



Global Scientific and Academic Research Journal of Economics, Business and Management

ISSN: 2583-5645 (Online)

Frequency: Monthly

Published By GSAR Publishers

Journal Homepage Link- <https://gsarpublishers.com/journals-gsarjebm-home/>

Examination of Determinants of Social Capital in Elgeyo Marakwet County, Kenya

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Article History

Received: 02/03/2023

Accepted: 17/03/2023

Published: 19/03/2023

Vol – 2 Issue – 3

PP: -22-31

Abstract

Peoples' socio-economic livelihood is a function of various factors that work interchangeably. In most cases, however, not all factors are used, and ignoring one leads to unsustainable livelihoods and projects (Kirori, 2018). Conventionally, the role of social capital integration on socio-economic livelihoods can be visualized in access to technology, effective networking for knowledge transfers, social networks and associations, and equitable distribution of incomes across the population. However, according to County Integrated Development plan CIDPII, (2018), Elgeyo Marakwet County being a rural county that majorly relies on agriculture as the main economic activity presents a contrary scenario. The role of social capital integration is crucial in social cohesion, sharing knowledge, technology, and pooling resources towards increased and efficient productivity (Government of Canada, 2003). For instance, farmers in the rural community do not only require farming inputs for their socio-economic wellness. It is important to underscore that social capital enhances interconnectivity of people-based approaches in development. This by extension would lead to active participation in solving inter-sectoral problem and their implementation by grass root organizations and additionally through the support of other development stakeholders. By focusing on socio-economic livelihoods, the issues of enhanced income, reduced vulnerability to disease and poverty, improved food security, and more sustainable use of natural resources will cause a transformation on people's development. The area of social capital is still new, complex, and not yet well considered. This study attempts to tackle this difficulty and aims at producing a comprehensible documentation of the dynamics of social capital for reference by a range of stakeholders including researchers, scholars, and policymakers principally interested in social capital on people's socio-economic livelihoods. It is accepted that the study will increase the understanding of social capital on people's livelihood in rural Kenya as well as add to the formulation of rural policy and socio-economic schedule and to the pains of fighting poverty. Individuals, households, or groups in a community use social capital to produce concrete goods and essential services that are negotiable and potentially marketable. The findings of the study are of critical relevance to both national and county governments, as well as development actors interested in getting a better understanding of the role played by social capital in enhancing social economic livelihood in Kenya.

Keywords: Social Capital, Socio-Economic Livelihood, Social Capital Integration, Integrated Development, e.t.c

INTRODUCTION

In defining its Sustainable Livelihoods Approach, the Department for International Development (DFID) of the United Kingdom stipulated that the primary factors for determining the level of livelihood are natural capital, human capital, physical capital, financial capital, and social capital (DFID 2019). Among these factors, although the first four notions of capital can be clearly defined, the notion of social capital remains ambiguous. Human and social capital and social arrangements are closely related and likely to be confused. The OECD report made a clear distinction between them: Human capital is embodied in individuals; social capital resides in social relations, while political, institutional, and

legal arrangements are rules and institutions in which human and social capital work (OECD 2020). Hence, social capital has been, on frequent occasions, been vaguely understood to be the last resort to account for residuals of socioeconomic matters that cannot be clearly explained by the above-mentioned four types of capital. In other words, social capital can compensate for a lack of other types of capital (DFID 2019). With its versatile acceptance, the term social capital is widely adapted by researchers, policymakers, and practitioners as a convenient concept in matters related to community development.

Social capital is an ever-expanding theme in the social sciences and has also become popular with policymakers in



both developed and developing countries (World Bank 2011). Social capital has been proposed as a pathway to societal and individual health, well-being, and understanding of relationships (Enfield & Nathaniel, 2013; World Bank, 2011). Additionally, a growing number of sociologists, anthropologists, political scientists, and economists have employed the concept to explain various economic and social outcomes (Enfield & Nathaniel, 2013). Nicholson & Hoyer, (2008) notes that the fundamental notion of social capital is to incorporate sociocultural factors to explain social economic development outcomes. Historically, social capital can be traced a long way back to classical economists, such as Adam Smith and John Stuart Mill, and sociologists, such as Max Weber, who provided the cultural explanation to economic phenomena (Guiso *et al.*, 2006).

There are different definitions of social capital but the most famous, and most contested, is the one offered by Putnam (1993) who defines social capital as “features of social organization, such as trust, norms, and networks that can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating coordinated actions” (Akram & Routray, 2013). Homan (2011) defines social capital as “individual and community wealth derived from active engagement of individuals with other members of the community and with what might be called ‘community life.’ The theory of social capital is particularly rooted on the notion of trusts, norms, and informal networks and it believes that ‘social relations are valuable resources’. According to Liu (2017), the whole notion of social capital is centered on social relationships and its major elements include social networks, civic engagement, norms of reciprocity, and generalised trust. He further opines that social capital is a complex multidimensional concept having different dimensions, types, and levels of measure. As Putnam and Homan’s definitions illustrate, there are different ways to apply the concept of social capital. These levels include micro, meso, and macro social capital (Akram & Routray, 2013). In addition, social capital can be measured within the individual, a small group such as a family unit or within an organization, and within a community such as a neighborhood or town. Social capital has three subcomponents: bonded, bridged, and linked social capital (Akram & Routray, 2013). Further, social capital is one of the five different types of capital (natural, physical, human, financial, and social) that are needed for households to develop sustainable livelihood strategies. Coleman (1990) suggests that “social capital is defined by its function; it is not a single entity, but a variety of different entities having characteristics in common as they all consist of some aspects of a social structure and they facilitate certain actions of individuals who are within the structure.” Furthermore, Grootaert and Bastelaer (2002), define social capital as “institutions, relationships, attitudes, and values that govern interactions among people and contribute to economic and social development.”

Over the years, social capital has been shown to act as an important bridge between academic disciplines in the development of economic theory (Woolcock & Narayan, 2000, Cordes *et al.*, 2003, Yen, Barnes, & Wang, 2011).

Furthermore, social capital has been cited as having an important role to play in government, regarding the investment of resources into poverty alleviation or income generation. With a clearer sense of livelihood assets such as social capital, policy-makers can identify the most useful sorts of public investment for different people in different places (Bebbington, 1999). Currently, when considering socio-economic development alternatives, social capital has to be considered on how social capital can contribute, how it can be reengineered, and how it should be considered in development initiatives to link state and society for optimal outcomes.

According to an article by Claridge (2018), social capital is an important resource that can be mobilized for purposive action or competitive gain. Social capital is the benefits derived from sociability. Social capital can be described most simply as the aspects of social context (the “social” bit) that have productive benefits (the “capital” bit). Social capital arises from the human capacity to consider others, to think and act generously and cooperatively. It relates to social relationships and social structures. It involves people knowing each other and having positive relationships based on trust, respect, kindness, and reciprocity. It involves supportive social structures that encourage prosocial actions and discourage exploitative behaviours.

Social capital exists at the level of the individual, the informal social group, the formal organization, the community, the ethnic group, and even the nation. The basis of social capital is individual actors and their relationships, but also the social structures within which they are embedded. This means that an individual may have some control over their social capital, but they do not *own* their social capital *per se*. Many aspects of social capital relate to shared values, attitudes, and norms that exist within social groups. Social capital is identifiable at any level of social grouping, from the individual level to the level of the nation, and it exists at any level where there is identification and belonging, i.e. a social grouping (Claridge, 2018).

Social capital determinants are key in pointing at reasons why some individuals and households get involved in particular types of social capital while others do not, that is, the levels of social capital associated with family characteristics. Family characteristics are distinguished as including geographic location; demographic characteristics (e.g., age, sex, marital status, household composition); and socio-economic characteristics (e.g., tenure, educational attainment, employment status, occupation, income).

Stone and Hughes (2003) argue that an individual’s social capital may vary with an array of factors including age, gender, health; family circumstances; education, employment, home-ownership status; attitudes and values; and the characteristics of the area in which an individual resides.

Additionally, Rose (1998), distinguishes determinants of social capital according to individuals, households, and societies/communities/villages. What accounts for some individuals being involved in particular types of informal social networks while others are not, are factors including

gender, education, age, and physical health. These factors have primary influences on economic activities and do affect an individual's capacity for productive activity. In a household, productive social capital varies with various factors including the number of economically active persons in the household; human capital (education and health) of household members; intergenerational capital (education of parents); duration of residence in current community; members away from home earning cash wages; ownership/access to land, water, and other resources. In the case of a community, the capacity of social capital (networks) to produce goods and services requires resources. Many households living in a community may collectively be deprived of resources useful for networking especially resources linking informal networks with formal institutions such as an all-weather road to take goods to a market. It is normally assumed in public policy that spending on infrastructure and community services are good investments in reducing poverty.

Christoforou (2005), opines that social capital determinants includes the psychological and socio-economic characteristics of individuals such as personal income and education, family and social status, values and personal experiences, which determine the incentive of individuals to invest in social capital and several other social and demographic determinants like age, gender, marital status and number of children. He further argues that social capital determinants also include contextual or systemic factors at the level of community, such as overall level of development, quality, and fairness of formal institutions, distribution of resources and society's polarization, and prior patterns of cooperation and trust. Additionally, Kaasa and Parts (2008) notes that community social capital is influenced by both micro-level determinants (e.g., income, education, and health and macro-level determinants (e.g., income inequality and national cohesion).

According to Aldridge *et al* (2002), the main determinants of social capital include: history and culture; whether social structures are flat or hierarchical; the family; education; the built environment; residential mobility; economic inequalities and social class; the strength and characteristics of civil society; and patterns of individual consumption and personal values

Ashrafi *et al* (2012), and Kaasa & Parts, (2008) studies on the multidimensional construct of social capital, adopted a range of indicators to represent the levels of community social capital. For example, interpersonal trust, general trust, institutional trust, reciprocity among neighbors, and the sense of belonging. Halman and Luijkx (2006) and Denny, (2003) found out that individuals with higher incomes and more education have higher levels of interpersonal trust. On the other hand age, marital status, and religiosity are positively associated with both general and institutional trust according to Christoforou (2005) and Ashrafi *et al* (2012). Education tends to increase the likelihood of reciprocity, and age and general health were found to be positively associated with trust and the sense of belonging to local communities as noted by Ashrafi *et al* (2012). However, Kaasa and Parts (2008) and

Halman and Luijkx (2006) argue that findings on the relationship between education, income, gender, and institutional trust are inconsistent. Structural social capital common adopted indicators include the number of organization memberships, social participation, volunteering, and civic participation are common adopted indicators (Kaasa and Parts, 2008, Alma *et al* (2012) and Principi, *et al* (2016).

Kaasa and Parts (2008) note that individuals who are older, male, and employed are likely to have more organization memberships, as opposed to those with higher income and education. Alma *et al* (2012), Marcus (2007), and Einolf, (2011) opines that ethnicity, marital status, and health are the most important determinants of social participation. Principi, *et al* (2016) notes that education, income, and health are the most important determinants of volunteering in later life while higher income and education foster higher levels of civic participation (Kaasa and Parts, 2008). In addition, men tend to have significantly higher levels of civic participation than women (Christoforou, 2005).

A study by Ifeanyi-Obi & Matthews-Njoku (2014) revealed that the major socio-economic factors that affect livelihood choice of rural dwellers are age, number of years in school, and monthly income. According Aguilera & Massey (2003) the social capital component is influenced by the length of residence in the area because of the increased opportunities and time available to maintain and increase social networks and relationships. The longer respondents have lived in the local city area, the more opportunities they have to access a greater number of people, acquire information through friends and expand their social circles.

Moss (2002) opines that gendered expectations of women for care provision and family support may increase their bonding social networks while limiting their bridging networks. In contrast, a study from Northern Sweden found that women were more involved in bridging social networks when compared to men Eriksson *et al.*, (2010). It has further been found that the kind of associations women and men are involved in, differs. For instance, Lowndes (2000) found that men tend to be more active in sports and recreational associations, while women are more active in associations related to social services and health. In a similar vein, Son and Lin (2008) found out that civic action tends to be gendered, where women were more involved in expressive actions than the men.

Institutions in rural areas are formed as investment strategies that seek a regulated return to satisfy common needs and interests. These needs or interests could hardly be satisfied from individual efforts. Local institutions that are formed in rural territories, generally for productive purposes, in addition to generating profitability, employment, exchange of services, exchange of knowledge, ease of access to local resources, and distribution of goods among their members, contribute to the governance of the territories.

A vision of governance for rural territories is proposed from the institutionalization of reciprocity relations, in this sense it is understood that "governance is being seen as a process of

economic coordination, capacity development, creation and strengthening of local institutions that have for the purpose of reducing transaction costs, from a neo-institutional economics and sociology point of view” (Torres Salcido; Chávez, 2008). Local institutions contribute to the governance of territories and according to Zubriggen, (2011), “governance is characterized by a network of institutions and individuals that collaborate together and united by a pact of mutual trust, they are organizations of power that form semi-autonomous and sometimes self-governed networks” (Zurbriggen, 2011).

Empowerment constitutes a premeditated social process, which aims to change power relations (Sen 1997) by generating opportunities for one or more individuals. It is not based on a power granted by a higher authority, but rather a power acquired through self-management, which consists of enhancing the pre-existing strengths of a person or a group of people. Empowerment should not be considered as a neutral process, but as a process that seeks to gain control by substituting the external barriers that influence access to resources (Sen 1997)

In rural areas, local institutions have more influence on the governance of the territories, mainly because they are often the only institutions present in them; contrary to cities, where political institutions are more present, due to the fact that the State administration tends to be centralized. Although there are some political institutions in rural territories, these generally manage very large territories and in most cases obey the territorial order of the States, without necessarily having a very broad knowledge of specific territories. While the local institutions that are generated from associations between individuals in rural territories manage internal, decentralized, and specific levels of action (Claridge, 2020).

Putnam’s (1993) hypothesis on the relationship between social capital and good governance is grounded in the Tocquevillian notion of civic activism, emphasising the twofold effects of civic associations: the internal effects on individual members and the external effects on the political system. Putnam argues that by participating in associations members adopt “habits of cooperation, solidarity and public-spiritedness” (pp. 89-90), and they gain skills that are important for a participatory democracy to function. Hence, civic associations can function like schools in democracy for the citizens. The external effects are in the institutional links that civic associations provide between their members and the political system and allow for flow of information and articulation of interests (p. 90). These twofold effects of participation are believed to produce more accountable and responsive public officials, as well as engaged citizens that have the capacity to influence the decision-making process and political outcomes. Furthermore, Putnam’s notion of the relationship between social capital and good governance should be understood as a reinforcing and cumulative development, rather than a one-way mechanism. Putnam’s (2000) empirical study on social capital in the US confirmed his theory on social capital and good governance. Other empirical studies confirming the positive relationship between social capital and the functioning and responsiveness of the

political system include (Andrews, 2011; Paxton, 2002; Stolle, 2004).

With regard to government performance, the trust variable shows much stronger impact and more robust results than the participation variable. Moreover, there is still slim evidence on informal sociability and government performance (Andrews, 2012; Nannestad, 2008). Rice’s (2001) study shows that social capital values correlated more strongly with local government performance than social capital measured as social networks.

Through supporting the networking and sociability within and beyond communities, local governments can strengthen the structural form of social capital that brings about the cultural/cognitive aspects such as trust and shared norms. This can be done by providing financial and non-financial support to local associations of citizens, organizing community events, providing the “meeting infrastructure” (children playgrounds, parks with benches, sport facilities, etc.), and developing both formal and informal cooperation with other municipalities in the area Kusakabe, (2012).

The cultural/cognitive aspects of social capital can also be strengthened directly by being transparent and encouraging citizens’ participation in planning and decision-making processes. This means providing information about the activities of local government and other actors in the community in the form of a local newspaper, county/ federal state website, etc., which can help building local identity as well, and by providing opportunities for people to express their ideas and views regarding their needs and expectations for their life in the municipality in the form of polls, public hearings among others (Van and Finsen, 2010).

Governmental organizations and welfare programs can connect low-income individuals to resources within the community, and that may help to foster relationships (Smith, 2016). Local government initiatives that are designed to enhance low-income families’ social networks, such as those that focus on encouraging family stability, could be improved to better target social capital formation (Desmond & An, 2015). These programs could further emphasize the importance of connections within and outside of the family for obtaining economic resources.

4.4 Determinants of Social Capital Integration

The first objective of this study was to examine determinants of social capital integration in Elgeyo Marakwet County. These determinants are key in pointing out the reasons why some individuals and households do not while others get involved in associations, social networks, and informal networks where social capital rests. The study found out and categorized these factors into demographic characteristics, socio-economic characteristics, and contextual/ systemic factors in the community.

4.4.1 Demographic Determinants of Social Capital Integration

Demographic determinants of social capital considered in the study include gender, age, marital status, and household composition and size. The factors account for why some individuals are involved in particular types of informal social networks while others are not.

4.4.1.1 Gender as a Determinant of Social Capital Integration

Based on the results in table 4.1 gender had no significant effect on social capital integration Elgeyo Marakwet County. In particular, on trust in the community, trust of the government, participation in the community projects, high-level distance, joint petitions, women groups, community organization, and religious groups did not depend on the age of the participant. However, gender determined one's eagerness to get involved in community activities and to be a member a credit group. This finding agrees with Eriksson et al. (2010) who observed that women were more involved in bridging social networks compared to men.

4.4.1.2 Age as a Determinant of Social Capital Integration

The results in Table 4.2 showed that age was not a significant determinant of social capital integration. Using the constructs analyzed which included trust in the community, trust of the government, participation in the community projects, involvement in community activities, high-level distance, membership in neighbour committees and religious groups. However, it was a determinant of joint petitions, women groups, community organization, and credit groups. Majority of participants between the ages of 21 to 35 were engaged in joint petitions, women groups, credit groups, and community organizations. This shows that individuals who are the same age tend to share common interests and are more likely to work together as compared to those in different age groups.

4.4.1.3 Marital Status as a Determinant of Social Capital Integration

Results in Figure 4.5 indicate that the majority of the respondents were married. This influences social capital integration because marriages come with huge responsibilities. These compel individuals to network in order to acquire more knowledge, benefit from technological transfer, and to have an opportunity to pool resources. This would ultimately ensure that they create and enjoy more income hence improved food security and increased well-being. As a result, there exists harmony and unity among people which improves cognitive, emotional, and physical well-being for children as well as better mental and physical health for adults. These results concur with Alma, et al.(2012) and Einolf (2011) who opine that marital status is one of the most important determinants of social participation.

4.4.1.4 Household Composition as a Determinant of Social Capital Integration

Results in Figure 4.6 and 4.7 indicate that most of the household size consist of more than five household members and most households have very young members under the age

of five. This influences social capital integration because large size families particularly in the rural areas have a greater risk of poverty and food insecurity. In addition, the existence of a majority young members in a family indicate a high dependency rate on the household heads. As pointed out in Rose (1998), in a household, productive social capital varies with various factors including the number of economically active persons in the household.

4.4.2 Social-Economic Characteristics

Social economic characteristics factors have primary influences on economic activities. In the study, such factors include land tenure (size of land), educational attainment, occupation, income, and duration of residence in the current sub-county

4.4.2.1 Size of Land

The researcher further sought to determine the effect of land size on social capital integration among residents in Elgeyo Marakwet County. This is because land size determines the level of agricultural productivity and the scope of interaction with the rest of the society. The results of are shown in figure 4.9.

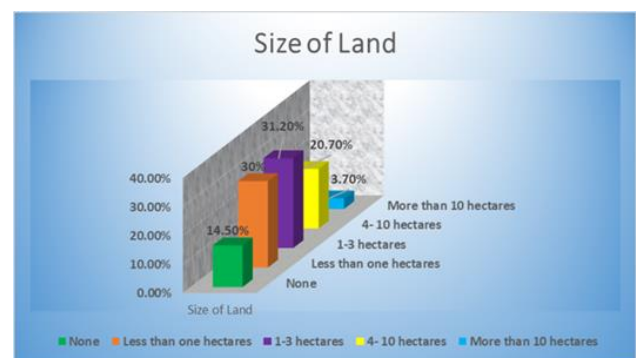


Figure 4.9: Size of Land in Hectares

Source: Field Survey, 2021

The findings in figure 4.9 indicate that 5(14.5%) of the households do not own land, 106(30%) had less than one hectare of land, 110(31.2%) had 1-3 hectares, 73(20.7%) had 4-10 hectares and 13(3.7%) had more 10 than hectares. This implies that most households own less than 3 hectares of land. This should motivate individuals to look for alternative means of generating resources for enhanced socio-economic livelihoods. When one has ownership of land, they tend to work harder and smarter on it so that it can enable them to get the very best out of it unlike when working on other peoples land. According to the World Bank, (2015), ownership of land encourages more utilization of the resource for local and foreign investment.

4.4.2.2 Occupation of the Households Heads

The occupation of a household head determines their income level. In the rural areas, income is derived from many sources which include earning from general business, livestock farming, formal employment, casual jobs, and stock trading among others. Most of the household heads were involved in different activities as shown in Figure 4.10.



Figure 4.10: Occupation and Source of Income

Source: Field Survey, 2021

The results show that 157(44.5%) practiced crop farming, 79(22.4%) livestock farming, 43(12.2%) stock traders, 92(26%) general business, 70(19.8%) employed, 31(8.8%) casual labourers, 46(13%) students and 8(2.3%) are engaged in other activities. This is a clear indication that the majority of the residents were crop farmers. In the same vein, responses from the interviews revealed that main occupation was agriculture with majority individuals engaging in crop farming. A respondent said; *“our county is a good place where crop farming and livestock rearing never disappoint. Even though we have some challenging terrains, whenever we plant in time and experience good rains we are sure of good outputs from the farms”*.

According to Sisay (2010), households diversify because of the need to enhance their capabilities and assets, realization of economies of scope, liquidity constraints, and to stabilize income flows and consumption risk. They also use it as a strategy to combine activities that add to the accumulation of wealth in the household (Khatun & Roy, 2012). Livelihood diversification can also help the rural inhabitants avoid environmental and economic trends and seasonality shocks, and hence make them less vulnerable (UN and NEPAD-OECD, 2011).

4.4.2.3: Range of Income

The range of household income has an implication on the potential of a household to invest in social capital integration activities through joining various groups.

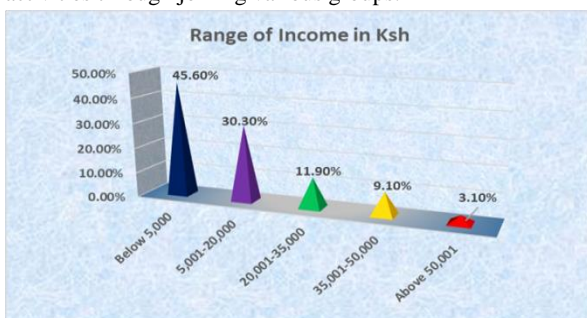


Figure 4.11: Range of Income

Source: Field Survey, 2021

The findings in figure indicate that 161(45.6%) income is below 5,000, 107(30.3%) range between 5,001 -20,000, 42(11.9%) range between 20,001 -35,000, 32(9.1%) 35,001-50,000 and 11(3.1%) above 50,001. This means that the majority are low-income earners. This implies that they may not have the capacity to participate in social integration

programmes which require pooling of resources. McDonald, (2011) argued that low-income earners may not have access to the social networks with high-influence contacts, and in return, their networks might not lead to finding stable employment. In addition, empirical evidence shows that higher levels of income and education coincide with a strong probability for group membership and interpersonal trust from the part of the individual (Denny 2003, Paldam 2000). According to Seefeldt(2016), many low-income individuals work in flexible jobs, such as through the sharing economy, self-employment, or during off-hours, which often create social isolation from which it may be difficult to build a strong social network.

4.4.2.4 Education Attainment

The results in table 4.23 established that education was not a determinant of social capital integration. From the constructs analyzed which included membership of neighbor committee, credit, and religious groups. Consequently, education is not a criteria for committee, group, or religious membership. However, it was a determinant on joint petitions and eagerness in involvement. Consequently, from the interviews, one of the respondents intimated that *“as the levels of education of many young people rise, we would probably see our social capital improve greatly”*. This could be attributed to the fact that educated individuals are more informed about their rights and are knowledgeable on the benefits of being involved in socially integrated communities. This finding is contrary to Njoku (2014) who opined that the number of years in school is a major socio-economic factor which affects the choice of livelihood among rural dwellers. In the same vein, Principi, et al (2016) observed that education is one of the most important determinants of social participation and that it fosters higher levels of civic participation.

4.4.2.5 Duration of Residence

Results in figure 4.8 show that duration of residence was a determinant of social capital since the majority had stayed in the different sub-county for a period more than five years, this is because the component more one stays in a particular area increases opportunities and time available to maintain and increase social networks and relationships.

4.4.2.6 Contextual /Systemic Determinants of Social Capital

Social capital determinants also include contextual or systemic factors at the level of community, such as overall level of development, quality, and fairness of formal institutions, distribution of resources and society’s polarization, and prior patterns of cooperation and trust.

The results indicate there is no high level of development in the community (Mean= 2.23, SD=1.18, Skewness=-0.23, Kurtosis=-0.72). However, an interview with the county commissioner revealed that there has been a lot of positive development after the introduction of county government. According to Şavkar, (2011), the level of social capital of societies is positively and significantly related to the level of development of societies. He further asserts that social capital is seen as a society in which higher societies are safer,

cleaner, healthier, and cultured, whereas societies with lower social capital levels have inverse characteristics with constant political, ethnic, religious, and sectarian conflicts and that these scarce resources are wasted.

Table 4. 4 Systematic Determinants of Social Capital

Systematic Determinants	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
There is high level of development in my community	2.2266	1.17969	-0.228	-0.723
There exist quality and fairness in formal institutions in the community	2.1756	1.17153	-0.292	-0.811
There is fair distribution of resource in the community	2.3892	1.38112	0.305	-1.226

Source: Field Survey, 2021

Likewise, the results indicate that there exist no quality and fairness in formal institutions in the community. This was shown by the result of (Mean= 2.18, SD=1.17, Skewness=-0.30, Kurtosis=-0.811). The sub-county director of education revealed that there are many institutions in the community which are engaged in different activities.

Further, the results show that there is no fair distribution of resources in the community (Mean= 2.39, SD=1.38, Skewness=-0.30, Kurtosis=-1.23). Generally, resources in the community are always scarce and the needs are unlimited. Anderson *et al.* (2002) opine that enhanced social capital can improve environmental outcomes through decreased costs of collective action, fair distribution of resources, increase in knowledge and information flows, increased cooperation, less resource degradation and depletion, more investment in common lands and water systems, improved monitoring and enforcement.

4.4.2.6 Role of Government in Social Capital

The study also sought to examine the role of government in social capital. Governmental organizations and welfare programs can connect individuals to resources within the community, and that may help to foster relationships (Smith, 2016).

Table 4.5 Role of Government in Social Capital

Variable	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
The government is encouraging mutual cooperation in the groups that exist in the community	1.1713	0.63406	4.534	22.143
The groups in the community are keeping contacts with the government and non-governmental organization representatives	1.4428	0.85220	2.454	5.035
The county government and institutions provides financial and non-financial support to the groups	4.3180	1.02357	-1.546	2.026
The government organizes community events and provides meeting structure for the citizens	1.4157	0.76807	2.444	7.234
The county government encourages citizen participation in the planning and decision-making process.	1.3015	0.67633	2.417	7.112
Through existing initiatives and policies the government plays a role in social capital formation welfare programs	1.4563	0.82733	2.470	5.885

Source: Field Survey, 2021

This section provides the study findings for the role of government in social capital. The findings indicate that the government is not encouraging mutual cooperation in the groups that exist in the community. This is attested by the results (Mean=1.17, SD=0.63, Skewness=4.53, Kurtosis=22.1). This implies that the county government is not training the groups that exist in the community.

Similarly, groups in the community are not keeping contacts with the government and non-governmental organization

representatives as shown by the results (Mean=1.44, SD=0.85, Skewness=2.4, Kurtosis=5.03) Smith, (2016) Governmental organizations and welfare programs can connect low-income individuals to resources within the community, and that may help to foster relationships when there is close relationship between the government and the local community.

Further, the results indicate that the county government and institutions provide financial and non-financial support to the groups (Mean=4.32, SD, 1.02, Skewness=-1.54, Kurtosis=2.03). The Key informant interview revealed that through extension services, training, and capacity building the



community gets financial and non-financial support through their unions and cooperatives. Kusakabe, (2012) suggested that through supporting the networking and sociability within and beyond communities. The government can provide financial and non-financial support to local groups of its citizens.

In addition, the findings indicate that the government does not organize community events and provides meeting structure for the citizens in the region (Mean=1.41, SD=0.77, Skewness=2.44, Kurtosis=7.23). According to Kusakabe, (2012), local governments can strengthen structural form of social capital that brings about the cultural/cognitive aspects such as trust and shared norms through organizing community events, providing the “meeting infrastructure” (children playgrounds, parks with benches, sport facilities, etc).

The results also show that the county government does not encourage citizen participation in the planning and decision-making process (Mean=1.46, SD=0.67, Skewness=2.41, Kurtosis=7.11). This affects the support that the community gives to the implementation of community projects. According to Van and Finsen (2010), the cultural aspects of social capital can also be strengthened directly by being transparent and encouraging citizens’ participation in planning and decision-making processes. Through providing information about the activities of local government and other actors in the community in the form of a local newspaper, county/ federal state website, etc., which can help building local identity as well, and by providing opportunities for people to express their ideas and views regarding their needs and expectations for their life in the municipality in the form of polls, public hearings among others

The finding also indicates that through existing initiatives and policies the government does not play a role in social capital formation welfare programs (Mean=1.45, SD= 0.83, Skewness=2.50, Kurtosis=5.88). These results contradict those of Desmond & An, (2015) who opine that local government initiatives and welfare programs enhance low-income families’ social networks, through encouraging family stability which leads to improved social capital formation.

Similarly, among the respondents interviewed, outstanding responses on the assessment of the level of development in Elgeyo Marakwet County indicated that the establishment of county governments had resulted to significant improvements in the levels of development. One of the respondents posed;

“the coming of county governments is a big change in our development since it has opened up Elgeyo Marakwet County for more opportunities. Although we are still under traditional development models, the openness of counties through the intercounty forums is a likely changer in development”.

Varda, (2010), took a network perspective, and her research examined the community-level social capital outcomes of a government-led intervention which were operationalized as social networks, social capital is measured as an increase to the strength of weak ties and reduction in redundancy among exchange relationships. Her findings suggested that state-

society synergy has the potential to increase bridging social capital in communities. In addition, communities with higher levels of cohesion and connectivity pre-intervention results in greater increases to social capital, and although trust plays a crucial role in development of social capital, the influence organizations are perceived to have does not.

5.2.2 Summary of Findings

5.2.2.1 On Determinants of Social Capital in Elgeyo Marakwet County

The findings of the study are summarized on the basis of the research objectives. First, it became clear that most households own less than 3 hectares of land. This should motivate individuals to look for alternative means of generating resources for enhanced socio-economic livelihoods. When one has ownership of land, they tend to work harder and smarter on it so that it can enable them to get the very best out of it unlike when working on other people's land.

From a cross-section of respondents it was observed that the main economic activity in the County is crop farming and livestock rearing. Similarly, it was observed that the majority of the residents of EMC are low-income earners. There is optimism that as the levels of education of many young people rise, they would see social capital improve greatly. This in essence indicates that levels of education are low and could contribute to negative social capital integration.

Generally, resources in the community were noted to be scarce amidst unlimited needs. A scholar as already discussed opined that enhanced social capital can improve environmental outcomes through decreased costs of collective action, fair distribution of resources, increase in knowledge and information flows, increased cooperation, less resource degradation and depletion, more investment in common lands and water systems, improved monitoring and enforcement. This points to the fact that the coming of county governments is has resulted in opening up of Elgeyo Marakwet County for more opportunities towards development.

There were government-led interventions in social capital integration initiatives through provision of extension services, training, and capacity building as well as financial and non-financial support to unions and cooperatives. This helped strengthen weak ties and reduction in redundancy among associations. However, groups in the community were not keeping contacts with the government and non-governmental organization representatives for close monitoring of their activities.

In addition, it was observed that the establishment of county governments had resulted to significant improvements in the levels of development. The coming of county governments is a big change in our development since it has opened up Elgeyo Marakwet County for more opportunities. Although we are still under traditional development models, the openness of counties through the inter-county forums is a likely changer in development.

5.3 Conclusion

From the study findings, the following conclusions emerge:

- i. Social capital integration enhances socio-economic livelihoods from benefits to members from whom majority are experiencing inertia thus renewed vigor in joining groups.
- ii. Some key determinants of social capital integration from the study leads to a conclusion that; the meagre the size of land ownership had a correlation to enhancing social capital integration, the meager the resources among households indicated a higher preference to social integration initiatives, and the existence of county governments due to Constitution of Kenya (CoK) 2010 has a great potential to social integration and by extension improved socio-economic livelihoods. On the other hand, other determinants including age, marital status, gender, etc had specific roles in social capital integration.
- iii. Social capital involves interactions between households' members or individuals and the social system, social networks, political parties as well local or international based associations and it is agreed that social capital is the measure of interactions, affiliations, and feelings of trust among community members which in turn lead to cooperation and collective action.
- iv. Social capital determinants include the psychological and socio-economic characteristics of individuals such as personal income and education, family and social status, values and personal experiences, which determine the incentive of individuals to invest in social capital and several other social and demographic determinants like age, gender, marital status and number of children.

5.5 Recommendations

The study, therefore, came up with the following recommendations.

- i. National and the County government should intensify the implementation of policies that support the operations of groups and subsequently giving them force through legal frameworks.
- ii. There is need of stakeholder involvement in strengthening social capital integration in EMC for enhancement of socio-economic livelihoods.

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