

C H A P T E R = VI  
S U M M A R Y A N D C O N C L U S I O N S

## CHAPTER VI

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The present chapter is designed to summarize the findings noted in <sup>the</sup> earlier chapters.

The present study attempts to understand Women's groups ~~in Kenya~~ operating at the grass root level in Kisii District , Nyanza province , Kenya.

THE FIRST CHAPTER is designed to outline the emergence and development of women's groups in Kenya. The women's group movement is not a new concept in Kenya. In traditional Kenyan societies , women's group took the form of Amasaga or Ebisangio among Abagusii, Ngwatio among the Agikuyu, Mwethya among the Akamba , Bulala or Buhasio among the Luhya , Saga among the Luo to mention a few. These groups tended to be informal , small in membership size, based on ethnic and familial affiliation and formed for the purpose of mutual assistance and social interaction<sup>on</sup> among the members of the group. These informal Women's groups , functioned during stressful times such as sickness and death, as well as for performing other activities that required collective efforts such as birthgiving, marriage ceremonies and agricultural activities.

In 1952, Maendeleo Ya Wanawake Organization, was created . This organization formalized traditional Women's groups in Kenya. It focussed mainly on women in rural areas and aimed at strengthening Women's

participation in rural community development projects.

Its major objectives was to promote the advancement of African standards of living .

The post independent period witnessed the emergence and proliferation of Women's organization, probably, because women realized that political independence in the country did not automatically bring socio-economic improvement to them. During this period, Women's groups grew rapidly and expanded quantitatively and also acquired an elaborate formalized structure spreading from the grassroots to the national level.

CHAPTER II has dealt with the research problem and methodology of the present study. The details regarding the methodological aspect of the study such as the objectives of the study , scope of the study, selection of the respondents, techniques used for data collection, data collection are noted in the second chapter.

The data for the present study were collected from the respondents through an interview schedule designed keeping in view the objectives of the study. The respondents included the leaders and ordinary members of the women's groups selected. For this study, all the office bearers, including The Chairman, Vice Chairman, Secretary, Assistant Secretary, Treasurer and Assistant treasurer were treated as leaders. Data was also collected from representative sample of the ordinary members .

It was decided to select 25% of the ordinary members belonging to each of the women's groups selected for the study, by adopting random sampling procedures. Data collection of this study commenced on 20th April and ended on 22nd December 1995. Out of 23 leaders of these groups seventeen of them were actually interviewed. It was not possible for this researcher to interview <sup>the</sup> remaining six leaders due to various reasons. The total number of ordinary members belonging to all the groups, was 231. Out of this only 60 of them were interviewed.

<sup>THE</sup>  
IN <sup>A</sup> THIRD CHAPTER an attempt has been made to analyze the organizational structure of the groups. The duties and responsibilities of the office bearers, have been spelled out as defined by the constitution. The actual functioning of the groups is explained. The various programmes undertaken by these women's groups have been discussed in the light of the objectives of their groups. Then, the financial and other types of assistance which these groups receive from various government departments and individuals is discussed. Finally, the major problems which these groups come across have been highlighted.

It was noted that though the women's groups covered under the present study had a uniform written constitution, which spelled out the group's office bearers, duties and responsibilities, in actual practice, the provisions in this constitution were not strictly adhered to. To a large extent, the groups' structure was less hierarchical and more informal than in most

formal organization. To a large extent the groups are run on the informal level.

It was also noted that the written constitution is an important precondition which must be fulfilled by women's groups to officially register themselves with the Government Department of Social Services. The constitution states the groups' objectives.

It was observed that the women's groups under the present study were engaged in various programmes such as Merry-go-round, and members' contribution, farming -agricultural, cultural, and welfare programmes. Among these, Merry-go-round and members' contribution and cultural programmes were proved to be the most popular programmes amongst the majority of respondents interviewed. It was noted that these programmes give an opportunity to the members to come together and strengthen the ties of sisterhood. The findings clearly indicate the Women's groups were <sup>not</sup> financially sound. On the income side, the member's contribution, receipts from tasks carried, registration fees, income from cultural activities income from rented farms were the main sources. It was noted that the groups mainly depend on financial assistance provided by <sup>the</sup> Government of Kenya, for carrying out their main activities. Other types of assistance in the form of technical equipments, and materials are also offered to the groups by individuals. It is noteworthy mentioning that these groups face various problems ranging from operational problems to problems which originate from outside their operational

areas. The internal problems that the groups face include poor attendance by members, irregular payments of fees, and leadership/squabbles. External problems which they face include lack of market for their produce, transportation, no visits by Government officials and husbands and politicians' interference with the groups' affair.

IN CHAPTER IV the data regarding the background characteristics of the members and leaders of the women's groups are presented and analysed. An attempt has also been made to point out the similarities and differences between the members and leaders of women's groups. It was observed that the members of these women's groups were both men and women. Women form an overwhelming majority of the membership of these groups. [76.67%]

All the leaders and members were married, belong to extended families and identify themselves with the middle class. The leaders of these groups were found to be younger than the ordinary members of these groups. It was also noted that the leaders of these groups were more\* educated than the ordinary members. Most of them [65%] have their level <sup>of education, primary</sup> and above. It was also observed that the leaders have greater political participation 58.82% than the ordinary members 55% in terms of their number.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER analyze the respondents perceptions and views on the women's movement and women's problems in Kenya. Their perception of the

Status of women in contemporary has also been discussed. The respondents general

opinion regarding the laws relating to women in Kenya has also been noted. Their views on essential qualities that women leaders should possess in order to make the leadership of the women's movement in Kenya more effective also <sup>have</sup> been looked into.

Some of the respondents ~~of the women's movement in Kenya~~ felt that the women's movement in contemporary Kenya is very strong. The movement was seen committed to sensitization and conscientization of women on their rights as citizens of Kenya.

The findings on the status of women in contemporary Kenya clearly indicate that women still suffer from subordinate status in the Kenyan society. This is as a result of Kenya's culture, economic status, religious beliefs, and practices and also her political status.

The respondents were also asked to give their opinion on laws relating to women. They reported that the Kenyan laws were biased and discriminatory against women. To support their opinion they singled out some areas and incidents which

Prove this to be true. They also claim that on many occasions husbands beat their wives unnecessarily and no law tends to protect them. They also claimed that the law enforcers, majority of them men, in most cases discriminate against women when executing their legal duties.

#### LIMITATIONS OF THE PRESENT STUDY

1. The findings are mainly applicable to those women's groups included in this study.
2. Findings could be also applied to women's groups and organizations in other region in Kisii district.
3. This is an exploratory study: Therefore the findings are of tentative nature and need to be reexamined.
4. Data collection was done in a relatively short span of time whatever resources which were at hand.
5. In-depth study of male members of women's groups was not carried out.