

Consequences of women group leadership competencies in enforcing illegal alcohol control policy in Nandi North Sub-county, Kenya

Stancy Chepkemoi¹

Edmond M. Were²

Pia Okeche³

¹stancysiele1@gmail.com

^{1,2,3}Kisii University, Kenya

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ABSTRACT

Alcohol consumption, despite the present legislative frameworks, remains a severe social and socioeconomic challenge in Kenya. This research investigated the influence of the group leadership skills of women on the manner in which the illegal alcohol control program was enacted in Kenya in the Nandi North Sub-County. This research used a convergent parallel mixed-methods design, which was grounded on agency and empowerment theories. The sample size of the respondents was selected as 258 respondents, based on the target population of 881 stakeholders, comprising residents, community leaders, enforcement officers, and the members of women's groups in purposive and systematic random sampling. Data were collected using semi-structured interviews, focus groups, and structured questionnaires. Thematic content analysis was used to analyze the qualitative data, whereas SPSS version 17.0 was used to analyze the quantitative data through multiple regression analysis and descriptive statistics. The findings indicated that the leadership potential of women's groups was also of a significant predictive ability of the efficacy of policy implementation ($R^2=0.551$, $F(4, 145)=18.367$, $p<0.001$). Resource mobilization ($b=0.291$, $p=0.004$), advocacy and sensitization ($b=0.352$, $p=0.003$), leadership decision-making ($b=0.418$, $p=0.001$), and monitoring and accountability ($b=0.267$, $p=0.004$) were also significantly beneficial. The qualitative study found out that collaborative strategies, including joint lobbying campaigns (68%), regular coordination meetings (79%), community sensitization programs (82%), and collaborations with local authorities (86%), enhanced policy implementation outcomes. Based on the findings of the study, group leadership by women is a useful, though under-explored, resource in executing policies at the grassroots level. In an effort to enhance the sustainability and effectiveness of community-based treatment, the policy frameworks are supposed to recognize women's organizations as valuable players in alcohol control programs and offer them adequate funding, capacity building, and integration in institutions.

Keywords: Community-Based Implementation, Illicit Alcohol Control Policy, Nandi North Sub-County, Policy Effectiveness, Women Group Leadership Capabilities

I. INTRODUCTION

Worldwide, alcohol consumption is a serious public health concern, with low- and middle-income nations being especially affected. According to estimates from the World Health Organization [WHO] (2018), about 25% of alcohol consumption worldwide goes unreported; in developing countries, where illegal manufacture flourishes due to lax regulatory enforcement, financial incentives, and cultural acceptance, this percentage is significantly higher. Illicit alcohol has become a significant development concern in sub-Saharan Africa, contributing to economic losses, gender-based violence, family dissolution, and avoidable mortality (Bryceson, 2002). According to Lelei et al. (2022), illicit brews accounted for the highest proportion of alcohol seizures in Kenya during the first half of 2020, highlighting the widespread prevalence of illegal alcohol consumption. The brief confirms that alcohol remains the most widely used substance in the country, indicating extensive consumption of both licit and illicit products.

Despite the existence of the Alcoholic Drinks Control Act, 2010, and other national laws aimed at regulating the production, distribution, and consumption of alcoholic beverages, enforcement continues to face significant challenges, particularly at local levels where illegal brewing operations persist. The Rift Valley region of Kenya's Nandi North Sub-County is a prime example of these implementation difficulties. The region is known for its abundant agricultural potential, with the main drivers of the local economy being the production of tea and maize. However, serious alcohol-related issues coexist with this agricultural prosperity. According to National Authority for the Campaign Against Alcohol and Drug Abuse [NACADA] (2022), illicit alcohol-related problems, like as economic hardship, domestic violence, and health problems from toxic brews, directly impact about 38% of families in Nandi North.

According to data from Kariuki, et al. (2013) families afflicted by alcohol have average family incomes that are 25% less than the regional norm, which feeds poverty cycles. While community leaders claim an increase in domestic violence episodes connected to substance misuse, local health institutions routinely receive cases of alcohol poisoning. Communities' social fabric has been stressed, and the weight of alcohol-related issues has caused conventional support

networks to erode. Comprehensive regulatory measures, including as license requirements, quality standards, limited trading hours, and sanctions for infractions, were introduced under the Alcoholic Drinks Control Act (2010). National policies place a strong emphasis on a multi-sectoral strategy that includes community involvement, health services, and law enforcement. However, in Nandi North and other such situations, traditional enforcement tactics have not worked. Illicit brewing activities are only momentarily disrupted by police raids; output quickly resumes after enforcement measures end (Were, 2021). Challenges for court prosecutions include judicial backlogs, witness intimidation, and evidence gathering. Because of their financial reliance, skepticism of the government, or sense of camaraderie, community members frequently defend brewers, undermining official enforcement measures. Alternative strategies, especially community-based initiatives run by formal civil society organizations, have gained traction as a result of these implementation gaps. Because alcohol addiction disproportionately affects women and families, women's organizations have become especially engaged in attempts to reduce alcohol consumption.

In Nandi North, women have suffered greatly from the effects of illegal alcohol, including increased caregiving responsibilities, financial hardship when male household heads waste their income on alcohol, domestic violence, and unstable families. Women's organizations have responded by organizing to combat these issues head-on through direct confrontation of brewing operations, family support programs, advocacy for more stringent enforcement, and awareness campaigns. Collective decision-making processes that guarantee widespread participation; resource mobilization strategies that pool financial, material, and social capital; advocacy tactics that increase awareness and shape community attitudes; and accountability mechanisms that uphold organizational integrity and community trust are just a few of the leadership qualities that these grassroots organizations possess and should be carefully examined. Despite these proven qualities, women's contributions to formal policy implementation institutions are still mostly unrecognized and primarily informal.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

The production, sale, and consumption of illicit brew in Nandi North Sub-County, Kenya is an issue regardless of the enactment of the Alcoholic Drinks Control Act (2010) and National Policy on Control of Alcohol and Substance Abuse. NACADA (2022) considers illicit alcohol-related problems to be about 38 percent of households in the sub-county. Among the recorded effects are reports of alcohol poisoning which requires medical intervention, rise in instances of domestic violence, loss of household income, on average, 25 percent below the regional averages, and social disintegration reducing community cohesion (County Government of Nandi, 2021). These issues are not resolved despite the existing policies, which implies that there is a problem with their implementation. The conventional enforcement acts, such as police raid and court proceedings, have failed and merely resulted in temporary disruptions without fixing the cause-and-effect of the demand factors and supply chains (Were, 2021). Community opposition to state-enforced policies is also a weakness of the policy as it is provided with the lack of trust towards authorities and economic reliance on the alcohol business. These implementation problems are the weakness of the state-centric, top-down approaches and indicate that more alternatives, which are community-based, are needed.

Women groups in Nandi North have been the active participants in the alcohol control efforts through awareness programs, family support services, enforcement advocacy, and direct face-to-face confrontation of illegal brewing activities. Their experience of the disproportional impact of domestic violence, alcohol abuse, poverty, and increased caregiving burden motivates them. Such groups exhibit leadership features such as the collective decision-making process, mobilization of resources, advocacy and accountability processes. Their input though remains unofficial, under-recognized within official policy systems, and unsubstantiated by institutional processes and resource allocation. The inability to pursue policy objectives through community-based social capital is a lost opportunity, which is symbolized by the inability of the women organizations to be considered in the process of the official policy implementation. No empirical research specifically focuses on women group leadership abilities in illicit alcohol control policy-making and rural Kenyan context, although the literature provides an appreciation of women leadership in other development setups (Eagly and Carli, 2018), and the significance of community involvement in the policy implementation process in general (Gaventa & Cornwall, 2004).

This gap was filled by this study since it focused on determining the extent to which women group leadership potential, that is, their decision-making processes, resource mobilization processes, advocacy and sensitization processes, and monitoring and accountability processes, affect the effectiveness of the implementation of the illicit alcohol control policy in Nandi North Sub-County. The insight into these relationships can be useful in policy reforms that officially involve community-based actors in the implementation structures and enhance the effectiveness of the policies and the power of the marginalized communities.

1.2 Research Hypothesis

H₀: Women group leadership capabilities have no significant implications in the implementation of the illicit alcohol control policy in Nandi North Sub-County, Kenya.

Although the null hypothesis was developed to address the quantitative part of the research in order to evaluate whether the relationship between the capability of women group leadership and the policy implementation outcomes was statistically significant, the study used the mixed-methods approach. This was supplemented by the qualitative strand which ventures into how and why these quantitative relationships are the case and gives more details about the contextual, social and institutional processes that affect the role of women in the implementation of illicit alcohol control policies. This integration was what made sure that a more understanding was obtained concerning both quantifiable effects and qualitative opinions.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Framework

2.1.1 Agency Theory

This study is based on the agency theory that was initially developed in the field of organizational economics by Jensen and Meckling (1976) and then adjusted to apply to policy research. Agency signifies the ability of individuals and organizations to take independent actions, decisions and determine outcomes despite the structural and institutional limitations (Bandura, 1989; Eisenhardt, 1989). The agency theory examines the role of other actors other than the officially appointed implementers in influencing policy processes and outcomes in policy environments.

In the case of women, group action is the agency that works with group action, whereby there is coordinated collaboration to create capacities which are more than those of individuals operating on their own. These capabilities are created through coordinated action, networks of mutual support and strategic interaction with the structures of power. Women are limited in their formal political participation by the gender norms but their social role as family welfare managers and caretakers give them the right to voice their concerns about the adverse impacts of alcohol on families and the society (Eagly & Wood, 2012).

Therefore, the agency theory can provide a conceptual paradigm towards understanding the way in which even when marginalized actors are excluded in the formal systems, they are likely to affect the governance processes. It puts an analytical emphasis on how organizations of women have influence, the mechanisms of advocacy, mobilizing of resources, decision-making, accountability of organizations, and how these abilities lead to the outcomes of the implementation of policies.

2.1.2 Empowerment Theory

Empowerment theory complements the agency theory and describes the process of the marginalized groups acquiring the power to influence their environment. To Rappaport (1981), empowerment is a procedure of gaining control over a situation and its outcome. Kabeer (1999) made this notion better and identified three interrelated dimensions achievements (the outcomes of exercising agency), agency (the power to make decisions and negotiate), and resources (material, human and social resources).

There are social, political, and economic aspects of women empowerment of their organizations. Income-generating activities provide financial resources and create spaces of collective organization, which empowers the economies with economic power. Social empowerment increases by joining groups, forming networks, solidarity and shared identity that fight the individual isolation. The more vocal and influential the groups are in the government processes the more they become active participants in policy making rather than being passive subjects in the policies thus, becoming political players.

These dimensions operate in loops of reinforcement, in that economic assets make possible the existence of social organization, social networks enable political engagement, and additional resources are accessible through political power. In conceptualizing empowerment as a dynamic process that is complex in nature, the concept of women organizations forming and utilizing leadership capacities that are significant to policy implementation, and the ability to enhance these capacities can empower groups and enhance the success of policies.

2.2 Empirical Literature Review

Research on women leadership within the community setting underlines that women tend to employ relations, involvement and coalition approaches as opposed to hierarchy. According to Hassan and Silong (2008), the female leaders are inclusive, consensus building and capacity developing so that their members are engaged and become proprietors of projects in the community. In the same vein, Eagly and Carli (2018) emphasize the role of women in working around structural impediments, in which they form coalitions and control influence by the use of relationship-based leadership. Northouse (2025) builds on this insight by locating the practices of women leadership in a wider theoretical framework demonstrating that participatory and transformational leadership styles are useful in community development since they capitalize on the social capital and collective responsibility. Despite these studies concurring on the significance of participatory leadership, they do not concur on how effectiveness is explained. Hassan and Silong also identify culture legitimacy and community trust as a source of success, whereas Eagly and Carli emphasize on

versatility and strength in breaking gender-limited boundaries. Northouse combines the two perspectives by claiming that the result of leadership is contingent on the ability of leaders to match the competencies on one hand with the situational needs. All these studies together indicate that the leadership of women plays a role in prolonged community development whereby participatory activities are solidified through adaptive strategies that react to situational pressures.

Studies of alcohol control intervention have shown the possibility as well as difficulties of community participation. According to Babor (2010), formal regulation of alcohol use should be accompanied by community-based prevention and awareness programs with the aim of ensuring that alcohol is managed effectively. According to Kalema et al. (2015), community mobilization in Uganda associated with education and treatment programs led successfully to a decrease in harmful drinking patterns, but the results were difficult to maintain due to the lack of funding after the external sources stopped. Lawhon and Herrick (2013) analyzed the experience of alcohol control in South Africa and found that the effectiveness of alcohol control policies can be determined by the quality of the policy coverage in the media and the perception of the community to the use of interventions. Gitatui et al. (2019) offers a Kenyan lens with a case study of women-led anti-alcohol movements in Kawangware where mobilization of the locals, enforcing actions and sensitizing on alcohol abuse issues minimized the alcohol abuse in the community. Nevertheless, these attempts were met with opposition by people who were economically reliant on the illegal brewing industry. In comparison to the Kalema et al., the study conducted by Gitatui et al. brings out a closer enforcement by women though with higher risks of confrontation. The insights provided by Babor at the policy level put an emphasis on the institutional design, but the local studies show that the cultural, economic, and gendered aspects of the community-based alcohol control success. Combining the results, the community participation is seen to contribute to ownership and impact, yet sustainability, and collaboration with formal authorities are seen as key issues.

Some of the obstacles that can hinder policy implementation in Kenya include lack of proper funding, poor coordination and political interferences. According to Kabeer (2005), these restrictions in governance are linked to gender inequities that undermine the contribution of women during the development process. The African alcohol-control evidence points to the fact that the women groups can fill the policy gaps by ensuring the community presence, offer local enforcement feedback, and initiate communal support. The literature depicts significant differences when comparing them within contexts. Women groups in Uganda and Kenya will cover the vacuum created by the ineffective government control, and in South Africa the efficacy of the control on alcohol consumption is dependent upon the public discourse and political framing. As it is evidenced in the Kenyan experiences of Gitatui et al. (2019) it is possible to say that women groups can effectively decrease alcohol-related harms on the community level but it is impossible due to the lack of the institutional recognition and financial support in the long term. Kalema et al. (2015) and Lawhon and Herrick (2013) also demonstrate that even though community mobilization provides instant outcomes, sustainability dictates the need to incorporate community strategies into the official policy frameworks.

The comparative synthesis of existing literature demonstrates that female leadership and negative intervention of communities are the key to attaining positive results in development and alcohol control. Yet, not many studies have integrated quantitative evaluation of the results of policy implementation, as well as qualitative investigation of the leadership processes under one research design. The majority of Kenyan research, including Gitatui et al. (2019), includes descriptive information, but does not measure policy effects in a systematic way, whereas the larger scale policy studies such as those of Babor (2010) and Kabeer (2005) do not consider localized gendered leadership processes. This gap points to the necessity of combined research to both measure the effects and explain the situation on the ground. The study at hand responds to this requirement by relying on a mixed-method design in order to examine the association between the capabilities of women group leadership and the application of illicit alcohol control policy within the Nandi North Sub-County. It is a mixture of quantitative data on the effectiveness of the policy and the qualitative data about the impact of the practices of women leadership, challenges, and interactions with the community on the outcomes. The research therefore adds to the heightened understanding of the role of women leadership in aiding the execution of community-based policy programs in Kenya.

III METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

In order to provide a thorough grasp of the research problem, the study used a convergent parallel mixed methods design, concurrently gathering and integrating quantitative and qualitative data (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017). A cross-sectional survey examining the connections between women's group leadership skills and policy implementation outcomes was used in the quantitative strand. The qualitative strand used focus groups and semi-structured interviews to explore lived experiences and perceptions phenomenologically. Combining the two methods allowed for triangulation of results, capturing subtle contextual elements and mechanisms while offering statistical support for connections.

3.2 Study Area

The study was carried out in Nandi North Sub-County, which is part of Nandi County in the Rift Valley region of Kenya. The sub-county is made up of Kipkaren, Mosop, Kabiyet, and Chepteriwai, among other administrative divisions. The region is known for its ideal growing circumstances, which make growing maize and tea the main sources of income. Notwithstanding the potential for economic growth, illicit alcohol-related issues affect about 38% of households (NACADA, 2022). The documented effects of these issues include health issues, domestic violence, and economic deprivation, which lower average household incomes by 25% below regional averages (County Government of Nandi, 2021). Active women's organizations in the sub-county are involved in a range of socioeconomic endeavors, including as community development projects, microfinance programs, and agricultural cooperatives. Since these organizations have been more active in the fight against illegal alcohol, Nandi North is a suitable location to study the leadership potential of women's groups in enforcing policies.

3.3 Target Population

The target population consisted of 881 stakeholders who were divided into five groups: 30 women's groups with about 300 members actively involved in illegal alcohol control activities; 50 community leaders (chiefs, assistant chiefs, village elders) who were knowledgeable about the dynamics of policy implementation; 30 local enforcement officials (police officers, county enforcement officers) who were in charge of enforcing the policy formally; 1 sub-location administrator who provided administrative oversight; and 500 residents who were directly or indirectly impacted by illegal alcohol and who were watching women's group activities. With women's groups as the main actors, authorities as the official implementers, and community people as the beneficiaries and observers of implementation efforts, this multi-stakeholder model guaranteed thorough understanding from a variety of viewpoints.

3.4 Sample Size and Sampling Procedure

Sample size was determined using Yamane's (1973) formula:

$$n = N / [1 + N(e)^2]$$

Where: n = sample size, N = population size (881), e = margin of error (0.05)

A minimum sample of 239 responders was obtained as a result. In order to account for any non-responses, the study eventually attracted 258 respondents, who were divided as follows:

Table 1: Distribution of the Sample Size by Respondent Category

Respondent Category	Population	Sampling Technique	Sample Size
Women Groups	30	Purposive	30
Women Group Members	300	Purposive	78
Community Leaders	50	Purposive	30
Local Enforcement Officials	30	Purposive	20
Households/Residents	500	Systematic Random	100
Total	880		258

Purposive sampling was used for women groups, group members, community leaders, and local enforcement officials because these categories possessed specific knowledge and experiences relevant to the study objectives. Their inclusion ensured that information collected was rich, detailed, and directly related to the topic under investigation. On the other hand, systematic random sampling was employed to select households or residents to ensure equal representation of the general community and minimize selection bias. This mixed approach enhanced the validity and representativeness of the study findings.

3.5 Research Instruments

3.5.1 Structured Questionnaires

Women group members, community leaders, law enforcement officers, and respondents from households were given structured questionnaires that included both closed-ended and open-ended questions. Five sections made up the questionnaires: demographic data (age, gender, education, and occupation); leadership skills of women's groups (decision-making, resource mobilization, advocacy, and monitoring mechanisms); collective action strategies (coordination, collaboration, and challenges); results of policy implementation (reductions in the production of illicit alcohol, community awareness, and enforcement effectiveness); and contextual factors affecting implementation.

3.5.2 Semi-Structured Interview Schedules

To collect detailed qualitative information, semi-structured interviews were performed with community leaders, law enforcement officers, and female group leaders. Open-ended questions in interview guides covered topics such as leadership roles and responsibilities in alcohol control initiatives, decision-making processes both within groups and in interactions with authorities, resource mobilization tactics and obstacles, advocacy and sensitization strategies, monitoring and accountability systems, opinions on the efficacy of policy implementation, and suggestions for improving women's leadership contributions in groups.

3.5.3 Focus Group Discussion Guides

Eight to twelve women participated in focus groups that examined common viewpoints, group dynamics, and collective experiences. Discussion guides covered the following topics: group leadership skills, teamwork tactics, difficulties implementing policies, connections with authorities and community people, and opinions on how well a group is doing at decreasing problems related to illicit alcohol. To reduce language barriers and improve participant comfort and comprehension, all instruments were translated into Kiswahili and Kalenjin, the native tongue.

3.6 Data Collection Procedures

After receiving ethical permissions, data collection took place over a period of eight weeks. In order to gain cooperation and explain the study, researchers first spoke with community leaders. After that, women's organizations were approached, and their leaders assisted in recruiting new members. In order to ensure understanding and completeness, questionnaires were distributed through in-person interviews. Semi-structured interviews lasted 45–60 minutes, were recorded on audio with permission, and were held in quiet settings to maintain confidentiality. Focus group talks, which lasted 90 to 120 minutes and were audio recorded with everyone's permission, took place in familiar community locations. Following an explanation of the study's goals, methods, risks, rewards, and their freedom to withdraw at any time without facing repercussions, each participant gave signed informed permission. During data collection sessions, no incentives other than light refreshments were offered.

3.7 Data Analysis

SPSS version 17.0 was used to code, clean, and enter quantitative data. The characteristics of respondents, the leadership capacities of women's groups, and the results of policy implementation were described by descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages, averages, and standard deviations). The effectiveness of policy implementation (dependent variable) and leadership capability aspects (independent variables: advocacy/sensitization, monitoring/accountability, resource mobilization, and decision-making) were compared using multiple regression analysis. The threshold for statistical significance was set at $p < 0.05$.

Thematic content analysis was used to examine qualitative information from focus group recordings and interview transcripts. Transcription of audio recordings, preliminary reading for familiarization, coding of significant passages, grouping codes into themes, spotting trends and connections between themes, and analyzing themes in light of theoretical frameworks and research goals were all part of this process. Quantitative data were contextualized, explained, and enhanced by qualitative discoveries.

3.8 Validity and Reliability

Three political science and public policy faculty members evaluated the instrument's comprehensiveness, relevance, and clarity in order to establish content validity. Instruments were improved based on their input. A pilot research with 30 respondents in the nearby Chesumei Sub-County, which has comparable sociodemographic features, was used to evaluate reliability. All of the scales' Cronbach's alpha coefficients (decision-making $\alpha = 0.78$; resource mobilization $\alpha = 0.75$; advocacy/sensitization $\alpha = 0.81$; monitoring/accountability $\alpha = 0.77$) above the acceptable threshold of 0.70, suggesting satisfactory internal consistency. Minor instrument improvements that improved clarity were prompted by pilot feedback.

3.9 Ethical Considerations

The National Commission for Science, Technology, and Innovation (NACOSTI) granted research license, and the Kenyatta University Ethics Review Committee provided ethical approval. After being fully informed about the study's goals, methods, possible risks and rewards, confidentiality safeguards, and their opportunity to withdraw at any time without incurring penalties, all participants gave their signed informed permission. Although sensitivity was maintained for possibly traumatic experiences with alcohol-related consequences, no vulnerable populations were expressly addressed.

Secure data storage, limited access, and anonymous coding were used to preserve data confidentiality. Ethics training for research assistants focused on participant distress management, confidentiality, and respect. To prevent

compulsion, no incentives other than refreshments were offered. By using appropriate attribution, quoting, and paraphrase techniques, plagiarism was avoided, and the manuscript's Turnitin similarity index was less than 20%.

IV. FINDINGS & DISCUSSION

4.1 Response Rate

Out of the 258 surveys that were sent out, 246 were returned, yielding a 95.3% response rate. Of these, 234 (90.7% usable response rate) were complete and appropriate for analysis. All 15 targeted interviews and the four scheduled focus groups, each with eight to twelve participants, were finished. Strong community interest in the research issue and successful mobilization by women's organizations and local leaders are indicated by this high response rate.

Table 2

Response Rate

Description	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Questionnaires Distributed	258	100
Questionnaires Returned	246	95.3
Usable Questionnaires for Analysis	234	90.7

4.2 Demographic Characteristics

Table 3 presents selected demographic characteristics of the study variable. These include age groups, educational level and occupation.

Table 3

Demographic Characteristics of Respondents (N = 234)

Demographic Variable	Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Women	159	68
	Men	75	32
Age Groups	21–30 years	42	18
	31–40 years	98	42
	41–50 years	65	28
	Above 50 years	28	12
Education Level	Primary	72	31
	Secondary	103	44
	Tertiary College	42	18
	University	16	7
Occupation	Small-scale farming	122	52
	Petty trading	56	24
	Casual labour	30	13
	Formal employment	26	11

As shown in Table 3, 68% of respondents were women and 32% were men, which reflects the study's emphasis on women's groups and the inclusion of male family representatives, law enforcement officers, and community leaders who offered a range of viewpoints.

The respondents were between the ages of 21 and 67 ($M=38.5$, $SD=11.2$). The age group of 31–40 years old accounted for the biggest percentage (42%) followed by 41–50 years old (28%), 21–30 years old (18%), and above 50 years old (12%). This distribution shows that a significant portion of participants are from economically active age groups that are directly impacted by alcohol-related issues.

There were differences in educational attainment: just 31% had completed primary school, 44% had completed secondary school, 18% had attended tertiary college, and 7% had attended university. This distribution includes enough individuals with higher education to provide technical skills and leadership in women's groups, while also reflecting patterns of educational access in rural areas.

Small-scale farming accounted for 52% of the total professions, followed by petty trading (24%), formal employment (11%), and casual labor (13%). This is supported by Theuri and Nzioka (2021), who observed that occupational profile describes the rural economic environment and indicates that women's groups are primarily small-scale farmers and traders who have a direct interest in the financial well-being of their households, which is impacted by alcohol consumption.

4.3 Illicit Alcohol Control Policy Implementation Outcomes (Dependent Variable)

Policy implementation effectiveness was measured through five key indicators assessed on 5-point Likert scales (1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree).

Table 4

Illicit Alcohol Control Policy Implementation Indicators

Indicator	Mean	Std. Dev.	Interpretation
Reduction in number of illicit brewing sites	3.72	0.89	Moderate improvement
Decrease in alcohol-related health cases	3.58	0.94	Moderate improvement
Reduction in domestic violence incidents	3.81	0.87	Substantial improvement
Increased community awareness of alcohol harms	4.12	0.76	Substantial improvement
Improved enforcement cooperation	3.45	1.02	Moderate improvement
Overall Policy Implementation Index	3.74	0.7	Moderate-Substantial

Source: Field Data, 2025

The overall policy implementation effectiveness index ($M=3.74$, $SD=0.70$) indicates moderate to substantial perceived effectiveness. Community awareness showed the highest rating ($M=4.12$), suggesting women's groups have been particularly successful in sensitization efforts. Reduction in domestic violence ($M=3.81$) and illicit brewing sites ($M=3.72$) also showed notable improvements. Enforcement cooperation, while positive, showed the lowest rating ($M=3.45$) and highest variability ($SD=1.02$), suggesting inconsistent relationships between women's groups and formal authorities.

Qualitative data provided context for these findings. A woman group leader explained: "When we started, there were brewing dens in almost every village. Now they are fewer, and people know to report them. Our monthly awareness campaigns have changed attitudes—people now see illicit alcohol as harmful, not just entertainment."

An enforcement official noted: "Working with women's groups has improved our intelligence. They know the community and can identify brewing sites we would never find. However, cooperation varies depending on the individual officers and group leaders involved."

4.4 Women Group Leadership Capabilities (Independent Variables)

Four dimensions of women group leadership capabilities were assessed as presented in Table 5.

Table 5

Women Group Leadership Capabilities

Leadership Capability Dimension	Mean	Std. Dev	Level
Leadership Decision-Making			
Inclusive participation in decisions	4.23	0.71	High
Strategic planning for alcohol control	3.87	0.85	High
Conflict resolution within groups	3.92	0.79	High
Delegation of responsibilities	3.78	0.88	High
Dimension Average	3.95	0.65	High
Resource Mobilization			
Financial resource generation	3.65	0.91	Moderate-High
Material resource acquisition	3.52	0.87	Moderate-High
Social capital leveraging	3.89	0.76	High
External partnership development	3.41	0.95	Moderate
Dimension Average	3.62	0.73	Moderate-High
Advocacy and Sensitization			
Community awareness campaigns	4.18	0.68	High
Cultural appropriateness of messages	4.05	0.74	High
Sustained engagement efforts	3.86	0.82	High
Use of diverse communication channels	3.72	0.89	Moderate-High
Dimension Average	3.95	0.69	High
Monitoring and Accountability			
Regular progress tracking	3.67	0.86	Moderate-High
Transparent reporting to members	3.88	0.79	High
Documentation of activities	3.54	0.92	Moderate-High
Accountability to community	3.91	0.77	High
Dimension Average	3.75	0.72	High

Overall, the results of the leadership abilities and teamwork strategies provide a powerful and consistent trend that has been well-grounded by previous literature. The groups of women are very competent in participatory decision-making, community advocacy, and accountability, which are identified in the literature as the strengths of community initiatives led by women. Meanwhile, the average results of external resource mobilization indicate the well-reported structural constraints of gendered community leadership situations. These combined observations affirm that women groups in Nandi North Sub-County have the leadership capabilities to propel community-based alcohol control but they have systemic challenges like those proposed in the previous African and global studies.

4.5 Collaboration Strategies

Respondents identified multiple collaboration methods employed by women's groups:

Table 6

Collaboration Methods among Women Groups

Collaboration Method	Frequency	Percentage	Effectiveness Rating (1-5)
Partnership with local authorities	182	86%	4.12
Community sensitization programs	173	82%	4.35
Regular coordination meetings	167	79%	3.98
Joint advocacy campaigns	143	68%	3.76
Economic empowerment initiatives	98	46%	3.52
Religious institution partnerships	89	42%	3.65

Note: Effectiveness rating measured on a 5-point scale where 1 = Very Ineffective, 2 = Ineffective, 3 = Moderately Effective, 4 = Effective, and 5 = Very Effective.

Partnership with local authorities emerged as the most common strategy (86%), enabling groups to leverage formal enforcement powers. A group chairperson explained: "We work closely with our assistant chief. When we identify brewing sites, we report immediately and accompany police during raids to show locations. This partnership makes our efforts more effective."

Community sensitization programs, though slightly less common (82%), showed the highest effectiveness rating (M=4.35). Groups conducted monthly community meetings, door-to-door visits, and school-based programs. A member described: "We invite health officers to explain alcohol's health effects. We also share testimonies from affected families. These stories are powerful—people see real consequences in their neighbors' lives."

Regular coordination meetings (79%) facilitated internal group cohesion and strategic planning. Joint advocacy campaigns (68%) amplified voices through collective action, though resource constraints limited frequency. Economic empowerment initiatives (46%), while less common, addressed underlying economic factors driving alcohol involvement by providing alternative livelihoods.

4.6 Regression Analysis: Women Group Leadership Capabilities and Policy Implementation

Multiple regression analysis examined relationships between leadership capability dimensions and policy implementation effectiveness:

Table 7

Regression Model Summary

Model Statistics	Value
R	0.742
R ²	0.551
Adjusted R ²	0.538
F-statistic	18.367
df	(4, 145)
Sig. (p-value)	<0.001

Table 8

Regression Coefficients

Predictor Variable	Unstandardized Coefficient (B)	Std. Error	Standardized Coefficient (β)	t-value	Sig. (p-value)	VIF
(Constant)	2.135	0.512	--	4.17	0	--
Leadership Decision-Making	0.418	0.105	0.362	3.981	<0.001	1.24
Resource Mobilization	0.291	0.097	0.278	3	0.004	1.18
Advocacy & Sensitization	0.352	0.114	0.301	3.088	0.003	1.32
Monitoring & Accountability	0.267	0.089	0.246	3	0.004	1.15

It was revealed in the regression analysis that the four dimensions of women group leadership competence collectively explained 55.1 percent of the variance in policy implementation effectiveness, which indicates that these leadership competences can be used to make predictions to a significant extent that can affect successful policy implementation. The model itself was statistically significant ($R^2 = 0.551$, $F = 18.367$, $p < 0.001$), i.e. the joint effect of the leadership competencies was strong enough to reject the null hypothesis with a high level of confidence. The discussion thus validates that the leadership competencies among women groups are very essential in enhancing the policy implementation in the society.

The findings showed there were positive and significant contributions made by all the four dimensions of competence. The most robust one was leadership decision-making ($b = 0.418$, $p < 0.001$), which means that the more inclusive and strategic decisions are made in a group, the more successful its apparatus to control alcohol consumption is. Qualitative insights provided support this observation. According to one group leader, decisions are never taken by a few individuals but via discussions which incorporate everyone. She observed that involvement by all means that the members get more committed since they own the decisions. By forming such structures of participation, groups are able to harness the knowledge of participants, make decisions that are consistent with local realities and establish a sense of collective accountability, which in turn reinforce implementation and follow-through.

The second most influential aspect was advocacy and sensitization ($b = 0.352$, $p = 0.003$). Implementation was better among groups that were carrying out regular awareness campaigns. One of the respondents in the focus group has remembered how their initial attempts were ignored and some people in the community told them that women had no right to comment on the affairs that were seen to be the business of men. The women did not give up on the resistance and they proceeded with community conversations, drama performances, and storytelling based on lived experiences. The attitudes changed with time and even men started asking the group to provide their meetings. This perception shift is mirrored by the finding of Barerah (2018) that community sustained education is a necessity in alcohol control interventions.

The mobilization of resources also played an important role in the success of implementation ($b = 0.291$, $p = 0.004$). Organizations that could attain fiscal, material, or social resources were in a better position to continue and reach a greater number of households. A treasurer said that they got their money every week through the table banking profits, church support, and some harambees which enabled them to hold meetings, make raids on communities, and to host people during sensitization forums. She pointed out that resources would in her words keep our operations down, and that access to resources would mean a straight direct correlation to operational capability. This is similar to the view of Musyoka et al. (2020) that resources are the basis on which agency and collective action is established.

Accountability and monitoring were also found to be an important factor to the success of implementation ($b = 0.267$, $p = 0.004$). Organizations that kept effective records and open reporting were building better internal commitment and trust by the community. According to one of the members, they write down all the events, meetings, and spending in order to bring order and demonstrate the community that they are serious and credible in their work. Governance researchers, including Comwall and Gaventa, (2017), have always observed that accountability and record keeping are the critical constituents of effective community organizations, which the current results also captivate. The Variance Inflation Factor values also supported the statistical validity of the model with all the values being less than 1.5 and this eliminates the possibility of multicollinearity. The constant ($B = 2.135$, $p < 0.001$) revealed that there is a certain degree of policy implementation even in the absence of a women group intervention, probably through the formal implementation, but groups that interfere greatly provide more strength to the base.

The qualitative data also helped to understand how exactly the implementation is actually enhanced by the women groups. The moral authority was one of the mechanisms based on their social positions. As caregivers, women were credible with their words on the evils that alcohol had in the family. A community leader noted that witnessing hunger, neglect and violence were things that provided them with legitimacy which non-members did not have. Women also ensured that critical enforcement loopholes were targeted by ensuring constant attendance in the community. Police raids were not very frequent and depended on outside information whereas women were aware of brewing locations, sellers, and consumers. The presence and intelligence of some of them made enforcement more effective according to one of the enforcement officers.

Another influence mechanism was the community support. The members of the group were integrated into the community hence communicated in culturally fitting ways and were trusted. According to one of the participants, they were neighbors, relatives, and friends, which made their messages more acceptable and convincing. This social embeddedness is consistent with studies that indicate that women leadership is more effective when there is local legitimacy. Women groups also enhanced the implementation through the establishment of alternative support systems to the families that were affected by alcohol. One of the beneficiaries stated that she was counseling her husband, making treatment referrals, and providing food to the family because the home had nothing. These all-encompassing solutions aimed at the social and economic problems that were wider than alcohol abuse and supported the enforcement strategies and the sustainability of the policy.

4.8 Challenges Faced by Women's Groups

Despite demonstrated effectiveness, women's groups faced significant challenges:

Table 9

Challenges in Policy Implementation

Challenge	Frequency	Percentage	Severity (1-5)
Limited financial resources	198	85%	4.52
Lack of formal recognition	176	75%	4.21
Community resistance/hostility	167	71%	3.98
Gender discrimination	154	66%	3.87
Safety concerns during confrontations	143	61%	4.35
Inadequate training/capacity	132	56%	3.76
Poor coordination with authorities	118	50%	3.65

Note: Severity was measured on a 5-point scale where 1 = Very Low, 2 = Low, 3 = Moderate, 4 = High, and 5 = Very High.

Limited financial resources (85%, severity $M=4.52$) constrained operational capacity. Groups relied on member contributions and occasional community fundraising, limiting activity frequency and reach. A treasurer lamented: *"We want to do more—visit more villages, hold more meetings—but we lack money for transport, materials, even tea for participants."*

Lack of formal recognition (75%, severity $M=4.21$) meant groups operated informally without official status, hindering access to government resources and institutional support. A chairperson stated: *"We're doing government work—implementing their policy—but receive no recognition, no support. If we had official status, we could access county funds and participate in formal planning."*

Community resistance (71%, severity $M=3.98$) manifested as verbal abuse, social ostracism, and occasionally physical threats, particularly from those economically benefiting from alcohol trade. A member described: *"Some people insult us, calling us busybodies interfering where we don't belong. Brewers and sellers are hostile because we threaten their income. We face threats, but continue because we believe in our mission."*

Gender discrimination (66%, severity $M=3.87$) undermined legitimacy, particularly among male community members dismissing women's authority. A leader explained: *"Some men refuse to attend our meetings, saying 'why should we listen to women?' This attitude limits our reach, though slowly changing as our work shows results."*

Safety concerns (61%, severity $M=4.35$) emerged particularly during confrontations with brewers and consumers. Groups accompanying enforcement operations occasionally faced aggressive responses. One member recounted: *"During a raid, intoxicated men became violent. One threw stones at us. We fear for our safety but feel we must continue."* These challenges align with broader literature on women's community leadership (Kabeer, 2020) while highlighting alcohol control's specific difficulties given economic interests and entrenched social practices.

V. CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusions

The study according to its results indicated that the ability of women to lead a group had significant influence on the implementation of illegal alcohol control laws in Nandi North Sub-County. Statistical results also indicated that the combination of decision-making, mobilising of resources, lobbying and sensitization, and monitoring and accountability contributed 55.1 percent to the variation in the effectiveness of policy implementation. The leadership decision making had the greatest effect followed by lobbying and sensitization. There was also a significant contribution on accountability and mobilization of resources. The qualitative findings indicated that women groups possessed local knowledge, legitimized through their social status and that women groups were linked to the community through means of trust which enhanced enforcement and awareness programs.

Although successful, women organizations had to overcome the problem of funding, non-official status, community resistance, sexism and safety. The findings reinforced the ideas of agency and empowerment because they were used to demonstrate how the collective activity of women enabled them to have a considerable impact on policy development despite institutional barriers. The paper found that the involvement of women in formal structures of alcohol control would have improved the policy outcomes because the women organizations provided social capital, moral authority and local experience lacking in state-led initiatives.

5.2 Recommendations

The study proposes that both the federal government and the local government accept women organizations as significant partners in alcohol control by the establishment of co-ordination mechanisms with the health and enforcement departments and through establishing conducive policies. Although other methods such as recognition programs such

as grants and awards may stimulate active involvement, capacity-building programs may support advocacy and leadership and financial management skills. The women organizations, on their part, should develop strategic plans that have set objectives, enhance documentation, and formalize their organization. They should also form networks of advocacy and resource sharing, implement safety measures and diversify their economic activities in order to ensure sustainability.

The NGOs and development partners are encouraged to encourage participatory research, to provide flexible financial and technical support, and to establish forums of cooperation and exchange of information. Subsequent research ought to focus on cost-effectiveness research of the community-based intervention strategies, comparative county-based research, and long-term research of the community-based women organizations impact. To affirm and generalize the findings, research on gender dynamics should be conducted more, as well as in other fields.

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