing VSLA in implementing income generating activities to

households. Findings indicated that the challenges included poor attitude of the community towards VSLA programs at the rate of 52.1%, limited resources verses overwhelming demand from the community people at the rate of 66.6% and corruption in both the association and government officials at the rate of 56.2% which affected the smooth running and expansion of the association in Matany Sub-County, Napak district.

Research also revealed that defaulting to repay loans promptly or not at all times broke mutual benefit among the members. This was attributed to either inappropriate investment choice made or natural hazards faced by borrowers since no human being is perfect, also where funds were invested in activities that never gave regular flow of income to cater for the bi-weekly loan repayment. Misappropriation of funds for household's requirements led to delay and defaults in payment where the cash was used for other purposes. However, through training some clients had understood their obligations.

The association also faced problems especially in determining the trustworthiness of some members, tracking the defaulters in that some of them became cruel. The effectiveness and efficiency was improved through the policies which were implemented, clients were sensitized on their role in the repayment programmes.

5.3. Conclusions

From the study findings, the major activities implemented by the VSLA towards increasing household incomes in Matany Sub-County included saving, capacity building on good governance, elite capture, self selection since trust was fundamental to the effective functioning of a VSLA, diverse linkages to financial institutions, lobbying form agencies to acquire loans, sustainability and quality of services once they became independent.

It can also be concluded that there was proper and accountable use of resources among the district officials despite corruption syndrome which stood at 56.2% which was high. Findings indicated that government through decentralization system forwarded funds at the districts to cater for the income generating activities like NAADS, Youth group's activities and implementation to increase on household's income. However due to the vice, it deterred the implementation of most activities, therefore I urge the government to reprimand the culprits on investigation and if found guilty they are fired off.

5.4 Recommendations

Poor attitudes of community people towards saving was a big problem that need to sensitize members of the community about the importance of VSLA program towards increasing household's income.

Limited resources verses overwhelming demand from the community people, there was need for government to increase on the funds injected in these income generating activities to supplement on the budget to enhance its effectiveness in various communities in Matany Sub-County.

Corruption in VSLA and government offices, to control corruption needed strict monitoring and evaluation by government on funded programs especially the programs that are meant to benefit the local farmers in rural areas to ensure effectiveness and efficiency in service delivery.

Supervision of income generating activities was to be carried on before funds were delivered for any project and implementation there is needed to plan and determine the beneficiaries in a given

locality. This is of paramount importance in that it caters for all the members of the community and revolving fund since the program is meant for all the people.

VSLA policy campaign, it is recommended that for the village savings and loans association to be perfect, policies should be more familiar and popular to the people, popularization was to observe in different avenues like media, church, and other public meetings.

Integrated budgets, It is recommended that the purpose of transparency and accountability was to have the information readily available to the farmers and the community at large therefore there is need to involve different stakeholders in budgeting process of the VSLA activities at all levels and promotes equal participation among members despite of gender, race, religious affiliation. This will help in narrowing down chances of misuse and abuse of resources.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

UGANDA MARTYRS UNIVERSITY,
INSTITUTE OF ETHICS AND DEVELOPMENT STUDIES,
P.O. BOX 5498,
KAMPALA, UGANDA.

15/03/2014.

TO:

Dear Respondent,

RE: **ASSEESING IMPACT OF VILLAGE SAVINGS AND LOANS ASSOCIATION IN SOCIO-ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN AT HOUSEHOLD LEVEL IN MATANY SUB COUNTY.**

My name is **Moru Emmanuel** a student of the Institute of Ethics and Development Studies of Uganda Martyrs University pursuing Bachelors Degree in Ethics and Development Studies. I am doing a research on assessing the impact of Village Savings and Loans Association in socio-economic empowerment of women at household level in Matany Sub County as my case study which is a prerequisite for the award of that degree in the above mentioned University.

It is my humble request that you assist me by use of the focus group discussion and responding to the interview questions as honestly and accurately as possible. Be assured that your identity and responses will be treated with utmost confidentiality and shall only be used for the purpose of this study. I take this opportunity to thank you in advance for you willingness to participate in this important exercise.

Yours Faithfully,

.....

Moru Emmanuel

APPENDIX II: FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE FOR VSLA MEMBERS.

Hallo, my name is **Moru Emmanuel**. I am a third year student of the Institute of Ethics and Development Studies of Uganda Martyrs University. I am conducting a research on assessing the impact of Village Savings and Loans Associations on socio economic empowerment of women at household level in Matany Sub County. Despite the recording of the interview responses, the information you give will be kept strictly confidential and will not be disclosed to anyone else.

1. SECTION ONE: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

1. Date of interview :...../...../.....(day/month, year)

2. Sex a. Male b. Female

3. What is your age in completed years?

a) Under18 b) 18-28 c) 28-38 d) 38-48

e) Over 48

4. What is your marital status?

a) Single b) Married c) Divorced d) Widowed

5. What is your highest level of education?

a) Never attended school b) Primary c) Secondary d)

University/college

6. What is your occupation?

a) Farming b) Small business c) Formal employment

d) Housewife

SECTION B: THE ACTIVITIES IMPLEMENTED BY VSLA

7. Which Income Generating Activities do you have as an association besides savings?

8. How have these activities empowered women of your VSLA?

9. Is there any external assistance towards the development of this association?

10. Do you have the following in your association?

- Saving Box
- Record books
- Ledger book

SECTION C: HOW WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT HAS IMPROVED FARMERS LIVELIHOODS

11. Is there any training(s) of VSLA members on women empowerment?

12. Has women empowerment increased household incomes?

13. Do you think improvements in managerial skills have lead to increased assets of women at household levels?

14. Has women empowerment lead to improvement in the decision making of women?

SECTION D: THE CONTRIBUTION OF VILLAGE SAVINGS AND LOANS ASSOCIATIONS (VSLA) .

15. As a member, to what extent has the VSLA benefited women in this community?

16. Is/are the benefit(s) limited to only members of the association or to also other community members?

SECTION E: CHALLANGES FACING VSLAS IN IMPLEMENTING INCOME GENERATING ACTIVITIES

17. Explain the challenges being experienced in the association.

18. Is poor attitude of saving culture in women one of the challenges facing VSLA in implementing income generating activities to household? Explain your answer.

19. Do you think limited resources and overwhelming demand from the community a challenge toward VSLA program in implementing income generating activities to households' level? Explain your answer.

20. Is corruption in VSLA a big challenge in the implementation of income generating activities to household levels? Explain your answer.

SECTION F: TO FIND OUT THE WAYS OF MITIGATING THE CHALLENGES

21. Suggest measures on how to eliminate such problem(s).

22. What recommendations would you give for the general improvement of VSLA services in the process of socio-economic empowerment of women at household levels?

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION

APPENDIX III: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR THE VSLA EXECUTIVE MEMBERS

My name is **Moru Emmanuel** a student of the Institute of Ethics and Development Studies of Uganda Martyrs University pursuing a Bachelors Degree in Ethics and Development Studies. This interview guide is designed to assess the impacts of village saving and loans association on the socio-economic empowerment of women at households in Matany Sub-county which is a prerequisite to the award of a degree in that above mentioned University. The information given will be used for academic purpose only. I therefore kindly request you to give your honest opinion.

SECTION G

1. Date of interview...../...../.....
2. Name of the respondent:(ask for their consent to provide their names and whether they should be cited.
3. Position in the VSLA:
4. When did the VSLA activities begin in Matany Sub-County, and what purpose do they seek to achieve?
5. What are the specific objectives of your VSLA?

6. What activities to achieve these objectives?
7. Apart from saving, what other projects have you initiated so far and what cost were involved
8. Have you ever attended any capacity building training on the socio-economic empowerment of women?
9. Considering the above answer, how do you appraise the expansion of VSLA has a form of micro-finance within the country basing on 2003 performance
10. What is the structure of the internal and external partnership that you acquire for better implementation of your activities?
11. How does VSLA follow (appraise) up its activities to ensure proper use of the loans for intended purpose?
12. What are your achievements?
13. What challenges do you face in implementation and management of VSLA activities?
14. What mechanisms have you employed to solve some of the challenges faced?
15. What suggestions do you give as possible solutions to the above problems?

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION

APPENDIX IV: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR THE GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS AT SUB THE COUNTY.

My name is **Moru Emmanuel**, a student pursuing a Bachelors degree in Ethics and Development Studies at the Institute of Ethics and Development studies of Uganda Martyrs University. I have designed this interview guide to help me assess the impact of Village Savings and loans association on the socio-economic empowerment of Women at Households' levels in Matany Sub-county. The information that you give will be used for academic purpose only. I therefore kindly request you to give your honest opinion.

SECTION H

1. Date of interview :..../...../.....(day/month/year)
2. Name of the respondent?
3. What is your official position in government?
4. How many VSLA's are registered with the Sub-County?
5. What criteria do you use for selecting the beneficiaries?
6. What are the activities of farmers in VSLA program?
7. How are the VSLA members benefiting in the programs of the Sub-county?
8. How do you view the performance of VSLA in improving the women empowerment in Matany Sub-county?
9. What are the responses of the members towards VSLA program?
10. What are the achievements experienced in the implementation of VSLA in Matany Sub-county.
11. What challenges do you face in implementing VSLA activities in Matany Sub-county?
12. What are you doing to overcome the challenges?
13. What recommendations would you give to mitigate the above challenges and improve the effectiveness of VSLAs?

Thank you so much for your time

God bless you

APPENDIX V: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR THE EX-OFFICIALS

My name is **Moru Emmanuel**, a student pursuing a Bachelors degree in Ethics and Development Studies at the Institute of Ethics and Development studies of Uganda Martyrs University. I have designed this interview guide to help me assess the impact of Village Savings and loans association on the socio-economic empowerment of Women at Households' levels in Matany Sub-county. The information that you give will be used for academic purpose only. I therefore kindly request you to give your honest opinion.

SECTION I

1. Date of interview :...../...../.....(day/month/year)
2. Name of an Organization
3. What is your target group? What does this question mean or seek to achieve? It is vague
4. According to your preference on internal partnership, rank your VSLA partners in relation to their technical aptitude in the implementation of VSLA activities.
5. How have your activities benefited the members of VSLA associations?
6. Have you ever carried out any capacity building training on women empowerment?
7. What are the achievements of VSLAs to the members?
8. What challenges do you face in the implementation of VSLA activities?
9. What have you done to solve those challenges?
10. What recommendations would you propose for to eliminate these limitations and improve the effectiveness of VSLAs?

Thank you so much for your time

God bless you

Appendix VI: One of the structures of the VSLA



Appendix VII: Members of Akai-Aikeny Association (the VSLA)



Appendix VIII: Training on Women empowerment



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