

CHALLENGES FACING WOMEN'S WHO ARE PARTICIPATING IN VILLAGE COMMUNITY BANK IN MBARALI DISTRICT

Abstract

The study aimed at examining challenges facing women's who are participating in VICOBA at Mbarali District. The specific objectives were: to determine social, economic and structural challenges facing women's who are participating in Village Community Bank, The study used both primary and secondary data. Primary data were collected from 178 respondents using researcher administered questionnaire and 18 key informants by using interview method. The sample size were selected by using purposive and simple random sampling technique. Quantitative data were analysed using Statistical Package of Social Science (SPSS) and qualitative data were analysed by using content analysis technique where data were organized and summarized into different themes and ideas which were expressed by key respondents. The study findings show that 44.9% women faced with a challenge of poor cooperation from VICOBA members, inadequate income 49.4% of women, short loan duration 83.7% revealed by VICOBA women, and structural factors including tough membership conditions by 82.3%. Conclusion, challenge facing women's participation in VICOBA in Mbarali District were poor education on VICOBA that led them to fail to participate effectively in VICOBA.

Therefore, the study recommends that through proper impletation of policy it can lead to reach the SDGs where encouraging to fight against inequality and the way of ensuring equality is to remove all challenges that facing women's in their participation in VICOBA

Key Terms: Women's participation in VICOBA in Mbarali District Council

1.0 Introduction

Microfinance is concept that exist in a community since there have been informal savings and credit groups that have operated for centuries including the "*susus*" of Ghana, "*chit funds*" in India, "*tandas*" in Mexico, "*arisan*" in Indonesia, "*cheetu*" in Sri Lanka, "tontines" in West Africa, and "*pasanaku*" in Bolivia, as well as various savings clubs and burial societies found all over the world (Mercy Corps Global Envision, 2019). "Village Community Banks (VICOBA), like other micro-finance institutions, are also considered to be 'bankable' micro-financial

institutions for improving livelihoods of the poor in rural and urban areas” (Kaberia and Allport, 2017). “VICOBA, like other microfinance institutions, operate worldwide though in different names. In Asia, India and Bangladesh they are known as Self Help Groups (SHG)” (Kaberia and Allport, 2017). “Formal credit and savings institutions for the poor have also been around for decades. They have been providing customers who were traditionally vacated by commercial banks a way to obtain financial services through cooperatives and development finance institutions” (Colombet, 2021).

“In the 1800s, various types of larger and more formal savings and credit institutions began to emerge in Europe. These institutions were organized primarily among the rural and urban poor; commonly known as People's Banks, Credit Unions, and Savings and Credit Co-operatives” (Okiocredit, 2018). “Regardless of the name or purpose, most groups have a similar structure and protocol. Members are required to make a small monthly contribution to the community fund. Groups usually have 30-50 members and are governed by a strict set of rules, either written or unwritten, depending on the group’s literacy. Breaching the rules is considered “*taboo*” and comes with social repercussions and possible financial penalties or ostracism” (Robinson, 2021).

“In Africa, VICOBA groups originated first in West Africa Mali, the model was later adopted by other countries such as Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Uganda and Eritrea. In West Africa where they are popular known as '*Mata maso dibala*' and Nigeria alone had nearly 41 million people participating in such groups” (Napier, 2019). “The value these individuals gain from participating in a savings group includes both tangible economic benefits as well as intangible social benefits. The tangible economic benefits include housing improvement, increase household assets and livestock. The intangible social benefits include skills on how to manage VICOBA groups, leadership skills and recognition by other community members” (SEDIT, 2020).

“In the Tanzanian context, the lending model was firstly introduced in Zanzibar through CARE Tanzania in 2000, and later it was adopted by other conservation and community livelihood support projects in Pemba Island and Tanzania Mainland” (Kihongo, 2015). Also, according to Kihongo (2015) Village Community Bank (VICOBA) adopted as a tool to Social and Economic Development Initiative of Tanzania (SEDIT) which is a non-governmental, non-political, non-religious organization registered in Tanzania 2002. The NGO defined its position NSGRP

(MKUKUTA) since 2002. Since then, it adopted a tool called; Village Community Banks (VICOBA). Since then, the acronym “VICOBA” for Village Community Bank was agreed by other development actors in September 2002. The development actors included SEDIT, CARE and WCRP as the major organizations that participated in formulating the VICOBA concept and its acronym. In fact, VICOBA aims at empowering the less privileged community in urban, peri-urban and rural areas, both socially and economically (SEMIT, 2020) also VICOBA model which exists today in Tanzania originated in Niger under the name of MMD model (*Mata Masu Dubara*) roughly translated as ‘women on the move’. The model was formed specifically to empower women economically (Kilonde, 2019). In Mbarali District VICOBA it emerged as to help women in order to increase their participation in agricultural activities such as paddy production (Mbeya Regional socio-economic profile 2018).

2.0 Reviewed Literature

Luyirika (2010) did the study on the role of VICOBA in the socio-economic development of women in a community in Uganda. The aim was to determine the role of VICOBA in the socio-economic development of women. The finding of the study established that the VICOBA had been operating in Mpigi Town Council since the early 1990s giving out loans, training the clients, sensitizing them about the organization and other cross cutting issues like HIV/AIDS, food security and enterprise development as well as conducting supervision and monitoring of the loan beneficiaries’ projects. The beneficiaries mentioned that they had utilized the loans to pay school fees for the children, to buy property like land, furniture and house, start up business enterprises and because of these benefits, they asserted affirmatively that VICOBA had played a big role in the socio-economic development of the women in the community. There were some challenges faced by the clients as they accessed and utilized the loan like high interest rate, short repayment period, lack of security, rigid policies, small amounts given at a time, diversion of funds, and difficulties in full filling the repayment schedules. The community regarded VICOBA as a central engine to economic growth although negatively they were looked at as being rigid and not sensitive to their clients’ needs and problems and they were regarded as property snatchers because they confiscated property of defaulters. Findings also established that there was a great role played by VICOBA in the socio-economic development of women in a community. This was because the women have been able to start businesses and earn income,

have been able to purchase property like land, furniture and solar, have been able to participate in the leadership roles, have become more self-confident and taken back children to school. These were some of the things they were not able to do or were doing with a lot of hardships.

“VICOBA based lending scheme focusing on fostering participant's ability to innovate and manage viable income generating activities. This aimed to reduce extreme poverty among group members in the community for achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals one (SDGs1). VICOBA members share knowledge on how to generate income and how to use the savings through provision of small loans for themselves” (Joyce, 2016). Inadequate income facing women participation in VICOBA group due to fail to have enough income that were enabled them to participate in VICOBA and this was caused by poor performance of their business conducted that led to them unable to obtain enough income that were enabled them to participate in VICOBA (Muganda, 2016) at Kinondoni Municipal in Kimara Ward in his study of VICOBA group formation. Also, inadequate income was revealed by women who participated in VICOBA in Mbarali District are the same with the reason to Kinondoni Municipal in Kimara Ward. Also inadequate income, it was observed that groups lack enough capital to lend to each other which will be adequate for their business. Consequently, groups depend on weekly or monthly contributions as the only capital available. However, local authorities like Small Industries Development Organization (SIDO) were providing loans to small business groups under the scheme of NEDF and RRF but still many groups do not meet the minimum requirement. The provision of capital is considered of utmost importance for members’ business succession (Shau, 2021). A study conducted by Pamuk et al., 2020 “in Iringa Tanzania revealed that 45 percent of loans were distributed for agricultural investment activities and that the main impediment was low savings and participation rates, as well as loan late repayment or defaults as well as poor record-keeping among members”. “The income level among members is also not exactly known and depends mostly on the seasonal harvest of crops” (Anuradha, 2020). Consequently, the prices of the crops are also uncertain which attracts major unintentional default to members. Moreover, Low saving prohibits loan loss coverage in case any member defaults.

According to Akarro 2016 in his study factors associated with operations of Village Community Banks (VICOBA) for poverty alleviation in Ilala Municipal where people they obtained the loan

in a short duration hence led to increase the loan defaulters that resulted to many women to suffer when they participate in VICOBA. There was high lending of loan in VICOBA in Ilala District. Also, loan defaulting by VICOBA members was fairly high (16%). Therefore, implementers of VICOBA should revise loan duration for borrowers to reduce loan defaulting. Also, the same related to Mbarali district where the women revealed that they faced with this challenge when they participate in VICOBA due to time that were given to members who obtained the loan in a group. Clients were asked if they ever experienced any negative effects of the VICOBA program. Only one client reported having a negative experience with the group. When probed, the client explained that she was asked to contribute money to pay for a group member whom she guaranteed, but the member failed to repay the loan on time. Key challenges reported included limited capital resulting in too small loan amounts for borrowing and a lack of entrepreneurial skills among clients. Clients pleaded for government support so that VICOBA could access adequate capital to facilitate larger loans (Kessy, 2020).

Late repayment of loan in VICOBA is a challenge although all transactions are made transparently to all members of the group. A community based cross sectional study was employed in analysing late loan repayment determinants in VICOBA (Akarro, 2016). A multistage sampling technique was used to obtain the study participants, a structured questionnaire on loan repayment was administered to the sampled members from the selected groups. Multivariate analysis (logistic regression) was used to determine factors for late loan repayment. The survey involved 404 VICOBA members from Ilala District. More than three quarters; 82.7% (334 of 404) of the VICOBA members owned loan from their groups. Overall, 16% (53 of 334) of VICOBA members who own loan were loan defaulters. Factor for loan default were used loan for investing in a new business which did not perform well hence discouraged women to participate in VICOBA. Also according to Tollano, (2019) observed that late repayment of loan and dishonest borrowers were cited as one of the challenge facing women in VICOBA. Concerning the loan being disbursed is one of the reasons which make the borrower dishonest by delaying loan repayment in partial or full. Also For the late repayment, we observed that customers' willingness to repay borrowed amount is compromised. Consequently, untrustworthiness members believe that it is only them who should benefit from the group and not the whole group. Late repayment is the heritage behaviour as punishment for members with previous late repayment which is considered a group killer. Shema, (2021) in the study

concerning effects of the increased credit limit in digital micro lending found the same results that, assessment of willingness to repay the loan is important before increasing credit limit. Moreover, the collateral pledged is the group itself therefore recoveries may become impractical. The findings are the same as the study conducted by Charles & Mori, (2017) on clients of informal lending institutions' loan repayment performance are challenge facing women in lending scheme (VICOBA) also Bargoria (2018) in the study conducted in Tinderet Sub-County, Nandi county Kenya the results also showed that 41% had accessed loans after every 6 months, 38% reported that they had accessed loans annually, 21% accessed loans after 4 months. However, the study showed that (97%) of the respondents reported that the loan acquired did not meet the needs of their intended projects and they had to source funds from other sources like their own business (45%), personal contribution (17%) and contributions from members (38%). Moreover, it was noted that in all the groups the members agreed that loans from external sources were not disbursed on time and therefore the projects were stalled while others were not completed on time.

2.1 Knowledge gap

Many reviews used to provides accurate discussion in understanding different studies concerning Village Community Bank conducted in different parts of the Tanzania such as to assess the contribution of village community banks in household rice production by Haule (2015) that shows how VICOBA has contributing much on ensuring the household income increase through conducting a rice production and the contribution of Village Community Banks to income poverty alleviation by Ngalemwa (2013) that tried to study how VICOBA are major assistance on ensuring the level of poverty is being alleviated, all these studies based on the contribution of VICOBA to women on ensuring they increase their income even though Village Community Bank was established for the aim of empowering women. Therefore, many findings based much on contribution of VICOBA to women who participate in VICOBA without looking at the other side for women when they participate what a challenge facing them. Therefore, this study intends to find out challenges facing women's participation in VICOBA in Mbarali District.

3.0 Research methodology

3.1 Description of the study area

This study was conducted in Mbarali District because women they engage in VICOBA in order to get the capital for paddy rice cultivation. Mbarali District is one of the seven districts of

Mbeya Region, Tanzania. It is bordered to the north and east by Iringa Region, to the south by Mbeya Rural District and to the west by Chunya District. The district covers an area of 16,632 square kilometres and has a population of 300,517 (URT, 2014). “The Mbarali District is administratively divided into 20 wards: Chimala, Itamboleo, Igava, Imalilo Songwe, Ihahi, Lugelele, Igurusi, Madibira, Mahongole, Mapogoro, Mawindi, Luhanga, Kongolo Mwatenga, Miyombweni, Ipwani, Ruiwa, Rujewa, Ubaruku and Utengule/Usangu. The main economic activities in Mbarali District are agriculture and livestock keeping. The main cash crops produced in Mbarali District are rice paddy, maize and onions” (URT, 2012).

3.2 Research Approach

Research approach is plan and the procedures for research that span the steps from broad assumptions to detailed methods of data collection, analysis, and interpretation (Creswell, 2007). This study were used mixed approach which are qualitative and quantitative approach due to provide a more complete understanding of research problem than either approach alone. “Qualitative research is an approach for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. Quantitative research is an approach for testing objective theories by examining the relationship among variables. These variables, in turn, can be measured, typically on instruments, so that numbered data can be analysed using statistical procedures” (Creswell, 2014). This study adopt both qualitative and quantitative approaches in order to collect data hence to reach the objective of the study. Also, through qualitative approach the researcher was collected direct explanation and respondent’s opinions and quantitative approach was collected a data in a numerical form that can be presented in frequencies and percentages.

3.3 Research design

Kothari (2000), argued that the function of a research design is to provide for the collection of relevant evidence with minimal expenditure of efforts, time and money. The reason to employ this cross-sectional research design was to be able to collect data from different groups of respondents at one point of time where the data was collected to women not participating in VICOBA.

3.4 Study population

The target population of this study was obtained from the available sampling frame which mainly were women above 18 years who participated in VICOBA (women-VICOBA members), key informants such as CDO, VEOs and WEOs in Mbarali District. Selection of various groups in area of study allowed a researcher to obtain various data from the respondents in order to fulfil the objective of research study.

3.5 Sample size and sampling techniques

3.5.1 Sample size

According to Mbarali District Report (2019), the projection of women above 18 years in Mbarali District was 28214 who are participating in VICOBA. Based on that number of women above 18 years the sample size was 356 women who were involved in a study. Sample size was calculated/estimated by using the table according to Krejcie and Morgan (1970) based on the population who are women VICOBA members. The sample was selected from four wards and two villages that were selected in each Ward. The study also included 18 key informants.

Table 1 A look-up table for sample sizes from different sized universes

Universe	sample	Universe	sample	Universe	Sample	Universe	sample
10	10	100	80	1250	294	6000	361
15	14	200	132	1500	306	7500	366
20	19	300	169	2000	322	10000	370
30	28	400	196	2500	333	15000	375
40	36	500	217	3000	341	20000	377
50	40	600	234	3500	346	30000	379
60	44	700	248	4000	351	40000	380
70	59	800	260	4500	354	50000	381
80	66	900	269	5000	357	75,000	382
90	73	1000	278	5500	359	1,000,000	384

Source: Adapted from Krejcie and Morgan (1970).

The total sample population of this study is 28214. The following procedure is used to get the sample size per each category of study unit.

Formula

Total population of the study* Universal sample/ Universal population size

Solution

$N_1 = \text{Universal population size}$

$N_2 = \text{Total Population of the study}$

$n = \text{Universal Sample}$

If N_1 30,000 = n 379

N_2 28,214 = n ?

$30,000 \setminus = / 379$

$28214 / = \setminus ?$

$28214 * 379 / 30,000 = 356$

Therefore, the total sample size of this study was 356

Kothari (2004) suggests that the 30% encouraged for statistical analysis of sample size of the study. But this study used 50% which is more enough than 30% cases of the sample size of the study which equal to 178 sample sizes. Also, the study involved 18 key informants where four were WEO's from four wards, eight VEO's from eight villages, one Community Development Officer in Mbarali District and VICOBA group leader four from the four wards.

Table 2: Categories and sample size of the study

S/N	CATEGORIES	SAMPLE SIZE
1	VICOBA members (women)	178
2	VICOBA group leaders	6
3	WEO's	4
4	VEO's	8
	TOTAL	196

Source: Researcher, 2022.

3.5.2 Sampling techniques

The sampling techniques that a researcher was used are simple random sampling and purposive sampling in order to fulfil the objective of the study.

Simple random sampling was used to select wards and villages in Mbarali District where each ward and village had a chance to be selected in the study. Purposive sampling was involved in selecting individuals based on their criteria that was specified by the researcher basing on the study, purposively sampling was firstly used to select Women-VICOBA members after that a Women-VICOBA members were selected randomly. Key informants who are knowledgeable of the study topic including CDO, Ward Executive Officers and Village Executive Officers were selected purposively.

3.6 Types and source of data

3.6.1 Primary Data

According to Kothari (2004) primary data are information gathered direct from respondent, collected a fresh for the first time original in character. Primary data were collected qualitatively and quantitatively form by using questionnaire and interview in order to generate the information needed in this study.

3.6.2 Secondary Data

Secondary data were collected from different existing relevant documents or literature (Kothari, 2004). These data were important sources of references against which the findings of the research were tested. These was books and journal articles that was used to obtain the data in order to fulfil the need of the study topic on the challenges facing women's participation in VICOBA in Mbarali District.

3.7 Data collection methods

The word Data collection refers to the gathering of information to serve or prove some facts (Kombo and Tromp 2006). For the purpose of this study several tools were employed in order to capture information about the Village Community Banks (VICOBA).

3.7.1 Questionnaires

Kothari (2004) defines questionnaire as the series of questions that typed and printed in a definite order a form. Questionnaire is the method in which questions are given to respondents for purpose of answering them at their own time. Questionnaire is the research instrument which gathers data over a large sample size. For the purpose of this study, a questionnaire which comprised open and closed ended questions were given to Women-Village Community Bank members. All questionnaire sheets were dully filled and collected. In this research study, the

questionnaires were translated into Kiswahili for purpose of being easily understood by all respondents.

3.7.2 Interview

This is verbal interaction or discussion between researcher and respondents (Kothari, 2004). Data was collected through conducting discussion with targeted population using interview guides. Interview which was conducted to key informants such as VEO's, WEO's, VICOBA leader and CDO. This enabled the researcher to probe and ask follow up questions thereby gaining a deeper understanding of interviewee's experiences, feelings, and perspectives. The interview guide was used as a tool to ensure systematic flow of questions and at the same time getting the information needed for the study.

3.8 Data analysis

The qualitative data from interviews were analysed by using content analysis technique where by data were organized and summarized into different themes based on description of views and ideas which were expressed by respondents. These themes were largely related to the study objectives in order to give detailed information. Quantitative data from the questionnaires were analyzed in descriptive statistical method through Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) tool. Therefore, the findings were presented by using: charts, tables, and graphs and word reporting system describe the descriptive analytical results.

4.0 Results and Discussion

4.1 Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

In this study, the demographic characteristics of the respondents such as age, education level and marital status were assessed. Demographic characteristics were collected having an overview of respondents and not for association with the dependent variables.

4.1.1 Age of the respondents

Based on study results, majority of the respondents that used in the study were women age group 18-35 as they comprised of 98 respondents equal to 55.1% of all respondents. The second group were those of 36-53 ages which comprised of 62 respondents equal to 34.8% while the third group were group of 54+ ages which comprised of 18 respondents equal to 10.1% of the respondents. The group of 18-35 were the most (55.1 %) of women were most who participated

in VICOBA in Mbarali District hence to experience those challenges facing them in VICOBA as indicated in Table 3 below.

4.1.2 Educational level of the respondents

According to the study findings show that, 36 respondents equal to 20.2% were possessed primary level of education while 89 respondents equal to 50.0% were possessed secondary level of education, 35 respondents equal to 19.7% were possessed college level of education and 18 respondents equal to 10.1% were possessed university level of education. Educational level were assessed to determine if education plays part in the sense of determining challenges facing women's participation in VICOBA in Mbarali District. This revealed that women with secondary level of education (50%) were most participated in VICOBA hence became familiar with those challenges facing women's participation in VICOBA due to their large number in participation in VICOBA as shown in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Demographic characteristics of respondents

Age	Frequency	Percent
18-35	98	55.1
36-53	62	34.8
54+	18	10.1
Total	178	100.0
Education Level		
Primary Education	36	20.2
Secondary Education	89	50.0
Collage Education	35	19.7
University Education	18	10.1
Total	178	100.0
Marital Status		
Single	83	46.6
Married	73	41.0
Divorced	4	2.2
Widow	11	6.2
Separation	7	3.9
Total	178	100.0

Source: Research data, 2022.

4.3.1 Inadequate Income

The study findings presented in table 4 shown that, inadequate income was among a challenge facing women's participation in VICOBA in Mbarali District. The result shows that the 49.4% of

respondents who answered research question agreed that inadequate income as a challenge facing women participation in VICOBA, 36.5% of respondents strongly agreed on inadequate income as a challenge facing women participation in VICOBA, 10.7% of respondents disagreed on inadequate income as challenge facing women's participation in VICOBA and 3.4% of respondents were neutral. This was revealed by most women who participated in VICOBA. That due to shortage of income lead most of VICOBA group did not grow that was important for the development of group later led them to fail on borrowing money in VICOBA because they were not able to contribute hence left to few women with adequate income to contribute but did not adequate to all who participated hence lead to other to leave in VICOBA. The researcher interested to know the main activities as the main sources of income for them. They show economic activities including the main ones are Agriculture (farming and livestock keeping) others were engaged in business and some participated in artisan activities in town (handwork). Agriculture appeared to be one of the most income generating activities that attract people in the study area. Income generated from agriculture and business can be used to pay for education, health, transport and housing hence to fail to contribute much in VICOBA (Mzery, 2020) while VICOBA had significant contribution to the socio-economic development of people in Mbarali from the household to council levels in terms of food security, health, material wellbeing, and agricultural development.

One of the respondent said am not contributed in VICOBA because I have not adequate income of contributing due to allocate some amount in family matters while am waiting for paddy price increase in December.

Table 4: Inadequate Income facing women's participation in VICOBA

Response	Frequency	Percent
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Agree	88	49.4
Strong Agree	65	36.5
Neutral	6	3.4
Disagree	19	10.7
Total	178	100.0

Source: Research data, 2022.

4.3.2 Short Loan Duration

Short loan duration was one among the discussed challenge which facing women's participation in VICOBA in Mbarali District. The study in table 5 shows that the 55.1% respondents who answered research question had strongly agreed on short loan duration in VICOBA as the one among the challenge facing women's participation in VICOBA in Mbarali District, 28.7% of respondents also they agreed that short loan duration was the challenge facing women's participation in VICOBA and 8.4% of women were neutral on short loan duration as on among a challenge facing women participation in Village Community Bank. Also (Kundaeli, 2019) on her study of contribution of VICOBA on improving household income elaborated short loan duration is among the challenge in VICOBA due to people obtain loan but in a short period of time hence lead to other borrowers to leave the group. It was evidenced by some respondents;

Short loan duration faced women in their participation in VICOBA through the period of loan given to people who obtained a loan and they revealed that there was no any grace period on repayment of loan hence led most of them to escape in VICOBA the duration was given according to our group were two hence lead others not prepared enough to pay the loan.

Table 5: Short Loan Duration facing women participation in VICOBA

Response	Frequency	Percent
Agree	51	28.7
Strong Agree	98	55.1
Neutral	15	8.4

Disagree	14	7.9
Total	178	100.0

Source: Research data, 2022.

4.3.3 Late Repayment of Loan

It was also among the raised challenge facing women participation in VICOBA in Mbarali District. The findings indicated in table 6 show that the 44.9% respondents who answered questions said that late repayment of loan was among a challenge facing women's participation in VICOBA, and 39.3% of respondents had strongly agreed that late repayment of loan as challenge facing women's in their participation in VICOBA, 10.1% of women disagreed on late repayment of loan as a challenge facing women participation in VICOBA and 5.6% of women were neutral. It was revealed that late repayment of loan facing women's participation in VICOBA due to most women who obtained a loan and did not paid on time. This led others did not get the loan on time they need so the situation ends to give up others on participating in VICOBA due to fearing on that, because women they participate in VICOBA in order to obtain the loan that could be helpful for their small business and paddy production. According to Mugenda (2016) late repayment of loan become the major challenges to people who participating in VICOBA hence lead to formulate the rules and regulation which also become as an obstacle for the group members to follow it.

Table 6: Late Repayment of Loan facing women's participation in VICOBA

Response	Frequency	Percent
Agree	80	44.9
Strong Agree	70	39.3
Neutral	10	5.6
Disagree	18	10.1
Total	178	100.0

Source: Research data, 2022.

In addition challenges facing women in VICOBA, Members' business failure is the major problem facing women VICOBA. Failure of business affects savings and repayments of loans. Most VICOBA members work in the informal sector as street vendors then their business income is uncertain or not predictable for the entire period. For instance, most street vendors who were forcibly evacuated from the urban street made them close their businesses and thus are unable to meet their dues. The results are consistent with (Anuradha, 2020) as it was revealed that business operation activities are such as business failure is one of the factors contributing to non-performing loans in VICOBA.

5.0 Conclusion and recommendation

5.1 Conclusions

According to the findings, challenges facing women participation in VICOBA in Mbarali District were discussed and revealed by women who were participated in VICOBA and key informants.

Social challenges facing women's participation in VICOBA in Mbarali District were poor cooperation among VICOBA Members where the VICOBA members were revealed that many women in Mbarali when they participate in VICOBA some of them they did not cooperate together because of classes also the time of cooperating as a group others they tend to participate in individually and family level production in their farms, Conflicts among group members also these was the challenge facing women's participation in VICOBA due to most women evidenced that conflicts that occur in VICOBA resulted to group broken and separation and lastly was lack of knowledge on VICOBA most members that contacted and answer the researcher's questionnaire they revealed that most of women who participated in VICOBA they have poor knowledge of VICOBA due to low level of education provided to them on VICOBA. Key informants they revealed on that but they show a researcher on how government and other stakeholders they started to provide education on VICOBA in a community in order to ensure most women they participate in a process.

Economic challenges facing women's participation in VICOBA, VICOBA has a great role in the performance of micro-financing institutions through financial inclusion of the underprivileged without or movable collaterals. Mou et al., (2020) also revealed that VICOBA has grown up to 250 million customers all over the world as it serves the poor and can also be used on social platforms to make it easier. Moreover, VICOBA is the carving succession for the VICOBA business members. The study discloses VICOBA is still a challenge for the women who participated on it therefore, poor financial information dissemination, capital inefficiency and late repayments are found to be the main bottleneck for VICOBA businesses.

Structural challenges facing women's participation in VICOBA in Mbarali District, tough membership conditions this was revealed that many women experienced this due to tough membership conditions that was difficulty for them to copy with some conditions that was revealed by some respondents were penalties when you failed to attend the meeting and fired when you failed to buy membership shareholders because sometimes were not good financially so according to that most of them they left to participate in VICOBA, loan repayment arrangement this was evidenced that loan repayment arrangement did not favoured for them due some women witnessed other in VICOBA they been alienated their properties.

To add more, most of challenges that were provided by the respondents and key informants on challenges facing women's participation in VICOBA were poor financial information dissemination, capital inefficiency, late repayments, absenteeism, intentional dropouts, and group preconception appeared frequently by most of the respondents.

5.3 Recommendations

5.3.1 Recommendation for Actions

Various actions should be taken by stakeholders to ensure challenges facing women who were participating in VICOBA in order to help them to tackle those challenges that faced them through ensuring social challenges, economic challenges and structural challenges until they improve their lives at all.

In social challenge to ensure the education of VICOBA must provide at large hence the community obtain the knowledge that can lead most of women to participate effectively in

VICOBA groups and knowledge can be provided through organizing various training and awareness campaign related to VICOBA and importance of VICOBA through ensuring the following issues reached to women as follows: Developing various advertisements that will be responsible on providing the knowledge to community and women at all on the importance of VICOBA and Formulating community committees, district committees and region committees that will be able to mobilize various women to participate in VICOBA.

Also, to ensure all conflicts to be solved within a group without reaching outside which later lead people to fear on their participation in VICOBA and lastly to ensure the strongly cooperation among VICOBA members that can attract other people to participate in VICOBA.

In economic, I would like to recommend that, however, to improve the performance of VICOBA financial institutions must improve or introduce information sharing, ability to pay, willingness, group registration, and proper assessment. also to VICOBA members must ensure they pay the loan on time which lead other to get loan on time, also business establishment and close supervision until you can accommodate to contribute in VICOBA.

In structural challenge, Community members including local leaders, should encourage women to participate in VICOBA due to when they encourage women to participate in VICOBA it creates the environment for women to be independent and not wait to obtain the services to their husband to provide the needs to their family also to ensure the tough conditions in VICOBA are removed, to ensure in a week there is favoured time to group members to meet and reduce the days of meetings, also to avoid to alienate the properties when some group members not repaid the loan on time and ensuring the strong leadership system.

Moreover, VICOBA members should not spread the bad information that led to discourage others to participate in VICOBA.

5.3.2 Recommendation for Further Research

The study concentrated only in Mbarali District was used as a case study. A similar study can be conducted in other district areas in Mbeya regional to see if the challenges facing women's participation in VICOBA in Mbarali District Council relate to another districts. Moreover, the same study can be conducted in different regions of Tanzania to see if challenges facing women's participation in VICOBA are same or not the same.

The study focused only on challenges facing women's to participation in VICOBA in Mbarali District, further studies can be conducted on other segments of VICOBA like factors leading women to leave, factors hindering men to participate in VICOBA and strategies to ensure people are participating effectively in VICOBA.

5.3.3 Recommendation to policy maker

I would like to recommend that the policy maker should implement their policy proper which would be suitable on ensuring they able to deal with those challenge that faced women in VICOBA members until we reach the 17 Sustainable Development Goals for the better world by 2030 where the goal fight inequality, power to end poverty and stop climate change all this can be reached when the policy tackle the challenge facing women in Village Community Bank.

Ethical Approval and Consent:

According to Adam and Kamuzora (2008), it is important to observe ethical issues when you go to conduct research in order to prevent problems that can be raised during research and also to protect the rights of participants. To observe this the researcher was obtained an introductory letter from the University of Iringa to conduct the study in Mbarali District. The researcher also was obtained the permit letter from the DED offices in order to conduct research within an area. The researcher also was aware on the need of confidentiality of respondents. Moreover, the researcher was explained the purpose of conducting research from which the respondents who are part of the beneficiaries through the methods of data collection.

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