

Influence of Microfinance Trainers' Characteristics on Women's Acquisition of Financial Skills: A Case of Women's Self-Help Groups in Kiambu County, Kenya

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Abstract

Microfinance institutions have had their fair share of challenges, especially the ability of the women entrepreneurs to manage loans secured from the institutions. Thus, the study intended to examine the effectiveness of microfinance trainers' characteristics on women's acquisition of financial skills in Kiambu County, Kenya. The study was guided by Pearson's Theory of Gender Relations, The Endogenous Growth and Knowledge-Based Theories. It adopted mixed methods approach and thus applied exploratory research design. The target population comprised of 8 Credit Officers, 25 staff members, 1900 women in SHGs, 700 spouses and 100 Key Informants (Training Officers) all totaling to 2733. Using the Central Limit Theorem to obtain a sample of MFIs, that is, 25.0% of 8 MFIs and 295 respondents, that is, 10.9% of 2708, were selected. Purposive sampling was used to select two Credit Officers and 20 key informants (Training Officers). 190 women in SHGs and 83 spouses were selected using simple random sampling. Focus group discussions were used to collect data from women in SHGs and their spouses, interview schedules for women in SHGs, Credit Officers and spouses whereas questionnaires were used to gather information from Training Officers. Qualitative data was analyzed thematically along the study objectives and presented in narrative forms while the quantitative data was analyzed descriptively using frequencies and percentages with the help of Statistical Packages for Social Science (SPSS 23) and were presented using tables and charts. The study established that microfinance trainers' characteristics influence women's acquisition of financial skills. Thus, the study recommends that microfinance trainers' need to update their skills to match the changing times such as adopting use of ICT and attitude change towards women empowerment. The trainers need to plan for quarterly and semi-annual evaluation of training programmes since they are effective in ascertaining of the efficacy of such programmes.

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Abstract

Microfinance institutions have had their fair share of challenges, especially the ability of the women entrepreneurs to manage loans secured from the institutions. Thus, the study intended to examine the effectiveness of microfinance trainers' characteristics on women's acquisition of financial skills in Kiambu County, Kenya. The study was guided by Pearson's Theory of Gender Relations, The Endogenous Growth and Knowledge-Based Theories. It adopted mixed methods approach and thus applied exploratory research design. The target population comprised of 8 Credit Officers, 25 staff members, 1900 women in SHGs, 700 spouses and 100 Key Informants (Training Officers) all totaling to 2733. Using the Central Limit Theorem to obtain a sample of MFIs, that is, 25.0% of 8 MFIs and 295 respondents, that is, 10.9% of 2708, were selected. Purposive sampling was used to select two Credit Officers and 20 key informants (Training Officers). 190 women in SHGs and 83 spouses were selected using simple random sampling. Focus group discussions were used to collect data from women in SHGs and their spouses, interview schedules for women in SHGs, Credit Officers and spouses whereas questionnaires were used to gather information from Training Officers. Qualitative data was analyzed thematically along the study objectives and presented in narrative forms while the quantitative data was analyzed descriptively using frequencies and percentages with the help of Statistical Packages for Social Science (SPSS 23) and were presented using tables and charts. The study established that microfinance trainers' characteristics influence women's acquisition of financial skills. Thus, the study recommends that microfinance trainers' need to update their skills to match the changing times such as adopting use of ICT and attitude change towards women empowerment. The trainers need to plan for quarterly and semi-annual evaluation of training programmes since they are effective in ascertaining of the efficacy of such programmes.

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Introduction

Financial skills are important for the success of any business venture. However, while the need for financial literacy may be largely acknowledged, the importance of gender dimension remains a subject for debate.

There are three key aspects of a general rationale for considering women's needs. In a study conducted in the Netherlands, Carr (2010) posits that, where gender differences in financial literacy exist, there are both philosophical and pragmatic reasons for addressing them.

While it is important to refrain from *ex-ante* assuming the direction of a gender gap, Carr (2010) suggests that women tend to have lower levels of financial knowledge and are relatively less financially skilled than men. This calls for the need to empower them through financial training. Such gaps represent fundamental problems for social equity, with several important follow-on implications.

There may be unrealized potential for gains in economic efficiency among one-half of the population, particularly in societies where a relatively large share of production takes place in informal home-based enterprises run by women. Low levels of female financial literacy and confidence may impede their more active

participation in the economy. In his journal about women's financial acumen in Italy, Abromovitz (2012) notes that financial literacy differences may affect relative economic power within the household. This has implications for well-being if men and women allocate household resources according to different preferences. Abramowitz (2012) suggests that spouses in different households do not act as single unitary decision makers. Instead, he asserts that household resources in women's hands have been observed to be more likely spent on improving family's well-being, particularly that of the children.

Trainers-of-Trainers and other stakeholders have been identified as a principal factor which contributes to women's acquisition of pre-requisite skills to manage their enterprises. Toby, Yang and Bartlett (2014) have articulated the need to focus on MFIs and trainer practices that are responsive to context when examining the performance of an individual woman rather than to over focus on strategies to teach women specific skills.

Public institutions have a responsibility to provide suitable training to its staff (Toby et al, 2014).

This mandate is often met by MFI through offering opportunities intended to train all women regardless of their status in society. Support is provided by trainers, management of MFIs and other stakeholders. In a study conducted in Nicaragua amongst 211 respondents to establish the efficacy of professionals on women training and financial management, Michael and Dwivedi (2013) have shown that the most important variable in such success is a well-prepared and capable trainer or facilitator.

The study further indicated that beliefs held by professionals have about women's ability to manage finances and their understanding of the challenges which women face after borrowing finance from MFIs, hold key to the success of such training. Michael and Dwivedi (2013) asserts that the exosystem and macrosystem also influence the trainer, in terms of the curriculum he or she has to work with, and the cultural expectations and views of trainers and their roles in society.

Similar findings were reported in Nigeria by Nwoye (2011) in which they suggested that trainers have images of knowledge custodians and the role they should play during women training to enhance their ability to do record-keeping, financial control, planning, budgeting, pricing, costing and working capital management. Nwoye (2011) further asserts that the best practice for trainers is that they should become well versed and trained in evidence-based instruction and behavioral techniques in order to help the women

obtain his or her therapeutic and training goals (Nwoye, 2011). Thus, with the majority of women spending large portions of their working days in general education or training settings, trainers must be knowledgeable.

Such knowledge should include the women's core characteristics and relevant evidence based training strategies for women in different cadres or levels of education to ensure that women succeed in realizing their full entrepreneurial potential. This study acknowledges considerable benefits of training while understanding the research based need for women to receive multiple hours of specific trainings depending on job demands.

The current researchers sought to understand how prepared general trainers are to implement training curriculum content for employees in different job groups. However, the findings contradict the assertions of a study by Kehrhahn (2012) which indicated that even when general trainers do report receiving academic instruction and/or professional development training related to the demands of different women, they still do not feel completely prepared to instruct women whose projects demand specific attention. In Kiambu County, the ability to manage microfinances amongst women is still wanting despite the importance of identifying observable aspects of professionals and trainers' preparedness as aspects of training which enhance women's ability to manage microfinances obtained from MFIs.

This is attributed to the fact that that studies by Nwoye (2011) and Kehrhahn (2012) have had difficulty identifying specific training and counseling skills or approaches of training which professionals should adopt to improve their effectiveness in enhancing women's acquisition of important skills to undertake microfinance management. There is little evidence that professional training of trainers and stakeholders predicts management of microfinances amongst women trainees. These were research gaps which this study sought to fill.

Statement of the problem

Microfinance institutions have been successful in providing legal frameworks upon which women get financial loans or subsidies to uplift their small and medium income generating enterprises. However, in Kiambu County, despite the highest number of MFIs, failure rate of women-based enterprises was on the rise. This situation has elicited concerns amongst stakeholders. It was also noted that efforts to mitigate these challenges have not yielded much and have failed to register remarkable progress in ensuring growth of women-based enterprises through prudent financial management. This brings into question the effectiveness of microfinance trainers' characteristics on women's specific needs and concerns.

As noted earlier, microfinance training has not been conceptualized to examine trainers' characteristics, yet these have been considered important training targeted women. Consequently, this study sought to assess the influence of microfinance trainers' characteristics on women's acquisition of financial skills in Kiambu County, Kenya.

Theoretical Framework

This study was guided by Pearson's Gender Relations Framework (2005) and the Endogenous Growth and the Knowledge-Based Theories. According to Pearson's theory, society views all activities that are carried

out to be based on social roles and interactions of men and women. In this context, the framework views the notion of gender roles and activities as having a strong ideological content. Policies often reflect a prescribed version of men and women's roles rather than the actual activities they engage in. Based on such ideologies, the society seems to have ultimate authority on nature of what men actually do and their contribution which turns out to be biased against women (Pearson, 2005). This theory was used to interrogate how women's prescribed roles and biased perceptions influenced their financial performance and how these informed MFI training, education and financial skills.

The Pearson (2005)'s gender relations theory identifies the social differences between men and women that are learned, are changeable over time, and have wide variations between and within cultures. Endogenous Growth and the Knowledge-Based Theories underline the role of knowledge in increasing productivity within different enterprises and the economy.

Enterprises and economies, which have highly educated and financially trained human resource, are likely to be high performers compared to those that lack these key resources. In relation to MFIs, it was presumed that women entrepreneurs, who are trained on financial skills, are proactive and quick at applying new skills to improve efficiency, productivity, risk taking and innovativeness of their enterprises (Penrose, 1959). Therefore, the rationale of using this theory is; it underscored the vitality of the level of women's financial training which positively impact on their finance skills such as record-keeping, pricing and costing projections, investment plans, budgeting plans and e-financing.

Scope and Limitations of the Study

This study was carried out in microfinance institutions and registered self-help groups in Kiambu County. It covered the period between 2009 and 2016 since this is the period when so many MFIs such as Faulu, K-REP, Rafiki, Uwezo, SMEP, CBA and KWFT were conceptualized and registered in Kiambu County. Some of the respondents withheld information due to its sensitive nature. In this case, the researcher explained to the respondents that the aim of the study was to provide knowledge that could improve training programmes. The study may not be applicable to all women in SHGs since there could be other dynamics which influence their ability to adopt financial prudence other than training.

Research Methodology

The study applied exploratory sequential design. This is a double-phase design in which qualitative data helps explain or builds upon initial quantitative results (Creswell, 2009). This design was useful since it provided significant insight on how microfinance training programmes have impacted on women's acquisition of financial skills.

The target population comprised of women and their spouses in 250 registered Self-Help Groups. Only those who had accessed microfinance services in the study area between 2009 to 2014 were included in the study. Key informants also included Credit Officers from the registered MFIs providing training services to women in the study area and the training officers commissioned by MFIs. This is because they had information on women beneficiaries of microfinance training.

Using the Central Limit Theorem, the study sampled two MFIs out of the eight operating in Kiambu County and 295 respondents, that is, 10.9% of 2708. Purposive sampling was applied to select two Credit Officers and 20 Key informants (Training Officers). This was because they held responsibility of implementation of the MFI training programmes.

On the other hand, simple random sampling was applied to select 83 spouses of women in Self Help Groups (SHGs) and 190 women selected from SHGs that benefited from microfinance training and loans from MFIs. Data analysis began by identifying common themes from the respondents' description of their experiences. The relevant information was broken into phrases or sentences, which reflect a single, specific thought.

Qualitative data was analyzed thematically along the study objectives and presented in narrative forms. Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, mean and standard deviation with the help of Statistical Packages for Social Science (SPSS Version 23) and presented in frequency distribution tables.

Results and Discussions

The study sought to evaluate the influence of microfinance trainers' characteristics on women's acquisition of financial skills in Kiambu County, Kenya.

Respondents' Background Information

In this study, 20 questionnaires were administered to the training officers. In return, 17 were filled and returned. The researcher also conducted interviews and focus group discussions among 156 women in SHGs, interviewed one Credit Officer and 80 spouses. This yielded response rates as shown in Table 1;

Table 1: Response Rate

Respondents	Sampled Respondents	Those Who Participated	Response Rate (%)
Training Officers	20	17	85.0
Credit Officers	2	1	50.0
Women in SHGs	190	156	82.1
Women's Spouses	83	80	96.4
Total	295	254	86.1

Source: Researcher (2017)

From Table 1, training officers, credit officers, women in SHGs and spouses registered a response rate of 86.1%. This confirmed the findings of Creswell (2009) that a response rate above 75.0% is adequate and of suitable levels to allow for generalization of the outcomes to the target population.

Levels of Women's Involvement with Microfinance Institutions

The study sought to establish if women in SHGs have been involved with MFIs, duration and the amount of money they have received as shown in Table 2;

Table 2: Findings of Women's Involvement in MFIs

Aspects of Involvement		Women in SHGs		Training Officers		Credit Officers		Spouses	
		f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Involved	Yes	102	65.4	13	76.5	1	100	56	70.0
	No	54	34.6	4	23.5	0	0.0	24	30.0
Duration of Involvement	Less Than 1	15	9.6	2	11.8	0	0.0	4	5.0
	1-3 years	47	30.1	4	23.5	0	0.0	32	40.0
	More than 3 years	94	60.3	11	64.7	1	100.0	44	55.0
Amount Received	>50,000	10	6.4	1	5.9	0	0.0	10	12.5
	50,000-100,000	31	19.9	3	17.6	0	0.0	25	31.2
	100,000-150,000	109	69.9	12	70.6	1	100.0	40	50.0
	<150,000	6	3.8	1	5.9	0	0.0	5	6.3

Source: Researcher (2017)

When asked if they have been involved in microfinance institutions, 65.4% of the women in SHGs reported to have been involved in accessing funds for their businesses from such institutions with only 34.6% indicating that they have never been involved with MFIs. To support this, most women, who were interviewed, indicated that their economic situations cannot allow them to depend on their own individual finances to start business enterprises. On further probing, a woman respondent noted,

“Most of us come from humble backgrounds and thus, find it difficult to even raise little capital to start business. In coming together, we find strength in each other and thus able to pool together to access findings from MFIs” (Monday, 24/08/2016).

The study also established that majority of women in SHGs which have not accessed any funding from MFIs find it difficult to carry out their activities. When asked why they have not been involved with MFIs as a source of funding, they cited longer bureaucracy and tedious procedures of filing forms and longer periods of waiting. Further, a woman discussant admitted,

“It is sometimes very difficult to access loans from these institutions. For example, last year, our SHG applied for the same, but up to today, we have not received despite meeting the necessary requirements and terms. When you receive the loan, their interest rates are very high to a point where it sometimes becomes difficult to pay back”

This was evidenced by the inability of the majority of women in SHGs to state the basic requirements and procedures for an individual to access loans. Fear of repossession of members' private property in case one defaults was another concrete reason for their non-involvement with MFIs. In the same vein, 76.5% of the training officers who filled questionnaires also corroborated the view that majority of women SHGs are involved in accessing funding from MFIs as did the Credit Officer and 70.0% of the spouses. Further, one spouse remarked,

“My spouse has been doing business with MFIs as a source of funding for her *mitumba* business since 2010 when it was started” (Tuesday, 25/08/2016).

From these findings, it is evident that microfinance institutions are regarded as the most reliable and main source of funding of businesses amongst women in SHGs.

These findings lend credence to the assertions of Mboguah and Musinga (2014) that the emergence of micro-finance as an industry is a relatively old phenomenon in Kenya, with a number starting about 20 or so years ago, but the sector gaining the status of an industry about 10 years ago.

These findings point to the fact that many women's SHGs regard MFIs as their source of capital to boost and expand their business ventures. Most women groups start their businesses with small amounts of money but later get support from MFIs.

On duration of involvement, Table 4.2 shows that majority (60.3%) of the women respondents admitted that they have been involved with MFIs for a period of more than 3 years, 30.1% indicated that they have done business with MFIs for 1-3 years whereas a small proportion of 9.6% indicated that they have done business with MFIs for a period less than a year. A woman discussant noted,

“Our Self-Help Group has been involved with MFIs since it was formed three years ago. We have accessed finances from MFIs at least twice since it was started” (Monday, 24/8/2016).

The study further established that most business enterprises owned by women in SHGs have been in existence for the last five years with MFIs as their main source of funding. This implies that any business enterprise owned by women in SHGs at their start-up stages or growth largely partner with MFIs.

Microfinance institutions form the basis of success of many businesses owned by women in SHGs. These views were echoed by training officers in their questionnaires with a majority (64.7%) indicating that women's SHGs have been doing business with MFIs for more than 3 years. Similar views were expressed by the Credit Officer and the spouses. In affirming this view, one spouse reported,

“My spouse started her saloon business four years and has depended on funding from Rafiki Microfinance Institutions”.

These findings lend credence to the assertions of Streppel et al (2011) that government policy or philosophy of microfinancing was to promote the small-scale and enterprise sector as a means of accelerating economic growth and generating employment opportunities. These findings attest to the fact that MFIs play a pivotal

role as a tool for empowerment of women and other socially and economically vulnerable members of society.

When asked to state the amount of money they have received from MFIs and how they have spent it, 69.9% of the women respondents admitted to have received a loan between Kshs. 100,000-150,000 from MFIs. 19.9% of the women respondents indicated that they have received amount between Kshs. 50,000-100,000, 6.4% received less than Kshs. 50,000 whereas 3.8% admitted to have received more than Kshs. 150,000 from MFIs. This shows that most enterprises belonging to women in SHGs get most of their funding from MFIs. This was evidenced by a smaller portion of women in SHGs which could not access any funding from such institutions. Their business had serious financial challenges. However, expenditure of these loans was also a challenge to many with much of the funding being channeled to vote heads for which the loan was not intended. A woman discussant confessed,

“I have had the opportunity to secure Kshs. 150, 0000 from Uwezo MFI to boost my detergent manufacture business. However, it has not been channeled wholly to my business enterprises. Sometimes, I had to allocate part of the money to help my spouse pay our children’s school fees and even purchase some iron sheets to set up our family house” (Wednesday, 26/08/2016).

This was evidenced by many women who could not account for the expenditure of the loans they acquired from MFIs. Some had disjointed accounts records which could not add up. Women respondents admitted that they had mismanaged their loans and could not meet the requirements of the budget plans which enabled them to secure the loans. To corroborate this, a woman interviewee confessed,

“I always find it difficult to balance my records in a manner to reflect the loan I borrowed, invested and the expected profit margins. This is because some of the money I get from the proceeds of the business find its way in taking care of family responsibilities. To this point, repaying the loans becomes a major problem” (Wednesday, 26/08/2016).

This implies that majority of women in SHGs lack the basic financial management skills to enable them do proper analysis of their priorities. Most women respondents admitted that they face the challenge of inadequate financial skills such as book keeping, investment, pricing and projections, and budgeting besides inability to prioritize between business and domestic needs.

Training officers also echoed similar views with 70.6% reporting that most women in SHGs receive between Kshs. 100,000-150,000 for their business activities, but lands in different priorities. The Credit Officer also corroborated these views as did half (50.0%) of the spouses. To affirm this, one spouse confessed,

“My spouse has received Kshs. 130,000 from KWFT, but due financial constraints at home, part of it has often been used to cater for domestic needs such as buying food, paying fees, medical bills and domestic expenses which leave little money for investment in business for which it was intended” (Thursday, 27/08/2016).

These findings corroborate the assertions of Abramowitz (2012), in his journal about women's financial acumen in Italy which revealed that financial literacy differences may affect relative economic power within the household. This has implications for well-being if men and women allocate household resources according to different preferences. Abramowitz (2012) suggests that spouses in different households do not act as single unitary decision makers. Instead, he asserts that household resources in women's hands have been observed to be more likely spent on improving family's well-being, particularly that of the children.

Microfinance Trainers' Characteristics and Women's Financial Skills

The study also sought to establish how microfinance trainers' characteristics influence women's finance skills and results are shown in Table 3:

Table 3: Findings on the Influence of Microfinance Trainers' Characteristics on Women's Acquisition of Financial Skills

Test Items	Women in SHGs		Spouses		Training Officers	
	f	%	f	%	f	%
Education of microfinance trainers does not determine the ability of women in SHGs to acquire financial skills	92	59.0	36	45.0	12	70.5
MFI's usually hire experienced trainers, though, has not improved financial skills amongst women in SHGs	93	59.6	32	40.0	13	76.5
Most microfinance trainers view women as people who can't learn financial skills	109	69.9	52	65.0	3	17.6
Microfinance trainers rarely possess guidance skills to enhance their ability to impart financial skills to women	82	52.6	40	50.0	11	64.7

Source: Researcher (2017)

When asked about their trainers' levels of education, 59.0% of the women respondents stated that education of microfinance trainers does not determine the ability of women in SHGs to acquire financial skills. During the interview, a woman respondent observed,

"I may not know the level of education of my trainers, but I am only concerned with the ability of the trainer to make me understand different concepts in financial skills" (Monday, 14/10/2016).

This implies that, despite the importance of levels of education of microfinance trainers, their ability to transfer financial knowledge to women in SHGs is vital. In other words, their mastery of content, effective communication and ability to make women understand financial concepts are critical to women's

acquisition of financial skills. This further indicates that trainers' educational level enables them to have an understanding of the implications of women's lack of financial skills. However, only 45.0% of the spouses responded in favor of the view that trainers' educational level does not determine women's acquisition of financial skills. During the interview, a spouse remarked,

“For effective delivery of training content, the trainer must have good educational background. Education enables the trainer have a grasp of the concepts being taught” (Friday, 12/10/2016).

These views were supported by the credit officer and 70.5% of the training officers. These findings lend credence to the assertions of a study conducted in the Nicaragua amongst 211 respondents to establish the efficacy of professionals on women training and financial management in which Michael and Dwivedi (2013) have shown that the most important variable in such success is a well-prepared and capable trainer or facilitator.

Likewise, these views attest to the fact that trained professionals such as trainers and other stakeholders have been identified as a principal factor which contributes to women's acquisition of pre-requisite skills to manage their enterprises. When asked whether MFIs hire experienced trainers, 59.6% of the women respondents reported that MFIs usually hire experienced trainers, though has not improved financial skills amongst women in SHGs. During the FGD, a woman participant observed,

“Trainers hired by MFIs often have a wealth of experience in training clients for the MFIs. Despite this, I still have challenges with my record-keeping, investment plans, pricing and costing projections, budgeting plans and e-Financing skills” (Thursday, 28/08/2016).

This indicates that for women to effectively acquire financial skills, experience which trainers have is paramount. This is indicative of the fact that microfinance trainers should be well-versed and trained in evidence-based instruction and behavioral techniques in order to help the women obtain their therapeutic and training goals for women.

Despite trainers' experience, women stated that they still manifest inadequate financial skills which brings into question trainers' area of specialization and experience. However, 40.0% of the spouses indicated that trainers' experience is important in enhancing women's financial skills as did credit officer and 76.5% of the training officers.

These findings lend credence to the assertions of Nwoye (2011) who noted that, with the majority of women spending large portions of their working days in general education or training settings, trainers must be knowledgeable of the women's core characteristics, relevant evidence based training strategies as well as general strategies for training women in different cadres or levels of education to ensure that women succeed in realizing their full entrepreneurial potential.

These views further affirm the fact that acknowledging considerable benefits of training while understanding the research based need for women to receive multiple hours of specific trainings depending on job demands, the current researchers sought to understand how prepared general trainers are to implement training curriculum content for employees in different job groups.

On trainers' attitudes, 69.9% of the women respondents noted that most microfinance trainers view women as people who cannot acquire financial skills. Women noted the society views their inability to manifest any for financial skills as appropriate. During the interviews, a woman participant noted,

“My ability to acquire financial skills has been made difficult by people's attitude. For example, our trainers view us as people with little understanding of financial concepts, lazy, not hardworking and that only men have the capability of undergoing complex financial training” (Monday, 15/10/2016).

These views point to the fact that attitude and biases which trainers hold against women is a hindrance to the women's ability to master financial skills. Besides, this points to the fact that gender stereotyping developed by trainers has a way of preventing women in SHGs from actively taking part in microfinance training. These views were echoed by 65.0% of the spouses who indicated that any trainer who manifests any form of gender bias towards women is an obstacle to the women's acquisition of financial skills.

However, the credit officer and 17.6% of the training officers disagreed with the view that most of the trainers consider women as people who cannot acquire financial skills. This indicates that, for effective acquisition of financial skills, microfinance trainers should develop positive attitudes, beliefs and interests towards women's training and believe that women have the ability to understand every concept they are trained. These further corroborate the views expressed by Michael and Dwivedi (2013) that beliefs the professionals have about women's ability to manage finances and their understanding of the challenges bedeviling women after borrowing finance from MFIs, hold key to the success of such training. These findings also lend credence to the Gender Relations theory by Pearson (2005) which asserts that society seems to have ultimate authority on the nature of what men actually do and their contribution which turns out to be biased against women. Pearson (2005) further posits that women's prescribed roles and biased perceptions influence their financial performance and how microfinance training influence their acquisition of financial skills.

Slightly more than half (52.6%) of the women respondents also reported that microfinance trainers rarely possess guidance skills to enhance their ability to impart financial skills to women in SHGs. Women stated that trainers do not show any care and concern for the financial challenges. A woman respondent reported,

“When I share a challenge with my trainer, he does not appear to care about seeking for a solution. Sometimes, it is even difficult to ask the trainer any question about a topic learnt since he answers rudely and never provides any convincing answer. He often blames me for inattentiveness during training sessions” (Monday, 23/10/2016).

These findings affirm the fact that guidance and counseling skills play an important role in training and any trainer should have such skills. Any trainer with guidance and counseling skills have their trainees manifest impressive acquisition of financial skills. This further implies that trainer with effective counseling skill shave the ability to understand group dynamic which might be a hindrance to the women's acquisition of financial skills.

Besides, these skills enable trainers to create a conducive environment for training where every woman is considered equal and able to develop a sense of belonging which are very necessary for acquisition of

financial skills during training. Spouses also echoed similar sentiments with 50.0% indicating that any trainer with effective guidance and counseling skills have the ability to help women to manage challenges of self-rejection, low self-esteem and faulty self-concepts. Credit officer and 64.7% of the training officers also concurred.

These findings thus lend credence to the views expressed by Nwoye (2011) and Kehrhahn (2012) that have had difficulty identifying specific training and counseling skills or approaches of training which professionals should adopt to improve their effectiveness in enhancing women's acquisition of important skills to undertake microfinance management. That is, even when general trainers do report receiving academic instruction and professional development training related to the demands of different women, they still do not feel completely prepared to instruct women whose projects demand specific attention. Thus, these views also attest to the fact that professional training of trainers and stakeholders predicts management of microfinances among women.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

From the study findings, it is evident that trainers' level of education rarely enhances women's record-keeping, investment plans, pricing and costing projections, budgeting plans and e-Financing skills. These findings thus affirm the fact that most important variable in such success is a well-prepared and capable trainer or facilitator. From the study findings, it is also evident that trainers' experience enhances women's record-keeping, investment plans, pricing and costing projections, budgeting plans and e-Financing skills. This points to the fact that the best practice for trainers suggests that trainers should become well versed and trained in evidence-based instruction and behavioral techniques in order to help the women obtain his or her therapeutic and training goals. This is further indicative of the fact that with the majority of women spending large portions of their working days in general education or training settings, trainers must be knowledgeable of the women's core characteristics, relevant evidence based training strategies as well as general strategies for training women in different cadres or levels of education to ensure that women succeed in realizing their full entrepreneurial potential.

It is also evident that trainers' attitude and cultural orientation, trainers' counseling skills and trainers' ability to integrate ICT enhance women's record-keeping, investment plans, pricing and costing projections, budgeting plans and e-Financing skills. That is, beliefs the professionals have about women's ability to manage finances and their understanding of the challenges bedeviling women after borrowing finance from MFIs, hold key to the success of such training.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

From the study findings, it is also evident that trainers' experience enhances women's record-keeping, investment plans, pricing and costing projections, budgeting plans and e-Financing skills. Evaluation of relevance of the training curriculum enhances women's acquisition of record-keeping, investment, pricing and costing and budgeting skills. Assessing the progress of women trainees is one of the most important

responsibilities of a microfinance training officers and in training projects, all operations and issues that contribute to planning and implementation of a project can be evaluated. This includes many items such as the effectiveness of the training methods and materials used; the relevance of the training content to the backgrounds of the women trainees; the knowledge, attitudes and skills gained by the trainees and the types of services delivered by the trainers. The study thus recommends that trainers' need to update their skills to match the changing times such as adopting use of ICT and attitude change towards women empowerment. This will go a long way in helping train on concepts based on modern market demands and provide skills to match the changing times.

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