

**The impact of Government and Non-Government  
Organizations' economic empowerment  
programmes with respect to poverty reduction  
and gender equality in Manonyane rural  
community in Lesotho between 2010 and 2015**

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## Declaration

Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Social Sciences (Sociology) to the School of Social Sciences, College of Humanities, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban, South Africa.

I, **Josphine Hapazari (215082458)** declare that

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## **Dedication**

This thesis is dedicated to my late mother Mrs. Lillian Ndonde Bhiri, *mai Josie*, (07/11/55 - 02/02/2009). She battled with blood pressure, a heart ailment, asthma, her entire life and was also found to be diabetic in 2006. She defeated all these odds against her since her life was bursting with industriousness and endurance - a testimony and inspiration to her five children, grandchildren and others.

## **Abstract**

Poverty, unemployment and gender inequality remain huge global problems despite measures to eliminate the scourges. In Lesotho, poverty and unemployment are particularly endemic in the rural areas. Economic empowerment is a phenomenon that is fundamental for combating the above mentioned social problems, among others. This study set out to evaluate the impact of Government and Non-Government Organizations' economic empowerment programmes with respect to poverty reduction and gender equality in Manonyane rural community between 2010 and 2015. The study mainly employed quantitative approach while qualitative approach was used only to collaborate it. Quantitative data were collected from a sample of 120 unemployed adults aged between 21 and 64 years with the use of a questionnaire. On the other hand, qualitative data were collected from six Government officials and six NGOs officials using an interview guide. Quantitative data were analysed using Microsoft Excel 2007 and qualitative data were organized into information by sorting it into emerging themes. The study unearthed that the impact of economic empowerment by both the Government and NGOs was very low since an overwhelming majority (80%) reported that they received very little assistance and no assistance at all. Notably, gender equality was ensured when enrolling beneficiaries in those few programmes undertaken in Manonyane as the ratio of unemployed males (57%) to unemployed females (43%.) established in this study agrees very well with the male to female ratio of beneficiaries (56% to 46%). The study also revealed that the unemployed people were facing numerous challenges, including lack of access to the most basic human needs - food, water and sanitation. Moreover, the poverty levels were shown to have increased over the 6 year period, 2010 to 2015. The study recommends that Government needs to institute more stringent measures to monitor the implementation of the economic empowerment programmes in place and to add more such programmes. Unemployed people should use local resources and be more proactive by approaching the Government and NGOs for assistance to tackle poverty and unemployment.

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## **Acronyms**

AU	African Union
ECDC	Economic Cooperation and Development Countries
FLWE	Federation of Lesotho Women Entrepreneurs
GDA	Gender and Development Approach
GEM	Gender Empowerment Measure
GPI	Gender Parity Index
GDI	Gender-Related Development Index
GOL	Government of Lesotho
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HBS	Household Budget Survey
HDI	Human Development Index
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
ILO	International Labour Organization
IMF	International Monetary Fund
MDGs	Millennium Developmental Goals
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
SE	Social Exclusion
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programmed
WAD	Women and Development
WID	Women in Development

## **CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Outline of the research problem**

Poverty and unemployment are insistent and severe social problems globally. In fact poverty and unemployment are intertwined. For Lesotho in particular, poverty is attributed chiefly to high unemployment rates as well as the country's mountainous terrain. The Government of Lesotho (GOL) (2014) states that poverty in the country has a predominantly rural face since the poverty headcount rate is higher in rural areas than in urban areas. This is due to low agricultural sector performance, which is the main source of income in rural areas. The GOL further notes that overall, food insecurity and malnourishment are increasing and Lesotho is off-track in reducing hunger. Thus, poverty continues to be a deepening socio-economic setback for many poor people in Lesotho. According to the 2008 Integrated Labour Force Survey, Lesotho's unemployment rate is 21.2% for males and 24.6% for females and the labour force participation rates were 72.6% for men and 55.3% for women, implying that fewer women than men participate in the labour market (Ministry of Labour and Employment, 2012). However, these official statistics to a great extent fails to capture the informal sector where females generally seem to dominate numerically.

The causes of poverty are multifaceted and unemployment is one of the key causes. The high level of unemployment in Lesotho, among both women and men, calls for the economic empowerment of both genders. This is because the issue of unemployment poses a number of challenges to the jobless as well as their households. Generally, economic empowerment enables the unemployed people to lead a dignified life. Apart from that, economic empowerment is crucial because it is likely to reduce or halt other social vices such as crime, prostitution, drug abuse, illegal migration, human trafficking and domestic violence, among others. In addition, if poor people are not assisted in their places of origin, many of them are likely to resort to migration, heading for urban areas in search of greener pastures. In most cases, this migration tends to pose multifaceted challenges, including the mushrooming of shanty towns (or shacks), deforestation and some of the social vices mentioned earlier on. This is the bigger picture which researchers and other stakeholders need to consider in their efforts to generate information and/or solutions to nip the problems of poverty and unemployment in the bud before their negative consequences spiral nationally and internationally.

The GOL (2014) stresses that Lesotho's challenges with poverty, unemployment and food insecurity cannot be addressed in isolation from other development challenges that include emerging inclusive redefinitions that combine socio-economic, geographic and other deprivations to people's well-being. The GOL further gives some examples of these challenges as follows: environmental degradation, HIV and AIDS, job-less growth, inadequate diversification, and poor investment climate and youth unemployment. This study holds that it is the responsibility of the Government to create employment for the masses hence it places the blame of unemployment squarely on the Government and not on NGOs or any other sympathetic partners. This study considers economic empowerment as the major solution to minimizing the possibility of succumbing into poverty and even lifts the poor out of poverty.

Moreover, the GOL (2012) points out that moderate economic growth has not resulted in significant job creation and poverty reduction. In addition, the GOL explains that since Lesotho is still a young democracy with a miniature economy, any exterior and natural shocks tend to hinder any development initiatives in place. The GOL (2012) also emphasized the need to manage increasing urbanization, especially by creating job opportunities in rural areas to curb out-migration, and enhance basic infrastructure in urban areas. Also, the GOL notes the need to minimize out migration to South Africa especially given that South Africa itself was hard hit by the global financial crisis and the economy lost more than a million jobs between 2008 and 2010 (8.0% of total jobs). One can therefore add that it is now difficult for the Basotho migrants to be absorbed in the South African job market. In addition, Hapazari (2016) unearthed that South Africa is battling with her own social problems such as HIV as exhibited by the healthcare expenditure which is soaring, having increased a great deal between 2009 and 2010.

The study investigated the impact of economic empowerment programmes implemented by the Government and the NGOs to economically empower the unemployed adults in Manonyane rural community between 2010 and 2015. More specifically, the focus was on the impact of those programmes on poverty reduction and gender equality. Generally, the collaboration and/or concurrent execution of economic empowerment programmes by the Government and the NGOs is critical for ensuring better and far reaching outcomes. Poverty levels seem to remain unabated despite numerous Government and NGOs' programmes

implemented in these areas over the years. It is against the backdrop of all these challenges that there is need to conduct research on these issues. Therefore, there is need to find out the impact and sustainability of these programmes. More so, since most NGOs seem to focus on the economic empowerment of women, the study also intends to establish how the benefactors (i.e. Government and NGOs) factor gender equality in their programmes.

According to GOL's ambitious Decent Work Country Programme, the government aims to create employment for both females and males across the country. To some extent this study evaluated the impact of such economic empowerment programmes. The study was also borne out of the realization that despite the social protection programmes to cushion the vulnerable from poverty, many people in Manonyane are still suffering. It is worth noting that the causes of unemployment in Lesotho are not only internal but external. For instance, the consistently high levels of unemployment, estimated at 23%, worsened to 29.4% in 2009 because of the impact of the global economic crisis, which fuelled massive retrenchments in the country's fragile garment industry, and the shrinking mining sector in South Africa (Ministry of Labour and Employment, 2012). A large number of Basotho males are employed in the South African mines, and any shocks in that sector tends to affect Lesotho significantly.

The issue of gender equality is central in this study, reason being this study subscribes to the gender and development approach (GAD) which puts emphasis on involving both genders in any initiative. This comes upon the realization that failure to fully unleash the productive potential of both genders usually represents significant consequences for individuals, families, and economies. Any initiatives that tend to target one gender have a very high probability of brewing gender inequalities which will be very difficult to offset be it at community or national level. Any inclination towards one gender will disadvantage the other gender hence gender equality should be ensured by project implementers. The study will shed light on the impact of economic empowerment of both women and men thereby generating knowledge on poverty and gender issues globally. Suffice to say, it cannot be overemphasized that Lesotho's twin challenges of poverty and unemployment cannot be successfully addressed in isolation without taking due consideration of other development challenges particularly gender inequality. Failure to combat these twin challenges has detrimental effects such as an increase in street begging, prostitution, drug addiction, crime commission and other vices associated with too much idling and lack of income.

## **1.2 The general aim**

To evaluate the impact of Government and Non-Government Organizations' economic empowerment programmes with respect to poverty reduction and gender equality in Manonyane rural community between 2010 and 2015.

## **1.3 Objectives of the study**

- To evaluate the impact of Government and NGO efforts in economically empowering unemployed adults in Manonyane rural community to ensure poverty reduction between 2010 and 2015.
- To assess the extent to which gender equality was factored in the economic empowerment programmes implemented in Manonyane rural community between 2010 and 2015.
- To ascertain the unemployed adults' challenges and their proposed solutions.

## **1.4 Research Questions**

1. What is the impact of Government and NGO efforts in economically empowering unemployed adults in Manonyane rural community to ensure poverty reduction?
2. How was gender equality factored in the economic empowerment programmes implemented in Manonyane rural community between 2010 and 2015?
3. What are the unemployed adults' challenges and their proposed solutions?

## **1.5 Scope of the study**

The study looked at the impact of Government and Non-Government Organizations' economic empowerment programmes with respect to poverty reduction and gender equality in Manonyane rural community between 2010 and 2015. Economic empowerment programmes included those programmes which provided unemployed adults with education, income, opportunities, skills and inputs. Poverty was viewed in terms of ability to access basic needs and the way respondents rated themselves. Gender equality was looked at in terms of number of males versus number of females enrolled in empowerment programmes. With regard to Government, only six Ministries were directly targeted and these were: Ministry of Labour and Employment, Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security, Ministry of Gender and Youth, Sports and Recreation, Ministry of Forestry and Land Reclamation, Ministry of Small Business Development, Co-operatives, Enterprise and Marketing and

Ministry of Social Development. The Ministry of Development Planning was only approached to augment information on policies and economic empowerment programmes since this Ministry does not implement programmes but puts the plans in place. The NGOs looked at were: Caritas, Send a cow Lesotho, Lesotho Ex-miners Association, Rural Self-Help Development Association, Lesotho Homemakers Association and United Textiles Employees. The period under review stretched from 2010 to 2015. The study site was the Manonyane rural council in Maseru district. Only those who were currently unemployed and aged between 21 and 64 years formed the study population.

## **1.6 Structure of the study**

This study is composed of seven chapters. Chapter one is the introduction so it gives an overview and the current status of poverty, unemployment and gender equality in Lesotho, setting the scene of the research. The research problem will be outlined as well as the study objectives, research questions and the scope of the study. Chapter two provides the background of the problem by highlighting the demographic information of Lesotho. Furthermore, it gives the rationale of the study. Chapter three is the literature review and theoretical framework, hence it dwells on what other researchers covered and unearthed on the above issues in Lesotho and elsewhere. Chapter four outlines the research methodology that was adopted in conducting this study. It highlights that quantitative methodology greatly shaped the research design. Thereafter, it will show the study site, study population, sample and sampling procedure. Lastly, it will indicate the data collection and data analysis techniques utilized by the study. Chapter five presents findings with the use of the concepts found in the literature review. Chapter six discusses the findings, also basing on the literature review main concepts and the theoretical framework, the GAD. Chapter seven gives the conclusions, study limitations and recommendations. This chapter will summarize the study, making some conclusions in view of the findings of the study. The significance of the study will be highlighted too. Lastly, recommendations will be made also indicating areas where further studies should focus on.

## **CHAPTER 2: BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE**

### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter provides the background of the problem by highlighting the demographic information of Lesotho. The characteristics and trend of the state of Lesotho's economy will be explored, highlighting the socio-economic issues relating to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), Human Development Index (HDI), per capita income, gender gap and others. Having established the context of the study, the rationale will be outlined.

### **2.2 Background**

Lesotho is a country completely surrounded by the Republic of South Africa and is located in the south eastern part of South Africa. According to the 2006 census, its population is 1, 876,633 (Government of Lesotho, 2009). Most of Lesotho's 30,355 square kilometres are mountainous and only 9% of the total area is suitable for arable cultivation, the International Monetary Fund (IMF, 2012). It therefore implies that on one hand, the mountainous scenery attracts tourists and on the other, it also contributes to perennial food shortages in the country. The IMF (2012) highlights that by ecological zone, "56.7% of Basotho live in the Lowlands, 12.8% in the Foothills and 30.5% in the Mountains and Senqu river valley," (p. 11). The major agricultural outputs are grain and cereals but they are mostly produced for household consumption. Additionally, Lesotho exports mohair which is cut from goats and is used to make woollen products. Due to its small economy and insufficient arable land, there are high levels of poverty and unemployment in Lesotho.

With regard to goal number one of the United Nations' (UN) Millennium Developmental Goals (MDGs) which entails the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger, Lesotho is noticeably off track in most key poverty indicators. One of such indicators is the unemployment rate. The GOL (2014) specified that the country's unemployment rate in 2014 was 25.3% and yet the target was 15%. Such a huge discrepancy emphatically highlights that the actual progress recorded is way off track. Also, the incidence of poverty reportedly shows an increasing trend, and was pegged at 56.6% in the year 2002–03 and then at 57.1% in 2010–11 (GOL, 2014). The increase in poverty obviously has a bearing on the lives of most Basotho. Suffice to say, it cannot be overemphasized that Lesotho's twin challenges of poverty and unemployment cannot be successfully addressed in isolation without taking due

consideration of other development challenges particularly gender inequality. It is imperative to cater for both men and women in the process of solving social problems such as poverty and unemployment. That is why this study was particularly interested in finding out the impact of economic empowerment to both men and women who are currently out of work.

After 45 years of independence, Lesotho has made much progress towards development but she has not yet fully escaped poverty hence the GOL (2012) states that “she is still a Least Developed Country (LDC) with per capita income of approximately \$1000,” (p. 1). Lesotho is now classified as a lower-middle income country, though poverty and unemployment are still high and the major challenges “that need to be addressed include sustained and shared economic growth that results in poverty reduction,” (GOL, 2012, p. 3). One can stress that economic growth has to be sustainable because failure to that it will not transcend into improved welfare for the ordinary masses. A case in point is what transpires in South Africa and Nigeria in which both countries are endowed with resources yet some of the ordinary people on the ground will be living in shacks and slums, barely affording a day’s meal. Thus, economic programmes have to be people centred, realistic, sustainable and forecasting.

With reference to GDP issues, the GOL (2012, p. 3) reports that “real GDP growth rates averaged 3.8% per annum from 2000/01 to 2010/11,” to some extent higher than the target of 3.5% for 2010, but below the 5% required to reduce poverty on a sustainable basis. The trends of Lesotho’s GDP since 2010 are as follows: 2,10 for 2010, 2,52 for 2011, 2,38 for 2012, 2,2 2 for 2013 and lastly 2,18 for 2014 United Nations Development Programme (UNDP, 2016). With regard to GDP the UN (2004) clarifies that to compare standards of living across countries GDP per capita needs to be converted into purchasing power parity (PPP) terms that militate in national price levels. The unemployment rate of 24% derived from the Labour Force Survey of 2008 is significantly below the target of 29.5% for 2010. That also explains why currently there are a lot of unemployed people in the area under study, which is Manonyane rural community.

The HDI is a fundamental indicator of development since it sheds light on how a country is either progressing or regressing. The GOL (2012) observes that the HDI of 0.43 in 2010 is substantially below the target of 0.58 per capita income. Here it shows a regression and it is

not good for development. The UN (2004) clarifies that the HDI focuses on three measurable dimensions of human development which are, living a long and healthy life, being educated and having a decent standard of living. Thus, it combines measures of life expectancy, school enrolment, literacy and income to allow a broader view of a country's development than does income alone.

In addition, the UNDP (2016) expounds that the HDI was created to emphasize that people and their capabilities should be the ultimate criteria for assessing the development of a country, not economic growth alone, and the HDI can also be used to question national policy choices. The UNDP (2016) again states that the HDI simplifies and captures only part of what human development entails. Therefore, it does not reflect on inequalities, poverty, human security, and empowerment. With regard to savings and investment, both the savings and investment targets are far below the targets. In 2009/10, the savings ratio was merely "21% against the target of 35% while investment was 16% and far below the target of 39%," (Government of Lesotho, 2012, p. 3). However, it should be noted that for ordinary people, a number of factors militate against savings, for example low wages, the current exchange rate and nature of business or job, to name a few.

The GOL (2012) highlights the progress towards the Millennium Development Goals for 2000 to 2009, citing that for the first goal which is to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger, a portion of people living below the poverty line, 56.6%, in 2003 yet the target for 2015 was 29%, hence the progress was off track. The GOL further explains that economic growth is not an end in itself but it is the only reliable mechanism for achieving sustained reductions in the number of people living below the poverty line. The GDP has grown at a real annual average rate of 4.0% between 1982/83 and 2010/11 and unfortunately this has not resulted in a decrease in poverty because many of the gains in GDP have been offset by dwindling remittances (GOL, 2012). Apart from that, the fall in the number of mine workers has resulted in a much smaller proportion of households receiving income from abroad (GOL, 2012; Rantšo, 2015). In 2010/11, the savings ratio was only 8.4% against the vision target of 35% while investment was 18.9%, whereas the vision target was 39% hence it is clear that these historically low savings and investment ratios have hampered development and they are currently far below what is considered necessary for economic transformation (GOL, 2012). All this signifies a great need for economic empowerment in Lesotho.

However, there are other external factors bedevilling the efforts being made by the Government. The GOL (2012) asserts that “Lesotho has a small open economy and consequently the economic prospects are highly interlinked with output, growth and prices elsewhere in the world,” (p. 20). The projections in terms of critical indicators such as job creation, output and exports are therefore influenced by the global and regional forecasts, growth in advanced economies is forecast at only 2.2% in 2011 and 2.6% in 2012 (GOL, 2012). However, it should be noted that the most recent forecasts have been revised down from previous estimates as a result of greater-than-anticipated weaknesses in the United States and Euro-periphery economies (GOL (2012)). As far as the economy is concerned, the GOL (2012) expounds that South Africa remains Lesotho’s main trading partner, “supplying about 80% of imported goods and many services,” as well as buying approximately one-quarter of Lesotho’s exports, (p. 13). It is against this backdrop that the GOL (2012) warns that Lesotho must pay close attention to the economy of South Africa, with which it is most intimately connected and also added that unfortunately South African economic growth is lagging behind that of other emerging markets. Thus, any economic downturn in South Africa increases poverty levels in Lesotho in one way or the other.

In Lesotho, poverty is endemic in rural areas. Hope (2008) points out that “Lesotho is now classified as a lower-middle income country, though poverty and unemployment are still high,” (p. 3). These dual forces poverty and unemployment negatively affect both genders; hence Governments and NGOs ought to economically empower men and women. They can do so through availing the following to poor people: land, capital, agricultural implements, education, skills and developmental projects, among others. All mountain areas have at least “79% of their households below the poverty line,” (Care Lesotho, 2001, p. 18). It can be added that the foremost reason for this scenario is that these areas remain heavily unproductive. Adding on to Lesotho’s woes, the GOL (2013) observes that the openness of its economy also leaves Lesotho prone to exogenous shocks that can quickly undermine the consumption of the poor: examples include the recent loss of employment opportunities in garment manufacturing, the reduction in revenues from the South African Customs Union (SACU), and the decline of employment in South Africa’s mines.

Omile (2003) highlights that Lesotho is classified among the 42 least developed countries (LDCs) and macroeconomic indicators show that Lesotho is ranked as one of the 40 lowest-

income economies in the world. Furthermore, Omile states that the population is currently estimated to be growing at about 2.6% per annum, with population density highest in the Lowlands and Foothills. All this, undoubtedly, has a remarkable impact on the welfare of the poor people. The GOL (2014) points out that Lesotho is off track on these indicators since the incidence of poverty has increased by 0.5% from 56.6% in 2002–03 to 57.1% in 2010–11. The increase in severe poverty affects most Basotho in numerous ways. Malnutrition levels among children under five are unacceptably high everywhere and poverty is greater in rural areas where over 80 per cent of the population reside (Omile, 2003). It can be seen here that malnutrition was used as yet another poverty measure. On this, Hapazari (2016) also observed that high levels of food deficit will lead to undernourishment and ultimately to high levels of poverty too.

The GOL (2014) attributes poverty to poor soils, degraded range lands and volatile climate which combine to hold back progress on eradicating extreme poverty and hunger (MDG 1), for which Lesotho is off-track. As mentioned earlier on. In Lesotho, poverty is measured primarily through the periodic Lesotho Household Budget Survey (HBS). The most recent HBS was conducted between 2010 and 2011. The poverty line was constructed based on the value of a minimal level of consumption, which was M246.6/person/month in 2011 and the food poverty line is the value of the minimal level of food consumption needed to meet standard nutritional requirements and it stood at M137/month in 2011 (GOL, 2014). Therefore, a household will be deemed very poor if its income falls below this line.

Most rural areas in Africa continue to swim in poverty even though there seems to be various poverty reduction strategies in place. The population of the developing world is more rural than urban: some 3.1 billion people, 55 per cent of the total population, live in rural areas (IFAD, 2001). This signifies that a lot of focus needs to be placed in rural areas too. Despite massive progress in reducing poverty in some parts of the world over the past couple of decades, notably in East Asia, there are still about 1.4 billion people living on less than US\$1.25 a day, and close to 1 billion people suffering from hunger South Asia, with the greatest number of poor rural people, and sub-Saharan Africa, with the highest incidence of rural poverty, are the region's worst affected by poverty and hunger (IFAD, 2001). One can add that both Asia and Africa are endowed with resources but surprisingly they are the most hit by poverty. In Asia the central setback is political instability but in Africa poverty is

mainly caused by dependency syndrome, corruption, mismanagement of resources, and lack of political will, dictatorship and Government failure, among others.

Furthermore, one-sixth of the global population or about one billion people live in extreme poverty (Suharko, 2007). Again, Anríquez and Stamoulis (2007) observes that globally, extreme poverty continues to be a rural phenomenon despite increasing urbanization, adding that of the world's 1.2 billion extremely poor people, 75 percent live in rural areas. Notably, in Africa, poverty is by and large compounded by political instability, corruption, drought and high unemployment rates, among others. Sikrweqe (2013) clarifies that poverty is a dynamic and multidimensional phenomenon that needs to be clearly measured to allow Governments to design appropriate measures to reduce it. Even if there are interventions by NGOs to assist developing countries to reduce poverty, their efforts are derailed by, amongst other factors, inadequate funding, political meddling and too much dependency syndrome from beneficiaries, among others. What became noticeable from this is that poverty is a complex, multifaceted and dynamic phenomenon for which comprehensive solutions and engagement have to be sought.

IFAD (2010) points out that at least 70 per cent of the world's very poor people are rural, and a large proportion of the poor and hungry are children and young people. In addition, rural poverty results from lack of assets, limited economic opportunities and poor education and capabilities, as well as disadvantages rooted in social and political inequalities (IFAD, 2010). That is why this study asked the unemployed adults questions such as type of accommodation, household monthly income, level of education and skills possessed. Mobility out of poverty is associated with personal initiative and enterprise and poverty is highly correlated with household characteristics such as education and ownership of physical assets, and it is also dependent on good health (IFAD, 2010).

Policies are essential for fighting, among others, poverty, unemployment and gender inequalities. This study was informed by the African Union (AU) and Lesotho gender policies to unearth any mismatches between the pronouncements and implementation on the ground. One of the objectives of the AU Gender policy is to 'promote equitable access for both women and men to and control over resources, knowledge, information, land and business ownership, and services such as education and training, healthcare, credit, and legal rights'

(AU, 2009). By emphasizing both genders, it may be argued that the policy recognizes that gender equality and poverty reduction are intertwined, and the two cannot be separated from each other.

As expected, the Lesotho Gender and Development Policy is, by and large, in line with the AU Gender Policy. The Lesotho Gender and Development Policy, administered under the Ministry of Gender, Youth and Sports, was enacted in 2003. It is one of the key instruments with regard to the tackling of poverty, unemployment, gender equity, gender inequalities, HIV/AIDS, and development issues in the country. Berry et al (2013) points out that growing research trend has focused on income-generating activities of girls and women as a means of empowerment, however, gender inequality and discrimination have remained as barriers to accessing and managing resources for financial gain. Thus, training women and girls about income-generating activities as well as life skills is necessary to break the poverty cycle and provide a safer alternative to transactional sex (Berry et al, 2013). With reference to the gender gap index, the Guardian (2016) points out that Lesotho is ranked at number 18 globally, which is plausible. The index considers four key areas, which are health, access to education, economic participation (salaries, job type and seniority) and political engagement.

This study evaluated the extent to which the policy pronouncements match the situation on the ground with regards to unemployment, poverty and gender issues. These two policies were cited together firstly because they work hand-in-glove with each other; whereby the AU Policy gives some kind of a broader and standard framework, within which member countries, such as Lesotho, then craft and implement their own specific policies. Secondly, both policies make reference to the concepts central to this topic which are poverty reduction, unemployment and gender equality. Whereas Lesotho is on the right path, “the challenge is to continue implementing the gender policy framework which is expected to reduce women's social subordination and empower them to contribute more fully to development and poverty reduction,” (IMF, 2012, p. 25). Again, this clarifies why this study holds in high regard the economic empowerment of both males and females.

Lesotho is making strides with regard to gender equality issues. However, globally it is a different scenario as Chen (2004) reports that gender equality in education in the South Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa and the Middle East and North Africa regions has been consistently

below the global average. Wekwete (2013) concurs stating that despite women's contribution to the economy, gender inequality still prevails. In addition, Kabeer (2012) also states that evidence of the persistence of gender inequalities in relation to labour market outcomes raises a number of important questions in relation to women's empowerment. Thus, this study also established how gender was factored in the economic empowerment programmes implemented by the Lesotho Government and the NGOs between 2010 and 2015.

Numerous NGOs in Lesotho employ a range of strategies to ensure gender equality and poverty reduction. Suharko (2007) highlights that as part of their commitment to attain the targets of MDGs in 2015; NGOs have greater opportunity to increase their roles in reducing poverty and gender inequalities especially in the developing countries. The opportunity arises from the fact that poverty and gender inequalities are still rife in most parts of the Third world. Hope (2008) echoes the same sentiments, and argues that, African Governments, in partnership with NGOs should endeavour to establish social protection schemes through different frameworks and modalities. It is especially argued that in countries where government lacks public services, NGOs play a significant role "in the direct provision of social and economic services," (Suharko, 2000, p. 3). In this regard, NGOs play a central role in ensuring both gender equality and poverty reduction. CARE Lesotho (2001) asserts that it has been at the forefront in applying livelihoods perspectives to the designing and delivery of development programmes in Lesotho (CARE, 2007). It is crucial since poor people lack essential resources. Mikkola and Miles (2007) also point out that in most countries, the lack of resources and opportunities open to women is strongly associated with society-wide poverty or lack of development. As such, this study endeavours to bring to light the impact of economic empowerment by NGOs in Manonyane rural community.

There is a relationship between unemployment and poverty. IFAD (2008) observes that poverty is closely linked to lack of income and unemployment. A 2011 survey indicated that "Lesotho had a working-age population of 1,237,000 of whom 608,000 were employed and 192,000 were unemployed, giving an unemployment rate of 24%," (IMF, 2012, p. 23). It may be argued that, the apparent high unemployment rate in Manonyane is basically also a reflection of the national unemployment rate, as reported above. In addition, the IMF (2012) notes that poverty and high unemployment, especially among the youth, are also regarded as threats to stability. This holds water looking at the numerous protests and marches which

usually occur in South Africa where disgruntled youth also take part. Therefore it calls for continual research to establish the impact of the efforts geared towards fighting these social ills, and effective to inform any need for review of such efforts.

Poverty, unemployment and the scourge of HIV/AIDS characterize the socio-economic profile of Lesotho, South Africa and Zimbabwe (Dhemba, 2012). So the need to address these problems is an exigency. The study will look at the challenges faced by unemployed adults in Manonyane rural community which is a rural community in Maseru district. It is made up of 56 villages. Its population, basing on the 2006 census was 22,491. In terms of local governance, the area is under the Manonyane Community Council administration. The overall focus of the study will be on how both women and men in Manonyane community have been economically empowered by Government and NGOs and the impact of the programmes on poverty reduction and gender equality over the past six years, from 2010 to 2015. Mofoluwawo (2015) finds the following as the central causes of unemployment: rapid growing urban labour force arising from rural to urban migration, rapid population growth, rapid expansion of the education sector leading to increased supply and decreased demand of educated manpower, lack of employable skills and outdated school curricula, lack of vibrant manufacturing sector which has the capacity to absorb the unemployed and massive corruption that is perpetuated on daily basis by successive military and civilian administrations. As for Lesotho, unemployment is rife because the economy is too small to absorb the growing number of job seekers, few investors and also that there is very little production taking place.

It was also estimated by the International Labour Organization (ILO, 2008) that of the 7,500 graduates who enter the labour market each year, half do not get jobs. The ILO further states that in the decade between 1997 and 2007, unemployment of youth worldwide increased from 10.9 to 11.9 percent while the global adult unemployment rate stayed level at 4.2 from 1997 to 2007. “The youth are approximately three times more likely to be unemployed than adults and youth-to-adult unemployment rate was 2.8 in 2007, up from 2.6 in 1997” (ILO, 2008, p. 3). The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development Countries (OECD) highlights that unemployment duration has decreased from 1993–2000 and stressed that this measure is more relevant for advanced countries because youth in developing countries

cannot afford to be unemployed for longer periods. However, Kahramanm (2011) argues that such a generalization across developing countries may not be true. It could be because countries are not the same in all respects. Rantšo (2015) asserts that youth unemployment is very high in Lesotho and that of the world's 1.2 billion extremely poor people, 75 percent live in rural areas and for the most part they depend on agriculture, forestry, fisheries and related activities for survival. Globally, extreme poverty continues to be a rural phenomenon despite efforts made to fight it. Most of the world's poor live in rural areas where there are few investors willing to invest and develop those areas.

It is worth noting that, for Lesotho, unemployment is not limited to the uneducated poor only because even those possessing diplomas and degrees from tertiary institutions are roaming the streets, jobless. Mofoluwawo (2015) postulates that, a situation whereby, large numbers of youth remain unemployed may lead them to undermine economic development. For instance, in the case of Nigeria, Kahraman (2011) underscores that youth unemployment has turned Nigeria into a potential recruitment ground for terrorist Groups such as Boko Haram in addition to other social evils and redundancy. Hence, if overlooked, youth unemployment has a potential to constitute a serious threat, especially if engaged by the political class, so it has significant and serious social repercussions. Unemployment for the youth has implications for social exclusion and division within the society (ILO, 2006). Furthermore, Fares and Tiongson (as cited in Kahramanm, 2011) argues that if prolonged, unemployment may have negative consequences for one's later stages of working life in terms of lower wages and longer spells of unemployment. That is why this study was conducted so that it will make relevant recommendations to the Government for the betterment of rural people's lives.

### **2.3 Rationale**

The study was set to ascertain the impact of Government and Non-Government Organizations' economic empowerment programmes with respect to poverty reduction and gender equality in Manonyane rural community between 2010 and 2015. The researcher is making an attempt to contribute to the arrest of poverty and gender inequality through availing researched information to public domain. Poverty is a foreseeable gender issue as it adversely affects both females and males. Notably, in Manonyane, both women and men take the National University of Lesotho as their hunting ground for jobs-soliciting for all sorts of

jobs from either the university or staff members. Needless to say, many of them simply get very excited for being hired regardless of pathetic wages offered – which can be as low as R600 per month. This amply demonstrates how the unemployment levels in Lesotho have taken their toll on the poor and unemployed people.

Poverty needs to be dealt with given that Hope (2004) notes that it has historically been regarded as a vicious cycle in Africa. If poverty is left unchecked, poor people will be vulnerable to social vices such as human trafficking, prostitution, crime, among others. Compared to other regions in the world, Africa has the highest incidence of children at risk of poverty, disease, malnutrition, orphanhood and poverty is the primary cause of the low child survival rates found in sub-Saharan Africa (Hope 2008). This demonstrates that poverty is detrimental even to health thereby heightening the need for measures to be taken to combat poverty urgently. In this study both genders are going to be factored in. This is also because the World Bank Group takes as its starting point that no country, community, or economy can achieve its potential or meet the challenges of the 21st century without the full and equal participation of women and men, girls and boys (World Bank, 2015). Thus, ensuring gender equality in all poverty initiatives is fundamental.

The research topic was borne out of personal realization of the apparent deteriorating welfare standards of the Manonyane community residents, particularly the unemployed. The findings are expected to offer empirical evidence which may be used to improve interventions or future economic empowerment programmes. It is envisaged that the research output may be used as a stepping stone by Government and other benefactors towards improvement of the welfare of rural people in Manonyane or Lesotho in general. This will be achieved through the outcomes of this study, namely the quantitative and qualitative information, the conclusions and the recommendations.

The evaluation of the impact of economic empowerment programmes came into being upon realizing that most Ministries seemed to have a number of strategies they employ to combat poverty. Lesotho seems to have it all on paper. For instance the GOL (2012) explains that to achieve the National Vision goals and to reduce poverty and achieve sustainable development, the National Strategic Development Plan (NSDP) strategic goals will be to pursue high, shared and employment creating economic growth. The GOL further states that

the most effective way out of poverty is the creation of opportunities for employment, therefore, in order to sustain growth and employment creation, four sustainable growth generators have been identified. These are agriculture, manufacturing, tourism and deeper investment climate reforms.

The GOL (2012) highlights that the strategies intended to boost growth and employment in the agricultural sector are to improve access to finance; In reducing social vulnerability, the focus will be on consolidating social protection programmes and improving their efficiency and coverage; The GOL will promote gender equality interventions for the cross-cutting issues and the themes will be implemented by not only the Ministry of Gender, Youth and Sport but by the different Ministries. The GOL (2012) further points out that “as a small open economy, Lesotho’s growth and prosperity is both driven by and vulnerable to international trends” and the global economic and financial crises have been challenging for Lesotho as well (p. 26). With regard to the difficult economic environment, the GOL (2012) clarifies that the global economic and financial crises have affected Lesotho in several ways: the SACU revenue pool, which provides 50 – 60% of Government revenue, declined, necessitating expenditure reductions; world foreign direct investment has decreased as a result of global uncertainty; and the private sector has been forced to reduce output and employment in response to decreased demand for its exports. This also explains the rise in unemployment and a need for research on unemployment issues.

The IMF predicts that Lesotho’s trade balance will deteriorate by more than 3% of GDP in 2011 and the urban poor will be worst affected as they rely on transport to get to work and do not have access to subsistence farming to complement their income (GOL, 2012). The GOL goes on to point that employment growth has lagged behind GDP growth with much of the economic growth in recent years coming from capital-intensive activities. Growth drivers such as Lesotho Highlands Water Project Phase I and diamond mining have had limited linkages to the rest of the economy and create very few permanent jobs and at the same time, opportunities for well-paid work on the South African mines have been declining (GOL, 2012). This sheds light on why the unemployment social problem continues to persist in Lesotho.

It is envisaged that the Government and NGOs will take advantage of the outcomes, and decide how best they can improve their efforts and change the welfare of the unemployed adults for the better. Since Sociology promotes the use of evidence based research, this study intends not only to influence policies but also to provide factual information on the situation of the unemployed people in rural areas. In the same vein, the researcher observed a serious lack of documented literature on this particular topic, especially pertaining to Lesotho, which presents challenges to students researching for assignments and/or projects. Generally, all the literature pertaining to poverty in Lesotho tends to cover it in general not in relation to gender equality. Apart from this, most literature is on the economic empowerment of women only and not women and men. This signifies a literature gap of which this study will contribute towards its closure.

The researcher strongly holds that unemployed adults are first and foremost entitled to the same rights in all aspects of their lives like any other citizens. The researcher has an immense interest in poverty reduction issues. It is also the researcher's view that by ensuring genuine inclusion, equal opportunities and access to resources to the unemployed adults, the Government and NGOs will be availing the key ingredients for ensuring poverty reduction and gender equality. It is envisaged that the research output may be used as a stepping stone by Government and other benefactors towards improvement of economic empowerment programmes. Economic empowerment is fundamental because usually it ensures poverty reduction and gender equality. There appears to be a lack of documented literature on the economic empowerment of women and men, specifically pertaining to Lesotho. That is why the researcher was eager to embark on this topic anticipating that the research output will fill this literature gap. Literature on Manonyane rural community is also unavailable hence this study will avail that literature.

## **2.4 Conclusion**

The chapter provided the background of the issues under review. Firstly, the demographic information of Lesotho was highlighted. Thereafter, characteristics and trend of the state of Lesotho's economy were explained. The socio-economic matters relating to the GDP, Human Development Index (HDI), per capita income, gender gap and others were looked at. The background laid bare the challenges confronting Lesotho with regard to poverty and unemployment. Lesotho is ranked as one of the 40 lowest-income economies in the world

with poverty being endemic in rural areas. She is making strides with regard to gender equality issues. It emerged that more youth than adults are said to be unemployed globally. One of the sources of unemployment is lack of vibrant manufacturing sector which has the capacity to absorb the unemployed. The background also unveiled the context of the study. Lastly, the rationale of the study was outlined.

## **CHAPTER 3: LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

### **3.1 Introduction**

This section will present an extensive review of literature since the issues under investigation are intertwined. The literature review dwells on what other researchers covered and unearthed on empowerment, gender inequality, poverty, unemployment, Government, NGOs, rural communities and other concepts around these main topics. The empirical literature draws from studies conducted in developed and developing countries in relation to the empowerment of poor people by the Government and NGOs targeting poverty reduction and gender equality in rural communities. Attention will be given to whether or not other researchers have ever attempted similar research questions, the findings they got as well as the methodology they employed. Lastly, the theoretical framework will be specified which entails the gender and development approach. This chapter will rely on the theoretical approach and it draws from the conceptual framework. The literature review is divided into sections and each section commences with a conceptual framework relating to that subject matter. This framework will be utilised in the data analysis section.

### **3.2 Empowerment**

The review of literature on empowerment below will cover the following aspects: The meaning of empowerment, how to measure gender empowerment, economic empowerment, research on the impact of empowerment by Government and research on the impact of empowerment by NGOs.

#### **3.2.1 The meaning of empowerment**

The term empowerment carries different meanings depending on the development approach, institution and also the researcher defining it. Furthermore, defining empowerment is a complex issue since the term is sometimes used interchangeably with terms like participation, power, poverty reduction and gender equality. However, it is distinct from these terms. The World Bank (2002) underscores that empowerment speaks to the expansion of freedom of choice and action for poor people and that freedom is severely curtailed by their lack of power in relation particularly to the state and markets. Since powerlessness is embedded in the nature of institutional relations, the Bank adopts an institutional definition of empowerment

in the framework of poverty reduction. In defining empowerment, the World Bank (2002) states that empowerment is the expansion of assets and capabilities of poor people to participate, to negotiate with, influence, control, and hold accountable, institutions that affect their lives. Thus, it can be added that the availability of resources to the unemployed avails itself more freedom and options which will ultimately empower them.

Rai et al (2007) first provide a background of the term empowerment explaining that understanding and facilitating women's empowerment requires a more nuanced analysis of power. That is why earlier on this study mentioned that empowerment is sometimes confused with power. Rai et al (2007) further note that empowerment is thus a process through which women and men "experience as well as challenge and subvert power relationships, but it takes place in institutional, material and discursive contexts," (p. 3). It can be seen that most people see empowerment as mainly the exercising of power on available resources, but it is not as simple as that. While the focus on the local remains central to most empowerment advocates, the development studies community has become increasingly concerned with the role of national and global politics as well (Stiles, as cited in Rai et al, 2007). This holds water because small communities are also shaken by what occurs worldwide. For instance, if there is an economic recession in the United States of America, it will have a ripple effect, affecting the developing countries, their rural communities inclusive.

Several definitions of empowerment entail, power and participation (Batliwala, 2007; Ibrahim and Alkire, 2007; Rai et al 2007; World Bank 2002).The DFID gives a more comprehensive definition of empowerment since it encompasses economic, social and participatory aspects thus:

Empowerment refers to the process whereby people gain more power over the factors governing their social and economic progress and this may be achieved through: increasing the incomes and assets of the poor; interventions that endeavour to enhance confidence and self-respect; by developing collective organization and decision-making and by reforming political institutions to make them more inclusive, (the DFID, as cited in Handley, 2009).

The above definition by the DFID makes reference to the gaining of power which will be brought about by the acquisition of those aspects which bestow empowerment. The definition is also holistic since encompasses social, economic and political forms of empowerment.

Like the three preceding empowerment definitions, the following definition also has an element of a participatory process. Malhotra et al (as cited in Grown et al, 2003) conclude that empowerment is a process that marks change over a period of time and requires that the individual being empowered is involved as a significant agent in that change process. The central tenet of empowerment according to this definition therefore is the engagement of the one targeted by the empowerment process. With regard to women empowerment, Grown et al (2003) elucidates that this implies that to be empowered women must not only have equal capabilities such as education and health; access to resources and opportunities such as land and employment; they must also have the agency to use those rights, capabilities, resources, and opportunities to make strategic choices and decisions such as is provided through leadership opportunities and participation in political institutions. From this, it therefore means that empowerment can be social, economic or political. Reeves and Baden (2000) define women's empowerment as a bottom-up process of transforming gender power relations, through individuals or groups developing awareness of women's subordination and building their capacity to challenge it. It can be added that the building of capacity requires resources just the same as the empowerment process. However, this study does not subscribe to Reeves and Baden sentiments since it treasures the empowerment of both males and females, not females only.

### **3.2.2 How to measure gender empowerment**

There are diverse ways of measuring gender empowerment. The World Economic Forum utilizes the Gender Parity Index (GPI). Koronkiewicz (2016) states that the Gender Parity Index (GPI), commonly used to assess gender differences, is the value of an indicator for girls divided by that for boys. Koronkiewicz adds that a value of less than one indicates differences in favour of boys, whereas a value near one indicates that parity has been more or less achieved. There is also the UNDP's Gender-Related Development Index (GDI), The UN (2004) expounds that the GDI, measures achievements in the same dimensions and using the same indicators as the HDI but captures inequalities in achievement between women and men, which is the same as adjusting the HDI downward for gender inequality, the greater the

gender disparity in basic human development, the lower is a country's GDI relative to its HDI (UN, 2004). The human development index measures the average achievements in a country in three basic dimensions of human development which are a long and healthy life (life expectancy), Knowledge (adult literacy rate) and a decent standard of living (Espen and Bell, 2007). The UNDP also has the Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM). The UN (2004) clarifies that the (GEM) reveals whether women take an active part in economic and political life. The UN continue to clarify that the GEM is measured by looking at key areas of economic and political participation and decision-making

### **3.2.3 Economic empowerment**

Economic empowerment is one of the dimensions of empowerment. This is because people can be empowered in different ways. For example, people can be empowered with ideas, skills, knowledge, power and opportunities, to name a few. Generally, people can be empowered, either politically, socially or economically. Rai et al (2007) note that the World Bank advocates economic empowerment through Smart Economics by making markets work for women. Rai et al add that the World Bank's Action Plan to achieve economic empowerment through Smart Economics, for example, targets four key areas which are land, labour, product, and financial aid and it measures this through policy initiatives to make markets work for women as well as agency initiatives to empower women to compete in markets. According to Fraser (2012) economic empowerment is defined as a process that increases people's access to and control over economic resources and opportunities including jobs, financial services, property and other productive assets, skills development and market information. One can add here that when conducting research to measure the impact of economic empowerment, the indicators will be jobs, financial services, property, productive assets, skills development and market information.

Definitions and indicators of economic empowerment abound. Golla et al (2011) assert that one is economically empowered if is able to succeed and advance economically and has the power to make and act on economic decisions. The UN (2013) uses the following indicators to measure economic empowerment, benefits of economic empowerment programmes, ability to secure decent jobs, accumulation of assets, higher incomes, better access to and control over resources, greater security, household income and management positions. Golla et al (2011) highlights that women's economic empowerment is a multifaceted concept. Other

indicators include possession of the following, skills and resources, education, training, financial capital, loans, savings, land, machinery, (Golla et al, 2011; United Nations Foundation and Exxon Mobil Foundation, 2013). This study will measure economic empowerment using the following indicators: access to education, employment, participation in development projects, access to capital, loans, having been given skills and training.

The difference therefore between empowerment and economic empowerment is that empowerment is broad embracing social, economic and political facets whereas economic empowerment is inclined to economic aspects only. It is not just access to employment or livelihoods, but also the relative quality of jobs that matters for economic empowerment. Segregation of women in low-wage insecure jobs will do little to improve their bargaining power if male household members have inconsistent control over good jobs, however, data are, however, too sparse to precisely measure women's access to and control over material resources (Fraser, 2012).

### **3.2.4 Research on the impact of empowerment by Government**

The UN (2013) states that, the UN Women reaches out to women most in need, often engaging with grass-roots and civil society organizations. In addition, the UN points out that a UN Women partnership with the Democratic Association of Moroccan Women trains Soulalyates women, traditionally excluded from land rights, on leadership and community mobilization. The project helped raise unprecedented attention to their plight in the media and the broader public and in 2012, the Moroccan Government ruled that Soulalyates women should enjoy equal rights in land transfers (UN, 2013). It can be observed here that in all its economic empowerment programmes, the UN's ultimate goal will be inclusiveness and independency. This study views the empowerment of women only as anomalous.

Ndlovu (2013) carried a study whose major aim was to examine the impact of the Zanyokwe irrigation scheme in enhancing food security, not only for the farmers but also for the surrounding communities. In that study, a qualitative methodology shaped the research design. The study also focused on the challenges facing the rural communities of the Eastern Cape Province in South Africa. The study, according to Ndlovu (2013) unearthed that even though Zanyokwe irrigation scheme has played an indispensable role in enhancing food security for the smallholder farmers and the community at large, challenges such as market

challenges, road infrastructural issues, land tenure issues, lack of proper coordination amongst the farmers as well as farmer empowerment are a major limitation to the growth of the irrigation scheme and the farmers. It can be safely concluded that the impact of the Zanyokwe irrigation scheme was fairly high.

In a qualitative study conducted by Naidoo (2010) in the Vulindlela area found in South Africa's KwaZulu-Natal province, one of the objectives was to review the livelihood outcomes of Zibambele beneficiaries in response to the structural conditions that the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Transport faces. Zibambele is a poverty alleviation programme implemented by South Africa's Department of Transport. Naidoo expounds that the main objectives of the Zibambele programme are achieved through securing employment for the beneficiaries and the main criterion for employment is destitute female-headed households, who are selected by the community's traditional authority structures. The Zibambele programme claims that the focus on selecting women for participation in the programme is to address the inequality women face in economic and social spheres, (Naidoo, 2010). The study established that the Zibambele participants were requesting more money from the implementers and they also requested to be taught practical skills which they could use in income generating projects. All this implies that the impact of the Zibambele programme was low.

The empowerment of the poor is usually done by the Government and the Non-Government Organizations. These two actors are involved in all the components of empowerment depending on the needs of those to be empowered. Majara (2013) highlights that Lesotho has not only achieved tremendous progress in the implementation of the compact, in the areas of water, health and private sector development, but also gender and economic empowerment. The compact is a treaty signed between the Government of Lesotho and the United States Government through the Millennium Challenge Corporation's, which is an independent U.S. foreign aid agency that is helping lead the fight against global poverty. In partnership with the Ministry of Gender and Youth, Sports and Recreation and Lesotho's Gender Equality in Economic Rights programme, the Millennium Challenge Account (MCA) jointly established the Federation of Lesotho Women Entrepreneurs (FLWE) in February 2013 (Majara, 2013). In explaining the primary aim of the FLWE, Majara asserts that it is to ensure that gender

considerations extend beyond women's traditional roles thereby allowing women to contribute to poverty reduction and economic growth initiatives.

Usually the economic empowerment of poor people ensures poverty reduction. Additionally, it guarantees gender equality and a better control of life if both men and women are incorporated in the intervention measures. There will no longer be that powerlessness and lack of self-esteem that will have been created by poverty and gender inequality. It should however be pointed out that most of the previous research covered the economic empowerment of women. Zoellick in the UN (2013) points out that improved economic opportunities for women lead to better outcomes for families, societies and outcomes. This is spot on given that the majority of women are involved in the daily running of households hence most if not all the income passing through their hands will not only benefit them but all members of their households.

### **3.2.5 Research on the impact of empowerment by NGOs**

In a qualitative research conducted by Busiinge (2010) in Uganda, nine indicators of empowerment were developed which are self-confidence, financial confidence, challenging gender norms, autonomy in decision-making, perceived contribution to the household, communication within the household, relationship with partner, social group membership, and participation in collective action. Most of the research on empowerment is based on the empowerment of women. One of the research questions was: what is the impact of donor aided projects through Kabarole Research and Resource Centre on the social and economic well-being of the grass-roots communities in the region? That study established that the larger proportion (10 out of 15) of project beneficiaries continued to struggle to realize economic and social benefits mainly due to the structural approach favoured by both the NGOs and the donors. However, it may be observed that Busiinge's study was very broad since it embraced all three forms of economic empowerment. Also, the study did not address the question on the impact of economic programmes implemented by Government and NGOs specifically. This study will address the issue of impact of empowerment of both men and women since it holds that failure to ensure gender balance will be a source of gender inequalities.

A growing research trend has focused on income-generating activities of girls and women as a means of empowerment (Ahsan and Chowdhury, as cited in Berry et al, 2013). However,

Agheneza (as cited in Berry et al, 2013) observes that gender inequality and discrimination have remained as barriers to accessing and managing resources for financial gain. In this case, it can be added that when women and girls are trained in income-generating projects as well as life skills, it is highly anticipated to thwart the vicious cycle of poverty as well as promiscuity, HIV/AIDS and unwanted pregnancies. It is crucial to note that no questions have been asked by preceding researchers on the impact of economic empowerment by NGOs for poverty reduction and gender equality in Lesotho.

Makoko (2012) employed a qualitative study with a sample size of 14 in Teya-teyaneng town in the Berea district of Lesotho. In this study, Makoko examined women's experiences in economic empowerment projects. Some of the research questions were: How do those women associated with the projects understand how the project has impacted on the empowerment of women participating in the projects? How do those designing and implementing the projects understand about how the project has impacted on the empowerment of women participating in the projects? The study unearthed that with the Setsoto weaving, the impact of the empowerment project was low since the management acknowledged that the project was not rewarding the weavers satisfactorily to meet all their needs. In this case, one can safely conclude that the empowerment process did not achieve its objectives since the women were still struggling to survive after being enrolled in the project. On the other hand, women at Elelloang Basali were benefiting from the project as some have been able to educate their children and sustain their households, (Makoko, 2012). Basing on these findings, the impact of the economic empowerment implemented by the Elelloang project was high. One other thing which came out of this study is that there will be economic downturns when the number of tourists dwindles, hence the impact of the economic empowerment will also fluctuate.

Mohapi (as cited in Majara 2013) draws attention to the fact that women in Lesotho did not have a collective body through which they could voice their opinions and so the FLWE brings aspiring and budding female entrepreneurs together to share experiences, best practice, and to address the challenges they face in the business and economic world. The federation therefore is an efficacious remedy to this problem. It is a direct response to women's problems in the business fraternity, (Mohapi, as cited in Majara, 2013). For the past four years, the programme has supported Basotho women through training and outreach programs. "We

have worked closely with other development partners in pursuit of the same mandate of empowering Basotho women economically," explained Mohapi. Apart from this, Mohapi expounds that the FLWE has already trained more than 50 members on piggery and a group of 50 women in the knitting sector have started their trainings for both local and international markets. At the Lesotho Summit, Makeka (as cited in Majara, 2013) also stressed the link between gender-based violence (GBV) and women's economic empowerment.

### **3.3 Gender inequality**

The issues under gender inequality in this section are gender, gender equality and gender equity, gender inequality and research on gender inequality.

#### **3.3.1 Gender**

Gender is a social construct just like culture, class and ethnicity. Grown et al (2003) define the term gender as a set of social expectations that define the behaviours that are appropriate for women and men and that determine women's and men's differential access to rights, resources, and power in society. This definition incorporates expectations at both the family and national levels. Reeves and Baden (2000) note that gender refers to the socially determined ideas and practices of what it is to be female or male. In addition, Reeves and Baden expound that gender refers to the socially constructed roles ascribed to males and females and the resulting socially determined relations. To note also is that gender is used to make different assessments of how men and women fare in various aspects. It is important to understand the social, economic, political, and cultural forces that determine how men and women participate in, benefit from, and control project resources and activities and that a good analysis would highlight gender specific constraints, risks and opportunities (Handley, 2009). These roles are learned, change over time, and they tend to differ from one country to another as well as from culture to culture.

Svensson (2005) states that, gender refers to the socio-cultural division between men and women as well as what is seen as male or female characteristics within society. Men and women are allowed and expected to act and be in different ways, which are determined by gender. It can be added that gender is socially constructed and learned through diverse forms of socialization. WHO (2016) defines gender as the socially constructed characteristics of women and men such as norms, roles and relationships of and between groups of women and

men. It varies from society to society and tends to change with time. All the definitions zero in on the fact that gender is socially constructed within societies.

### **3.3.2 Gender equality and gender equity**

According to UN (2002), equality is the cornerstone of every democratic society that yearns for social justice and human rights. That is true since there can never be any semblance of justice in a society characterized by high inequalities. Grown et al (2003) point out that the term gender equality has been defined in multiple ways in the development discourse and it has dominated in various research on development and empowerment topics. Grown et al expound that gender equality is viewed in terms of the opportunities and possessions that men have as compared to those women have, for instance in terms of the right to own land and property as well as employment in life as men, for instance equality of access to education and employment, which does not necessarily lead to equality of power. In defining gender equality Svensson (2005) affirms it is a situation where women and men, girls and boys, should have equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities in life. Gender equality does not imply that men and women should become the same; but that the existence, work and efforts of men and women should be valued the same and none of the genders should be considered superior or inferior, (Hannan, as cited in Svensson, 2005).

The United Nations Human Development Report (1995) refers to gender equality in terms of capabilities such as education, health, and nutrition and opportunities such as economic and decision-making. Suharko (2007) states that gender equity implies that men and women have an equal representation and participation in the community level decision-making and control. Suharko further explains that men and women can articulate their concerns and interests, take responsibility, and actively participate in the development processes. Similarly, the World Bank (as cited in Grown et al, 2003) defines gender equality in terms of equality under the law, equality of opportunity (including equality of rewards for work and equality in access to human capital and other productive resources that enable opportunity), and equality of voice (the ability to influence and contribute to the development process). Several experts have proposed conceptual frameworks for understanding gender equality. Reeves and Baden (2000) posit that gender equality denotes women having the same opportunities in life as men, including the ability to participate in the public sphere. Therefore, it can be added that gender equality strives to remove all unfairness between men and women. As for

measurement, gender equality is measured with the use of an index that is called the GEM which was explained in section 3.2.2 on measuring gender empowerment.

Gender equity denotes the equivalence in life outcomes for women and men recognizing their different needs and interests, and requiring a redistribution of power and resources. Gender equity, is a term that is often incorrectly used interchangeably with gender equality, yet it moves beyond equality of opportunity and denotes equivalence in life outcomes for women and men, recognizing their different needs and interests, and requiring a redistribution of power and resources (Reeves and Baden, 2000). Gender equity, according to WHO (2016) refers to fair opportunity for everyone to attain their full health potential regardless of demographic, social, economic or geographic strata and it must be reached both between and within countries. Reeves and Baden (2000) assert that gender mainstreaming is an organizational strategy to bring a gender perspective to all aspects of an institution's policy and activities, through building gender capacity and accountability.

### **3.3.3 Gender inequality**

Gender inequality is differential access to and control over material resources and is sometimes perpetuated by gender norms and stereotypes reinforced in gendered identities resulting in the constraining of the behaviour of women and men in ways that lead to inequality (Ridgeway, 2011). "Gender equality is not about transferring opportunities from men to women, but about realizing the rights of everyone, and creating conditions where both all have the right and ability to realize their full human potential" (UNICEF and UN Women, 2013, p. 35).

Holmes (2007) highlights that liberal feminists hold that gender inequalities can be solved through reform within the system while the socialists or materialist feminists believe in a revolution or socialist redistribution and radical feminists emphasize the revalue feminine values such as an ethic of care. Gender inequality is resultant of imbalance or bias on the basis of the individual's sex in prospects and the allotment of wherewithal or benefits or access to services (UNDP Lesotho, 2008). These inequalities tend to disadvantage women as Grown et al (2003) and the UN (2016) rightly points out that although the specific nature and degree of these differences vary from one society to the next, they typically favour men, creating an imbalance in power and a gender inequality that exists in most societies

worldwide. However, this research posits that both men and women need to be catered for in economic empowerment programmes.

Gender inequality tends to impact on poverty and development initiatives. This explains why gender inequality has been at the heart of development policy debates for quite some time now. However, Kelkar (2013) hails the empowerment of women highlighting that women's economic empowerment is increasingly being acknowledged as a prerequisite for sustainable development and inclusive growth. The Africa Partnership Forum (2007) shares a similar view expounding that most of the poorest people in Africa are women. Many researchers have attempted to conduct research exhibiting the challenges related to gender and development issues. On the contrary, Bandiera and Natraj (2013) point out that 'although it is helpful to identify and understand aggregate patterns, evidence from cross-country studies is of limited use for policy design' since studies are characteristically silent on the mechanisms that drive or influence the association between gender inequality and development, (p. 2).

Apart from that, Bandiera and Natraj (2013) add that most of the literature focuses on the outcome of inequality on individual outcomes, such as schooling, rather than the effect of laws and institutions that generate disparities between the genders, such as laws that grant better property rights to men compared with women. This study will ascertain how economic empowerment in Manonyane community was factoring in gender between 2010 and 2015. To note is that empowering poor men and women requires creating a level field as pointed out by Narayan (2002) that there is need for the removal of formal and informal institutional barriers that prevent them from taking action to improve their well-being.

### **3.3.4 Research on gender inequality**

Average total years of education is a stock variable that captures the cumulative societal effect of gender inequality in education yet in contrast, (gross) secondary school enrolment rates are a flow variable, indicative of gender differences in the particular year in which the data are measured (UN, 2016). This contrasts with previous studies that emphasize gender differences in literacy and primary school enrolment rates. This study examined total years of education of those 15 and older as a broad measure of educational achievement, using data from Barro and Lee (2010) for 1990 to 2010. It also examined gender differences in gross

secondary enrolment rates for the same time period. According to the UN (2016) this study focused on secondary school enrolment rates for two reasons. First, substantial progress has been made in closing gender gaps in literacy and primary education, making it useful to shift focus to higher levels of education. Second, the study revealed that as economies change and move up the industrial ladder, secondary education is more likely than primary education to determine ability to participate in the paid economy rather than in earlier stages of economic development.

The UN (2016) explains that this variable reflects the cumulative effect of educational inequality in a society adding that panel A plots the distribution of the ratio of female-to-male (F/M) total years of education using a kernel density estimation procedure. Overall, it is visually apparent that global gender inequality in total years of education is not only falling, but that we are moving toward global convergence with a large number of countries at or close to parity (UN, 2016). Panel B plots the change in the F/M ratio of total years of education from 1990 to 2010 against the 1990 ratio and the negative correlation of these two variables shows that the greatest gains in narrowing educational gaps are countries that started out with the widest gaps (UN, 2016). This can be seen clearly in Panel C. The UN (2016) also found out that the two regions with the lowest F/M ratios in 1990, that is, the Africa and Arab regions, have made the largest advances toward gender equality in total educational attainment. In sum, just as with total years of education, there is both greater gender equality in secondary school enrolment rates within countries and a global convergence of gender equality in secondary school enrolment rates of 0.99 in 2010, up from 0.93 in 1990 (UN, 2016). This study is crucial because it sheds light on the developments made with regard to gender equality in literacy and primary education.

Jacobsen (2011) comments that it is notable that there is still a wide range of participation rates found in present-day so that countries have not converged on a specific higher level of female participation in paid work. Interestingly, there is a convex shape with regards to women's participation, with lower participation rates for the middle income countries compared to both the low and high income countries given that men's participation shows much less variation across income levels, but drops for higher-income groups (Jacobsen, 2011). Kabeer (2012) also states that evidence of the persistence of gender inequalities in relation to labour market outcomes raises a number of important questions in relation to

women's empowerment since women participate less in the formal or paid work, sector of the economy than do men worldwide.

Gender inequality in livelihoods can contribute to inequality in other domains (Seguino, 2013). Numerous studies find that employment is a key mechanism for promoting gender equity and that gender equality in this domain can leverage change in other domains (Ridgeway, 2011; Kabeer et al., 2013). Clearly, educational equality is not sufficient for securing gender parity in employment. This is confirmed in Panel D, which plots countries' change in the F/M ratio of secondary enrolment against the change in the F/M employment rate (UN, 2016). The (UN, 2016) highlights that there is no evidence of a positive correlation between gender equality in education and employment as the trend line in Panel D shows there is a weak or negative relationship.

The ILO (2009) estimates total worldwide female participation in the paid workforce at 40 percent, with generally a lower rate in the less developed countries (closer to 35 percent) and a higher rate in the more developed countries (closer to 45 percent in the OECD). In explaining this, Jacobsen (2011) points out that this lower participation of women than men in the formal sector appears in large part due to their having much greater work responsibilities in the informal, or household, sector. Whether these responsibilities are assumed by free choice, by following of social norms, by coercion, or by lack of opportunities in the formal sector (whether due to gender discrimination or general lack of opportunities) can vary by country, person and by society.

Due to perpetual and varied gender inequalities which exist, many countries are signatories to global and regional policies for gender equality. This is commendable since it is one of the ways to fight gender inequalities. The UNDP Lesotho (2006) highlights that Lesotho ratified the following gender declarations:

- Convention on the Political Rights of Women (1952).
- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966).
- Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (1980).
- Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action (1995).

- SADC Declaration on Gender and Development (1997).
- Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (2003).

This is a positive step since it shows a commitment towards achieving gender equality in all social, economic and political spheres. Ratification also means that Lesotho will have to adhere to the requirements of the gender declarations. Failure to do so, Lesotho risks being expelled from such declarations and at the same time bear the brunt of negative publicity.

### **3.4 Poverty**

It is undeniable that poverty is endemic and has become a social problem, particularly in the sub-Saharan countries. This section below will dwell on poverty definitions according to different approaches. Definitions of poverty abound. The definitions differ because poverty is a dynamic and contested concept hence definitions tend to change due to differences in approaches and also the changing of times. Prior to reviewing studies that have attempted to measure poverty in Lesotho and elsewhere, as well as the poverty reduction strategies, it is necessary to dwell on the various definitions or approaches employed by the various researchers. There is, however, consent that any poverty definition needs to embrace social and economic aspects.

This section gives a brief description of poverty approaches and their poverty definitions. These approaches include the monetary approach, capability, social exclusion, participation and consensual approaches. These approaches distinguish the poor from the non-poor differently. The possibility of a single definition of poverty is far-fetched, if not unattainable. There is no one definition of poverty which can be accepted by all the people as the correct one. What poverty is taken to mean depends on various factors, for example class, culture, level of education and the location, which is whether it is in the developed or developing country. As for researchers, it also depends on what paradigm they will be aligned to when conducting research. There are merits and demerits of having a variety of definitions of poverty. One of the advantages is that it allows different donors to provide aid and it also allows for the formulation of a variety of poverty reduction strategies to fight poverty from different angles. However, the demerits are that it may lead to falsified figures about the level of poverty and this will ultimately lead to the formulation of inappropriate poverty measures.

### **3.4.1 The monetary approach**

The monetary approach is one of the approaches employed in the conceptualization, definition and measurement of poverty. This approach speaks to the ability to meet basic needs. It is composed of the absolute and relative poverty. According to Laderchi et al. (2003), the monetary approach defines poverty in terms of how much a person's income (or consumption) falls short of some minimum level of resources.

#### **3.4.1.1 Absolute poverty**

Absolute poverty is a concept which is frequently defined in terms of minimum subsistence levels. The concept of absolute poverty and its definition as some kind of minimum subsistence level is strongly associated with the late nineteenth-century British social reformers Charles Booth and Seebohm Rowntree. Additionally, the concept of absolute poverty becomes synonymous with subsistence poverty. Absolute poverty is whereby families' total earnings are insufficient to obtain the minimum necessities for the maintenance of merely physical efficiency (Rowntree, as cited in Noble et al., 2004, p. 5). That is how Rowntree defined poverty in 1901 even referring to it as 'primary poverty.' Around the 1970s more researchers modified the above definition for example Joseph (as cited in Noble et al, 2004) considered a family to be poor if it is not able to eat. It is worth noting that no comparisons are made with other families or communities, as far as absolute poverty is concerned. Holmes (2007) posits that absolute poverty is about not being able to meet basic survival needs, for example not having enough food to eat.

To note is that from the absolute definitions, poverty lines or poverty thresholds can be derived. The World Bank's \$1 per day definition, conceived of as an absolute poverty line is used in its development initiatives and international endeavours. In an attempt to define poverty operationally, the World Bank in 1990 adopted a rule-of-thumb measure of US\$370 per year per person at 1985 prices (the "dollar a day" poverty line) for poor countries, (Townsend, as cited in UNDP, 2006).

In a classic study first published in 1901, Seebohm Rowntree calculated that 10 percent of the population of the English city of York in 1899 was living in poverty (below minimum needed expenditures). As we enter the next century, the World Bank calculates that a fourth of the population of the developing world about 1.2 billion

people is living in poverty (below \$1 a day). These two calculations of income poverty are separated by a century and have very different coverage. Nevertheless, the basic concepts and methods they embody have strong similarities (World Bank, as cited in Noble et al., 2004, p. 6).

Another explanation for the similarity is that both calculations employed the same approach (monetary approach) to make the calculations.

According to the World Bank (2000), poverty is pronounced deprivation in well-being. This definition is problematic in the sense that what may seem pronounced deprivation may not be the same to someone else. Based on these assertions, it explains why defining poverty is a daunting task. In 1995 a multi-dimensional definition of absolute poverty was given at the World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen thus: ".....a condition characterized by severe deprivation of basic human, health, shelter, education and information. It depends not only on income but also on access to social services" (World Summit for Social Development, as cited in Johanneburg 2007, p. 24).

The above definition is comprehensive since it touches on both basic needs as well as social services. However, the term severe used in this definition is subjective since there is no definite scale to measure severity. What one views as severe may not be seen as such by a different assessor. It is also not clear how income is calculated and the threshold. No mention was made of the exact social services. Haughton and Khandker (2009) state that, absolute poverty is a situation whereby a person is not able to satisfy his or her minimum requirements for food, clothing and shelter. The dollar a day poverty line is accepted internationally as an absolute poverty line. It should be pointed out that the above subsistence definitions can be easily turned into poverty lines. Poverty lines allow for both headcount and depth of poverty measures, and when individuals are tracked over time enable the dynamics of absolute poverty to be assessed (Noble et al, 2004)

The UNDP (2007) summarized the monetary approach by explaining that it constitutes the income perspective and the basic needs perspective. With regard to income perspective, the UNDP Lesotho (2007) points out that a person is poor if, and only if, his or her income level is below the defined poverty line. Many countries have adopted income poverty lines to monitor progress in reducing poverty incidence. Often the cut-off poverty line is defined in

terms of having enough income for a specified amount of food. As for the basic needs perspective, the UNDP Lesotho (2007) highlights that, poverty is deprivation of material requirements for minimally acceptable fulfilment of human needs, including food. The UNDP adds that this concept of deprivation goes well beyond the lack of private income: it includes the need for basic health and education and essential services that have to be provided by the community to prevent people from falling into poverty. It also recognizes the need for employment and participation.

#### **3.4.1.2 Relative Poverty**

Relative poverty as a concept has a history going back before the 1960s. Unlike absolute poverty which is specific, the relative poverty concept explicitly relates poverty to a reference group. Holmes (2007) observes that relative poverty is more common in the West, where you may be able to eat, but do not have enough money to share in the other benefits your society has to offer. In this regard, if one for instance does not possess a car and a house in a posh suburb, he or she is considered poor when compared to the surrounding people. In addition, relative poverty refers to the nature of the overall distribution of resources in a given community or nation. Johannesburg (2007) explains that relative poverty links poverty to a particular point in the distribution curve of a particular variable such as income. Johannesburg goes further elucidating that people are judged to be poor if they are poor in comparison to those around them. In agreement, Townsend (as cited in Johannesburg, 2007, p. 26) states that:

Individuals, families and groups in the population can be said to be in poverty when they lack the resources to obtain the types of diet, participate in the activities and have the living conditions which are customary, or at least widely encouraged or approved, in societies to which they belong. Their resources are so seriously below those commanded by the average family or individual that they are in effect excluded from ordinary living patterns, customs and activities.

In Britain, critics of this definition have been concerned that the notion of relative poverty might mean that some groups of people will always be poor compared to others, as there will never be absolute equality (Sen, as cited in Noble et al., 2004). Apart from this, some people who will not be struggling to access necessities will be counted as poor yet they will have

been compared with affluent people in their places of residency. On the other hand, the averagely rich staying within poor communities will be regarded as filthy poor. Hence with the absolute poverty, some people's poverty status will, in most cases, be wrongly assessed.

### **3.4.2 The capability approach**

Robeyns (2003) highlights that Amartya Sen has contributed to this a paradigm by developing ideas about capabilities and functionings defining poverty as a denial of choices and opportunities for living a tolerable life. The core characteristic of the capability approach is its focus on what people are effectively able to do and to be, that is, on their capabilities. The capability approach involves concentration on freedoms to attain in general and the capabilities to function in particular (Sen, 1995). Furthermore, Sen expounds that a functioning is an achievement, whereas a capability is the ability to achieve. Capabilities, in contrast, are notions of freedom, in the positive sense: what real opportunities you have regarding the life you may lead.

Mowafi (2004) states that in his 1999 book *Development as Freedom*, Sen shifts the conceptual framework by defining poverty as a deprivation of human capabilities. Therefore, poverty may at its core be defined as a deprivation of human capabilities whose solution is the introduction of basic freedoms. To accomplish such a goal, people must be guaranteed essential rights and liberties. It is a combination of both the absolute and relative poverty. Capability poverty is a marginalization of or failure of a person to achieve or develop certain basic functioning (or capability), where basic functionings (capabilities) are considered as a person's achieved ability to adequately fulfil certain crucial roles at a minimal level (Laderchi et al., 2003). The capability poverty approach defines the poverty line in terms of educational achievement or how well a person is educated (Saith, 2001). In line with this, the UNDP (2007) states "poverty is an individual state of deprivation whereby the opportunities and choices most basic to human development are denied," (p. 3).

### **3.4.3 The Social exclusion approach**

Social exclusion (SE) is a situation whereby an individual is denied the opportunity to participate in the normal activities of citizens whether he desires to participate or not (Silver and Miller, 2002). Therefore, this sort of poverty relates to notions of exclusion from

participation in mainstream society. Furthermore, the concept of social exclusion describes the processes of marginalization and deprivation that can arise even in rich countries with comprehensive welfare provisions (Clark, 2006). Deprivation takes with it various forms. Examples of marginalized groups include the albinos, people with disabilities, ethnic minorities and the landless. The situation of those deprived relative to the norm generally cannot improve without some redistribution of opportunities and outcomes on individual characteristics and circumstances (Clark, 2006). SE leads to a focus on distributional issues and elements of exclusion from mainstream society. For instance, when social exclusion occurs the individuals affected do not have an equal opportunity for jobs in the labour market.

#### **3.4.4 The participatory approach**

With this approach, if certain conditions of normal participation are met, then those able to participate are not in poverty, Townsend (as cited in Noble et al, 2004). The participatory approach to poverty does not provide a specific definition of poverty, rather it utilizes a Participatory Poverty Assessment (PPA) which is a form of participatory appraisal to assess and define poverty and it involves internal assessment of poverty by involving the poor to participate in decisions regarding their situations (Laderchi et al., 2003). Thus, participatory poverty is an experience of poverty defined by the poor themselves. Thus, apart from participating in political, social and economic activities, people also participate in the crafting of the definition of poverty that suit their situation.

#### **3.4.5 The consensual approach**

Noble et al (2004) state that, the list of socially perceived necessities underpinning a consensual definition of poverty includes social activities as well as goods and resources. It entails individual and social characteristics of poverty such as lack of access to health and education, powerlessness or lack of dignity. These are also called dimensions of poverty. Below are other terms used in poverty literature.

Chronic poverty is that kind of poverty that is experienced by individuals and households for extended periods of time or throughout their entire lives. It is also called persistent poverty and chronic poverty must be distinguished from transitory poverty or being non-poor (Handley, 2009). Acute poverty refers to two main characteristics. First, it includes people living under conditions where they do not reach the minimum internationally agreed

standards in indicators of basic functionings and secondly such as being well nourished, being educated or drinking clean water; second, it refers to people living under conditions where they do not reach the minimum standards in several aspects at the same time (Santos and Alkire, 2011). Poverty headcount is simply the proportion of the population living below the poverty line.

### **3.4.2 Poverty measurement**

Poverty measures are crucial to poverty policy and program formulation as well as policy analysis. Poverty and social policy research utilize a diversity of poverty definitions and measurements. What distinguishes one poverty measure from another is that each has a unique poverty definition and defined threshold levels. It is worth noting that the choice lies with the researcher whether to define poverty directly, using a set of indicators such as access to food, education, and health among others or indirectly in terms of money. Given a set of information on either per capita income or per capita consumption indicators and a poverty line, the only remaining problem is deciding on an appropriate summary measure of aggregate poverty. There are many alternative aggregate measures of monetary poverty that can be computed. It is important to point out that whether income deprivation is a relevant benchmark of measuring poverty or not, it is still a debatable issue.

The first step in measuring poverty is defining an indicator of welfare such as income or consumption per capita. Information on welfare is derived from survey data. Income poverty measurements are generally computed using standard budget approaches. Typically, poverty is then measured by comparing individuals' income or consumption with some defined threshold below which they are considered to be poor. Other popular measures of welfare include calorie consumption per person per day, food consumption as a proportion of total expenditure, and nutritional status as measured by stunting or wasting (Haughton and Khandker, 2009). Different researchers employ different indicators of welfare since there seem to be no typical indicator of well-being. The relative poverty threshold is fixed as a certain percentage or proportion of some central summary statistic, such as the mean or median, of the population income or resource while the absolute poverty line is set based on previous data, the relative poverty line is set utilizing current survey data (US Department of Health and Human Services, 2009).

Laderchi et al (2003) point out that determining poverty based on a monetary metric entails the choice of an indicator, a unit of analysis, and a poverty line. A poverty line may be identified either with respect to a list of basic needs (i.e., absolute poverty) or some characteristics of the distribution of the welfare indicators chosen (i.e. relative poverty) (Laderchi, 2003). The United States uses a poverty threshold that considers only cash income before tax. Schiller (2008) clarifies that the poverty threshold is computed by putting a monetary value on the minimum amount of food a family or individual needs to survive. When a family or an individual's total income falls below the poverty threshold, then the family or individual is considered poor. The family or an individual's monetary poverty level is associated with family size, age, gender, race, place of residence, and marital status (Schiller, 2008). Mowafi (2004) states that proponents of the absolute poverty line argue that it is best to maintain its existence for the sake of consistency and simplicity. However, issues which always remain controversial relate to the most appropriate way to measure poverty. While some view lack of income as the best measure, some see lack of basic commodities as a more suitable indicator of poverty. Apart from that, another bone of contention is whether poverty has to be measured at the individual, household or national level.

Both the monetary and consensual of poverty use surveys to compute measurements. The consensual approach to assessing or defining relative poverty was pioneered by Mack and Lansley in Britain in 1985. In this approach, a survey is undertaken of the general population to determine an inventory of socially perceived necessities (Noble et al., 2004). Unlike the monetary poverty, the social exclusion poverty measure sets the poverty line based on a relative approach. The social exclusion poverty defines the poverty threshold relative to the average living standard of the people (Schiller, 2008).

Unlike the monetary poverty and social exclusion poverty measures, the capability poverty measure utilizes a non-income based approach. The capability poverty threshold is defined as the end of specific years of schooling. However, the educational threshold is set by matching total income to educational level. Contrary to the other types of poverty above, the participatory poverty is defined and measured qualitatively and hence is excluded from this study because it is largely a quantitative study. It is important to note that analysts need to be aware of the strengths and limitations of any measure they employ.

In the 1997, the Human Development Report by the UN (2004) introduced the human poverty index (HPI), which focuses on the proportion of people below a threshold level in basic dimensions of human development, much as the poverty headcount measures the proportion of people below an income threshold. The human poverty index for developing countries (HPI-1) uses different variables than the index for high-income OECD countries (HPI-2). The UN (2004) expounds that the HDI does not include a measure of participation, an aspect of human development that is central to gender equity. The UN (2004) clarifies that the HDI clearly illustrates the distinction between income and human well-being and by measuring average achievements in health, education and income hence the HDI can give a more complete picture of the state of a country's development than can incomes alone.

### **3.4.3 Poverty research**

The review of literature on poverty research covered will focus on poverty research in Lesotho and poverty research in other countries.

#### **3.4.3.1 Poverty research in Lesotho**

Omile (2003) observed that about 84 per cent of the population lives in rural villages characterized by absence of basic infrastructure. To most rural populace, electricity, and pipe borne water remains a luxury. The study covered 410 households from the main ecological zones of the country, both rural and urban. It was a quantitative research where 100 structured questionnaires were administered each in Moyeni, Maseru, Mekaling and Mafeteng. The issues covered in the survey range from household characteristics such as size, income, educational attainment, occupation, monthly expenditure, access to basic social services, perceptions of households regarding their poverty status, possible causes of poverty and means of alleviating the poverty. Given that the average size of family in that survey was 6, it implies that an individual member of the family on the average was surviving on less than US\$20 per month or on about 66 cents (absolutely less than US\$1) per day. Omile (2003) states that "If we compare this to the United Nations classification, we can conclude that the majority of the people covered in the survey, which can also be regarded as a representative sample of the population is living below the poverty line in Lesotho," (p. 12).

The Lesotho Review (2013) set out to establish the household poverty reduction strategies and unearthed that during times of low food access, poor households in all livelihood zones first increase the search for casual labour for food and eat lower-cost, less-preferred foods.

During recent crisis years, the following coping strategies have been observed: gathering unusual amounts of wild foods, sending household members to beg, skipping entire days without eating, and harvesting immature crops, (Lesotho Review, 2013). Again, most of the households in this study were also prioritizing food expenditure over expenditure on other basic needs such as health and education. It should however be noted that one of the limitations of the study was that it used self-reported data from the BDHS, which was administered to either one woman or one man per household, hence the study could not establish in-depth experiences of the men and women.

The UNDP Lesotho (2007) notes that educational attainment also contribute to the poverty levels in Lesotho since it was found to be lower among the poor boys in rural areas than girls. However, this was relative to other urban areas outside Maseru, where the differential was marginal. By 2002 and 2003, the incidence, depth and severity of poverty had become the highest among the disabled and subsistence farmers (UNDP Lesotho, 2007). Moreover, the next highest levels of poverty were found in households headed by housewives, unemployed persons, and pensioners. Furthermore, poor households were found to be more likely to rely upon agricultural assets. Poverty was higher, deeper and more severe in both 1994 and 2002 for those who stated that they owned fields compared with those who did not.

An important question in the debate regarding rural development has been the relationship between economic empowerment and poverty reduction. A survey carried out by Care (2001) on livelihoods in Lesotho revealed that households headed de facto by women actually show higher cash income per member than male headed ones. This is because so many of these households can profit from the wage income of absent husbands. Most of the poor and very -poor lived in households headed by either regular wage or salary earners or unpaid family workers and unemployed. On the contrary, households headed de jure by women form the poorest class of livelihoods in Lesotho (UNDP Lesotho, 2007). These are usually households headed by ageing widows who have lost many of the human and material assets that they enjoyed in their younger days and who may find it hard to secure any cash income at all. In the rural areas, these are often the households that suffer the deepest poverty (Care, 2001). Overall, these features confirm that, while women continue to be discriminated against in the Lesotho economy and suffer greater poverty in their livelihoods overall than men, there are significant differences “between households headed by women de facto and de jure

respectively” and it is for the latter kind of female headed household that poverty is deepest (Care, 2001, p. 20).

Tanga (2009) gathered data on poverty which was analysed both quantitatively and qualitatively since a blend of the two methods proved useful. Although Lesotho has ten districts and each having one main town, the study was conducted in Maseru, Leribe and Berea districts in 2007. Tanga (2009) examined from the perspective of street vendors how they were fighting poverty and the extent of winning this endemic cankerworm. In this study, methodological triangulation was used in data collection. Questionnaires and focus group discussions were used as data collection instruments for the study. Tanga (2009) assessed the extent of poverty alleviation, a socio-economic poverty variables index was constructed with values of between one and three. There were 15 variables considered in the measurement of poverty. The study revealed that fourteen percent of the respondents were found not to have scored on the variables and were trapped in poverty and could hardly sustain their lives as well as their households.

Tanga (2009) explains that per capita agricultural production has been falling since 1970s despite the fact that 80 percent of the whole population depend on it and this has resulted in chronic food insecurity as a major problem facing poor households in Lesotho showing that 31 percent of the respondents opined that poverty can be understood from the perspective of meeting one’s basic needs which of course is shelter, housing and food. Tanga adds that this is followed by 21 percent who thought that it could be viewed from household income level, that is, the amount of income that a household can boast of. Tanga (2009) observes that ownership of assets and amenity, and educational standards was each perceived by 14 percent as a measure of poverty. It is but normal that people join certain ventures with high expectations and not all will meet those expectations. It should be noted here that meeting expectations does not imply that people escape from poverty. Tanga observes that some people could just be expecting to buy the minimum things that can sustain their living while others might be expecting much hence expectations of individuals differ and are by no way the same and this accounts for the diversity in responses of the respondents.

Care (2001) notes that households generally do not own land for cultivation, aside from small home garden plots. Most of those who do have their own fields do not cultivate them due to

lack of inputs such as labour, implements, seed and fertilizer, and/or because of ill health, disability and old age. Some of those who have fields have given the land to their children. This study unearthed that some households only ate *papa* and vegetables twice daily, having the opportunity to eat meat at feasts only. In addition, very poor households depend largely on assistance in the form of food, money and clothes from children, relatives, friends and neighbours. Weeding, the brewing of beer and forest development projects (*fato-fato*) are considered very important strategies for these households as they provide quick cash, though barely enough to cover the costs of basic household items. The sale of fruits, vegetables, snacks and second hand clothes were stated as economic activities taking place in the urban areas only. With regard to skills, capabilities and education, a large proportion of very poor households do not have any marketable skills. Of those who do, sewing, knitting, shoe repair, building, making of handicrafts (brooms and mats using local grass), and making bins were cited as the main marketable skills (Care, 2001).

#### **3.4.3.2 Poverty research in other countries**

A quantitative study conducted in South Africa, by Sikrweqe, (2013) found out that all the households (100%) had access to basic services such as electricity, water, transport, road, schools, and health care. The findings also show that 22% of the respondents had an educational status that was below Grade 12 during the time of conducting the research activities and these are the respondents that did not precede beyond Grade 12- a condition that may be associated with the lack of funds or other socio economic factors. Access to housing as a basic infrastructure need was determined using three types of categories and response could be whether households stay in a formal house, house provided through the RDP or a shack. This study also revealed that 88% of the households are living in formal houses which were either provided by the Government through Government subsidies or built by the owners themselves, 11% of the households are living in the houses provided by the municipality through the Reconstruction and Development Programme program and the remaining 1% lives in shacks. With regard to sanitation the indicator used was the households' access to toilets and it was classified according to households' access into three categories, namely flush toilet, bucket system as well as pit-latrines. The study unearthed that 67% of the households had access to flush toilets whilst 33% used pit-latrines. It appears

that the sample for this study was experiencing low levels of poverty since the majority had basic needs.

Suharko (2007) conducted research using two case studies, Bina Swadaya, a big and established NGO in Indonesia and Gram Vikas in India. Suharko notes that the greatest challenge to alleviate poverty can be reflected through the contemporary poverty situation in Indonesia and India where a huge number of people lives below the poverty line. This implies that whatever poverty reduction strategies employed in these countries will no longer be pronounced due to the severity of poverty. Additionally, in India, in rural areas, less than one-fifth has access to clean water and fewer than 5% have access to adequate sanitation. Apart from periodic cyclones, the population is disrupted by regular floods and chronic water-borne disease, causing widespread illness and death Todd and Palakudiyil (as cited in Suharko, 2007).

Kahraman (2011) unearthed that Turkey does not face an absolute poverty problem. In 2005, the percentage of population living on less than US\$ 1 per day was 0.01 percent while the rate of people living on less than US\$ 2.15 per day decreased by half from 3.04 percent to 1.55 percent during the period 2002–2005 (Ercan, 2007). However, a negative consequence of Turkey's post-1980 liberalization policies was an increase in relative poverty. Almost a quarter of the population now lives below the poverty line, and approximately 20 million people live below the general poverty line determined according to food and non-food expenditures calculated by TurkStat (Ercan, 2007). Relative poverty is closely related to one's employment status: 6.6 percent for regular workers, 32 percent for casual workers and 26.2 percent for the self-employed in 2005 (Ercan, 2007).

A report on the 2003 poverty rate, using data from the Current Population Survey of the United States, revealed that a greater percent of non-married families fell below the federal poverty line than married families (US Census Bureau, 2004). The same report highlights that for race, 10.5 % of Whites, 11.8% of Asians, 22.5 of Hispanics and 24.4% of Blacks fell below the federal 35 poverty level. With respect to age, 17.6% of people less than 18 years old fell below the federal poverty level, 10.8% of those 18-64 years old fell below the federal poverty level, while 10.2% of those 65 years and older were below the federal poverty level (US Census Bureau, 2004). According to Schiller (2008), an increase in family size can be

associated with an increased level of poverty. This is usually because a bigger family requires more necessities than a smaller one.

The US Census Bureau (2004) has shown that educational attainment has a profound impact on income and/or poverty in the United States. Poverty rate based on educational level by income has shown a relative high rate for those with less than high school diploma. The Bureau further states that for instance, in 2004 the median household income by educational attainment reveals that on average those with less than a high school degree earned \$17,000. Those with a high school degree (or equivalent) earned \$25,000, those with some college or associate degree earned \$36,500, those with Bachelor degree earned \$44,000 and graduate or professional earned \$57,500. Significant average income increases occur as one climbs the educational ladder from less than a high school diploma to a high school diploma (US Census Bureau, 2004).

Ogunleye (2010) explains the facts about dimensions of poverty in Nigeria highlighting that the Federal Office of Statistics indicates that majority of the poor are located in the rural areas of Nigeria and cited that in 1985 for instance, 49.9% of the population in rural areas was poor, declining to 46.1% in 1992, only to rise to 67.85 in 1996. Anríquez and Stamoulis (2007) elucidates that at least 70 per cent of the world's very poor people are rural, and a large proportion of the poor and hungry are children and young people. Rural poverty results from lack of assets, limited economic opportunities and poor education and capabilities, as well as disadvantages rooted in social and political inequalities. Households fall into poverty primarily as a result of shocks such as ill health, poor harvests, social expenses, or conflict and disasters. South Asia, with the greatest number of poor rural people, and sub-Saharan Africa, with the highest incidence of rural poverty, are the region's worst affected by poverty and hunger and levels of poverty vary considerably however, not just across regions and countries, but also within countries (Anríquez and Stamoulis, 2007).

### **3.4.4 Poverty reduction**

#### **3.4.4.1 Meaning of poverty reduction**

Poverty reduction entails “strategies and policies aimed at reducing the number or percentage of people living in poverty or the severe nature of poverty in peoples' lives” (RSA, 2007, p. 14). Poverty reduction usually refers to strategies and policies that reduce the number or

percentage of people living in poverty or the severity of the impact of poverty on the lives of poor people (Johanneburg, 2007). In simpler terms, it is the ways used by individuals, institutions and Governments to lower the impact of poverty. This entails the policies, frameworks and poverty solutions employed to fight poverty.

#### **3.4.4.2 Poverty reduction strategies**

Different researchers are aligned to different development approaches and institutions. This explains why there is no agreement with regard to poverty definitions, measurements as well as poverty reduction strategies. It is generally agreed that poverty reduction is an overriding goal of development policy. There is a plethora of poverty reduction strategies that have been proposed by various researchers, institutions and Governments.

Schiller (2008) highlights how personal investment in human capital such as education can operate as a strong mechanism that can influence the distribution of poverty. According to Schiller, educational achievement is a prime factor for distribution of poverty. It therefore follows that those who invest in education have a higher chance of getting out of poverty. Evidence of the value of supporting education to achieve development is convincing. A more equitable distribution of education correlates with reduced economic poverty and inequality and faster economic growth Birdsall and Londoño (as cited in Handley, 2009). Education for girls has a positive impact on women's empowerment and lowers women's risk of being poor. It also generates indirect benefits in terms of the health of their infants and children, family nutrition, immunization rates and educational attainment for their children (World Bank, 2010). It could be that most educated mothers tend to be cautious about diet and health issues.

Unemployment is undoubtedly one of the drivers of poverty. That is why several researchers put forward employment creation as one of the poverty reduction strategies. Economic policies of Government should be geared towards creation of jobs Marcus, (as cited in Handley, 2009; Ogunleye, 2010). Supporting market development and trade through improving market access, and lowering transaction costs, is therefore central to giving farmers and agricultural workers a clear sense of market opportunities at home and abroad (Wiggins, as cited in Handley, 2009).

In Nigeria, a number of measures were put in place to reduce poverty. The first one, as Ogunleye (2010) put it, was the Poverty Alleviation Programme (PAP) which was later amended further to National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP). These programmes were aimed at providing employment to the jobless Nigerians and to make the take-home pay of Nigerian workers a reasonable one, among others. Ogunleye further states that the formulation of a home-grown National Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS) which has been described as Nigeria's version of the MDGs. NEEDS was replicated into the state Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (SEEDS) and Local Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (LEEDS) at the state and local Government levels respectively Ogunleye (2010). In line with this, Omile (2003) indicates that most of the households covered in the conducted survey suggested that in order to considerably reduce poverty in Lesotho, Government should address the unemployment problem. In agreement with these two researchers, this study will look at challenges faced by those out of work.

In order for poverty to be reduced, Handley (2009) suggests two streams of policy responses: the first is a broad-based, public health response, which focuses on improving the access and quality of primary health care and also on the broader health implications of water and sanitation, housing and education for girls and women. WHO (as cited in Handley, 2009) warns that failure to do this will result in high levels of morbidity and mortality. Evidence from across countries and time periods demonstrates that economic growth and improved productivity are necessary for widespread and sustainable poverty reduction and indeed, economic growth is often the main factor in reducing income poverty Bird and Busse (2006). Specifically, to harness growth for poverty reduction countries must have certain policies in place so that poor people can participate in growth, Bird (as cited in Handley, 2009). Suffice to say, even though economic growth is necessary for poverty reduction, it is far from sufficient.

With reference to the Nigerian scenario, Ogunleye (2010) recommends that there is need to end the folly of privatizing state functions on a large scale and to rebuild the public institutions and services that were dismantled in recent years. It is sensible because the rebuilding of public institutions will enable ordinary people to acquire goods and services at cheaper prices since the state usually offer subsidies. Motivated mainly by the need to cut fiscal deficits, the 1980s saw the emergence of a strong privatization agenda as part of the

'Washington Consensus' and this promoted an increased role for the private sector in the delivery of services, and the opening of markets to competition (Estache et al., 2010). However form or efficiency, Sikrweqe (2013) suggests that the RDP as an integrated framework has the propensity to succeed in reducing poverty in municipalities, as compared to policy frameworks that are often administered by national and provincial spheres of Government.

Agriculture is undoubtedly one of the ways to combat poverty. As noted by Wiggins (as cited in Handley, 2009) poor people are disproportionately concentrated in rural areas, it therefore goes without saying that agricultural growth and rural development are key to growth and poverty reduction. Ogunleye (2010) points out that rural development is persistently erroneously perceived as achieving higher agricultural output hence the Government of Chief Olusegun Obasanjo at inception in 1999 set up Agricultural Development Projects (ADPs). Agricultural growth can also have a strong impact on food prices and as the poor usually spend a high proportion of their incomes on staple foods, productivity increases which result in declines in food prices, thus benefiting the poor.

Nick (2008) notes that, farmers will benefit if entry and exit barriers are low, if they can purchase inputs at fair prices, and if they are able to sell their output on fair terms. Additionally, they need a level playing field. An appropriate competition policy will include measures to address all of these concerns. Care (2001) notes that some of the poverty reduction strategies identified were getting financial support from their children monthly, using shrubs and dung for fuel, taking shrubs from the government forests for firewood, share-cropping is an essential strategy for poor households. Those who sharecrop with them are mainly those households who do not have fields, and those with animals for draught power (Care, 2001). This study also unearthed that those poor households who do not have the means for ploughing also rent out their fields in part or whole as a form of payment.

Social protection is yet another poverty reduction strategy for many people across the globe. Social protection can be best understood as policies and programmes which aim to help poor and vulnerable people manage risk and overcome deprivation, through direct cash or in-kind transfers, Marcus (as cited in Handley, 2009). The examples given by Marcus include cash transfers (for example, pensions, disability grants, child benefits, social assistance), input

distribution programmes (for example, agricultural implements), employment guarantee programmes, subsidized access to services (for example, health insurance subsidies and user fee exemptions), nutritional supplements and school feeding programmes.

In addition, Marcus points out that social protection programmes can reduce people's vulnerability to the shocks and stresses that might otherwise push them further into poverty. They can also help poor people build assets, promote and protect the capacities and well-being of people who are currently poor, help challenge and transform inequitable social relationships that keep people in poverty and contribute to reducing inequality (Marcus, as cited in Handley, 2009). The GOL (2012) suggests a systematic land regularization and registration which entails fast-track land regularization and registration programme whereby leases issued to informal or unplanned urban sites owners to enable them to own land as an economic asset. Agricultural production is an important route out of poverty for growing numbers of rural people, particularly for today's youth.

Infrastructural development is a poverty reduction strategy that reduces poverty in a considerable way. Handley (2009) highlights that developing and maintaining infrastructure is vital for the provision of energy, water, sanitation, transportation and communications. This is a crucial component of economic development. Ogunleye (2010) explains that investment in infrastructure that directly enhances productive capacities such as water supply, irrigation schemes, prevention of erosion can have a high economic return through increased agricultural output. Roads and other infrastructures should be extended to geographically remote areas. Ogunleye further notes that special attention should be given to the needs of the marginalized, disadvantages and vulnerable segments of the population including women towards their empowerment and self-sufficiency, formation of social development departments to disburse social grants for instance old, pensions, grants for child support, disability and unemployment grants among others.

In addition, political reforms can also enhance poverty reduction. Ogunleye (2010) suggests for political reforms that can make Government accountable to the people and also pave way for confidence in the polity so as to attract investment from abroad. Anti-corruption measures-both political and bureaucratic corruption are key barriers to economic development and poverty reduction (Rock and Bonnet, as cited in Handley, 2009). Where

such programmes have been adopted, they have had success. Handley adds that African anti-corruption commissions are notoriously weak; they are undermined by political manipulation that takes a number of forms, including by the Government appointing commissioners, underfunding, and refusing to prosecute well-connected individuals.

Other reforms that can be effective as far as poverty reduction is concerned are tax and aid reforms. Ogunleye (2010) recommends that national tax systems should be made moderately progressive so that the rich pay more, generating additional funds for poverty reduction and basic social services. With regard to aid and aid delivery reform (Lawson et al, as cited in Handley, 2009) affirms that while aid used to be helpful to the poor, there are challenges surrounding it such as difficulties in ensuring sustainability; and it is open to corruption, highly unpredictable funding levels and these concerns led to a new focus on working as far as possible through Governments and normal budgetary processes, with the adoption of new aid modalities. This can also reduce income inequality. Anríquez and Stamoulis (2007) expounds that mobility out of poverty is associated with personal initiative and enterprise and it is highly correlated with household characteristics such as education and ownership of physical assets, and it is also dependent on good health. Anríquez and Stamoulis continue to stress that beyond household-level factors, economic growth, and local availability of opportunities, markets, infrastructure and enabling institutions including good governance are all important.

Nick (2008) notes that poor people seem to interact with the economy in a number of ways, for example bid-rigging for Government provided infrastructure and services which appears to be common, but it diminishes what Governments are able to provide for their people from any given allocation for example four new schools instead of five. One can add that in most cases those who get tenders usually inflate the charges hence less will be accomplished by the allocated funds. Therefore, Governments must take responsibility for helping markets to function effectively for the poor, so that they enable choice, encourage innovation and provide goods and services to consumers at the lowest possible prices (Nick, 2008).

### **3.5 Unemployment**

The section will cover the meaning of unemployment, and unemployment research globally, in Africa and in Lesotho. It will also dwell on the challenges faced by the unemployed.

### **3.5.1 Meaning of unemployment**

The ILO (2016) affirms that a person is unemployed if the person is not working, currently available for work and seeking work. Byrne and Strobl (2001) assert that specifically, non-employed working age persons are considered to be unemployed not only if they are currently actively seeking jobs, but also if they are willing and able to work and are currently not seeking, but have looked for work sometime in the last three months prior to the interview - a group which is referred to as the marginally attached. Using layman's terminology, unemployment refers to a situation whereby one is not having a job or is not working.

### **3.5.2 Unemployment research globally, in Africa and in Lesotho**

South Africa is also grappling with poverty and unemployment social problems. The ILO, (2007) observes that unemployment in South Africa was nominally 9.8% in 2006 and the number of unemployed had risen by 35.3% in the previous ten years,(p. 2). However in reality because of the size of the agricultural and informal economies, significant numbers of unemployed and under-employed people are never counted. At the same time the national unemployment rate fell from 6.0 to 5.5% (Cadena and Sallee, 2005). Globally, the Mid-west was the only region that indicated a statistically significant increase in poverty. Cadena and Sallee analysed the unusual increase in the poverty rate in the midst of increased employment. The findings of the study revealed that in the Midwest employment fell significantly in higher wage sectors including manufacturing, education, and health while employment increased in low wage sectors such as leisure and hospitality between the 2003 and 2004. The researchers concluded that the increase in the poverty rate could be attributed to greater increase in low paying jobs. In addition, during a relatively strong labour market in 2005, high school drop-outs experienced 5.5% unemployment while the rate of unemployment for high school and college graduates is 4.2% and 2.2% respectively (US Bureau of Census, 2005).

Kahraman (2011) points out that as for the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries, unemployment duration has decreased from 1993–2000. The ILO (2004) argued that this measure is more relevant for advanced countries because youth in developing countries cannot afford to be unemployed for longer periods. It should be noted that in other countries generalizations like that may not be applicable. In giving possible reasons as to why youth in developing countries cannot afford to stay long being unemployed, it can be said that it is because of the levels of poverty within their families.

Their parents will not have saved money for them to use upon completion of their studies, unlike their Western counterparts. Their parents will not be catering for them only but for the extended family as well hence their needs will not be met. Ultimately, the need for them to seek employment will be heightened.

### **3.5.3 Challenges faced by the unemployed**

There are various challenges that confront the unemployed. Using national panel data from the 1990s in the United States, McMarry and Schoeni (2001) found that 44% of the difference in the economic status between widows (widowers) and married elderly was due to differences in the economic status that existed between the two groups and the rest of the difference 56% in the economic status was attributed to the loss of income and expenses associated with the death of the spouse. Grable (2007) also noticed that the individuals' large expenses for divorce processing led to fewer financial resources available for the divorced individuals. This is usually true for high-income and wealthy households because as for the poor households, they usually do not involve the lawyers when cancelling their marriages.

Auchoybur, (2013) underscores that unemployment rates differ significantly between men and women in Mauritius. In this study multilevel modelling of unemployment rates has also revealed that men unemployment rates vary more by region compared to unemployment rates for women. Studies have found that unemployment, if prolonged, may have negative consequences for a person's working life in terms of lower wages and/or longer spells of unemployment Fares and Tiongson (as cited in Kahraman, (2011). The authors used the term "scarring" to explain this phenomenon. The authors showed that for youth in Bosnia, for example, jobless spells take a higher toll on youth with more education (Fares and Tiongson, 2007). Rantšo (2015) states that lack of jobs or unemployment perpetuates poverty and results in low living standards in many countries. Research indicates that, in recessions, male job loss triggers increased incidence of domestic violence. This study will fill in the gap of shortage of literature on challenges faced by the unemployed people in Lesotho.

### **3.6 Government**

Firstly, the meaning of the term Government will be explored. Thereafter, the role of Government will be outlined.

### **3.6.1 Meaning of Government**

The term Government is one of the multifarious concepts just like empowerment and poverty. Dziobek et al (2013) first highlights that the lack of a precise definition of government in programs could potentially lead to situations where doubt arises as to whether a given target was met, and makes even-handed treatment of members under IMF-supported programs more difficult. Dziobek et al defines Government in terms of the general budget; state and local Governments and lastly in terms of the entire public sector. Keman (n.d.) refers to Government as the institutionalized process through which the public order is maintained and collective action is organized so as to enhance the welfare of the society. Finer (as cited in Keman, n.d.) asserts that the Government is a body of people charged with the duty of governing, adding that it is the method of ruling a particular society.

### **3.6.2 The role of Government**

In summary, the functions of Government according to Keman (n.d.) are managing the state, regulating public affairs, decision making and policy implementation, exerting leadership which are considered as essential to the role of Government as a life sustainable system. Most Governments play a central role in various aspects of people's lives. Increasingly, the role of social protection in development is recognized by donors and African Governments as key to poverty alleviation and economic growth (Handley, 2009). IFAD (2010) notes that, "the role of Government actors in creating an improved environment for the rural non-farm economy is important," (p. 9). In addition, IFAD explains that participation in the rural non-farm economy both wage employment and non-farm self-employment is an increasingly important element of the risk management strategies of large numbers of rural households.

Handley (2009) contends that while there is debate over the precise extent to which Governments should be intervening in the economy, it is accepted that they have a role to play in establishing and maintaining conditions conducive to economic growth. This involves appropriate Government involvement in enterprise regulation (including anti-corruption measures and corporate governance), taxation policy (to ensure progressive tax policies that place a greater tax burden on the rich than the poor), and financial services and insurance to ensure that the poor can access the financial services necessary to invest in enterprises and insurance to protect them from risk (Handley, 2009). It can be added that this will boost the

economy as well as attracting both local and foreign investors thereby creating jobs for the unemployed people.

### **3.7 Non-Governmental Organizations**

This section will dwell on the meaning of Non-Governmental Organizations, characteristics of NGOs and the role of NGOs.

#### **3.7.1 Meaning of Non-Governmental Organizations**

Definitions of the term Non-Governmental Organizations abound. The major reason for the plethora of definitions is what has been put forward by Salamon and Anheier (as cited in Lewis and Kanji, 2009) who have famously argued that most definitions have been either legal “(focusing the type of formal registration and status of organizations in different country contexts), economic (in terms of the source of the organization’s resources) or functional (based on the type of activities it undertakes)” (p. 10). NGOs are groups of individuals organized for the myriad of reasons that engage human imagination Charnovitz (cited in Lewis and Kanji, 2009). Lewis and Kanji (2009) affirms that the term NGO refers to an agency that is primarily engaged in work relating to the areas of development or humanitarian work at local, national and international level. It can be disputed that not all NGOs deal with international issues since some only have the capacity to serve a portion within its own country. A valuable and succinct definition is that provided by Vakil (as cited in Lewis and Kanji, 2009, p. 11) who asserts that NGOs are “self-governing, private, not-for-profit organizations that are geared to improving the quality of life for disadvantaged people.”

#### **3.7.2 Characteristics of NGOs**

Lewis and Kanji (2011) highlights the following five key characteristics of NGOs: it is formal, that is, the organization is institutionalized in that it has regular meetings, office bearers and some organizational permanence; it is private in that it is institutionally separate from Government, though it may receive some support from Government; it is non-profit distributing, and if a financial surplus is generated it does not accrue to owners or directors (often termed the ‘non-distribution constraint’); it is self-governing and therefore able to control and manage its own affairs; and finally it is voluntary, and even if it does not use volunteer staff as such, there is at least some degree of voluntary participation in the conduct or management of the organization, such as in the form of a voluntary board of governors.

### **3.7.3 The role of NGOs**

There are various types of work that NGOs perform for the betterment of people's lives. The question of what NGOs do can be summarized in terms of three main sets of activities that they undertake, and these can be defined as three roles: implementers, catalysts and partners (Lewis, 2007). To note however is that some NGOs do not focus on one area since their mandate is determined by their vision, donors and situation on the ground or people's pressing needs.

Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) are typically known for their fundamental role in poverty reduction and the promotion of gender equality in rural communities. Lewis and Kanji (2011) state that, NGOs play the implementer role which is concerned with the mobilization of resources to provide goods and services to people who need them, (p. 10). The service delivery role embodies a very wide range of activities carried out by NGOs in fields as diverse as health care, micro-finance, agricultural extension, emergency relief and human rights. A study conducted by Suharko (2007) in Indonesia revealed that the Bina Swadaya NGO fights poverty through service provision and it achieves this in two ways. The first one entails the empowerment of the community by developing human resource, local areas and agriculture, and increasing community health including sanitation and environment. In addition, the NGO has developed 5 bank institutions and 13 non-bank institutions thereby building a connection between the poor and the financial institutions that provide credit for micro businesses (Suharko, 2007). That research looked at how the economic empowerment process was taking place. On the other hand, this study attempts to answer the how question as well as the to what extent question.

Apart from that, Suharko (2007) observed that in India NGOs are also involved in a number of activities. Generally, NGOs are active in economic activities aimed at low-income groups, for example income generation, appropriate technology, agriculture, and micro-credit in addition to activities in social sectors especially in the issues of health, education and environment Sato (as cited in Suharko,2007). It can be seen that although Suharko's study answered the question on the impact of economic empowerment, it did not put emphasis on gender issues. The same applies with Tesfay and Tadele (2013), who also focused on challenges faced by women and unearthed that most women in developing countries do not have access to education, productive resources and other services. This study will go further

and add gender equality issues. This is crucial because this study holds that failure to incorporate both women and men will create gender inequalities in future since the left out gender will ultimately be disadvantaged with time. Again, it is likely to create antagonism between the two genders if only one gender is chosen to be the recipients of funds or resources to run developmental projects in that community.

The study by Abdullahi and Maiunguwa (2014) in the Katsina rural communities of Nigeria focused on gender parity and household poverty and it sought to show that empowerment is the way to go. That study used descriptive and correlational research designs to compare the income level, the educational level and occupational status of both males and females among household members in the study area. What emerged was that most of females are in home-based occupations and/or odd jobs, and the proportion of males employed in the public and private sector is more than double the proportion of employed females. The study also revealed that 34.9% of males had some level of education, and only 18.0% females, and the study recommended for the empowerment of both females and males in order to augment the family economic strength. Naher (2005) examined the relationships between gender, religion and development in rural Bangladesh and the study was prompted by a series of attacks on NGOs by 'fundamentalist' forces in the country in the early 1990s. Using Jiri as the research site, Naher employed an ethnographic research design, using participant observation, group discussion, unstructured and semi-structured interviews as her data collection tools.

Suharko (2007) first underscores that the purpose of the study was to describe and to analyse the roles of NGOs in alleviating poverty in rural areas in two developing countries which are Indonesia and India. Suharko clarifies that in these two countries, since their independence, NGOs have important contributions in increasing the welfare of the poor people were facing a variety of challenges. Many NGOs have various activities to empower the poor people. In helping the poor to climb out of poverty, NGOs use two approaches: supply-side and demand-side (Clark, 2005). In a similar sense, Fowler in Suharko (2007) identifies two types of NGO tasks: micro-tasks and macro-tasks. Fowler expounds that unlike the supply-side approach where NGOs directly provide services to the people, the demand-side NGOs play indirect roles. One can add that the demand-side role of NGOs can be seen as being an articulator of the people's voice.

Furthermore, Suharko (2007) states that NGOs mobilize and clarify the demand for services, from both the Government and the market, so that the people are able to achieve its development goals. The catalyst role cited by Lewis and Kanji (2011) can therefore be defined as an NGO's ability to inspire, facilitate or contribute to improved thinking and action to promote change and may be directed towards individuals or groups in local communities, or among other actors in development such as Government, business or donors. Such NGOs assist citizens in finding out about activities of the Government and others which might affect them; they use advocacy and political influence to hold local officials accountable for activities (or inactivity) which are damaging to the poor; they help communities mobilize and form societies to express their concerns, and help guard against reprisals; they construct fora in which officials can consult people about development plans and listen to alternatives presented by the people; and they help ensure that individuals disadvantaged by Government decisions receive just compensation, negotiates with affected parties," Clark (as cited in Suharko, 2007). It may include grassroots organizing and group formation, gender and empowerment work, lobbying and advocacy work, undertaking and disseminating research, and attempts to influence wider policy processes through innovation and policy entrepreneurship (Lewis and Kanji, 2011).

The role played by NGOs in entrepreneurial development of the young people is also observed elsewhere in Africa. In Swaziland, an NGO called Techno-Serve Swaziland assists the youth with skills training programmes, establishment of networks and capital, while another one called Junior Achievement Swaziland provides capacity building programmes on entrepreneurship and financial literacy to potential entrepreneurs in different high schools (Brixiovà, Ncube and Bicaba, as cited in Rantšo, 2015). NGOs also engage in policy advocacy to influence public policies concerning the poor people. In line with this approach, NGOs have developed various strategies to influence the process of public policy making and to control the implementation of development programs or projects and this is also an area into which NGOs have been moving during the 1990s when they revised and re-strategized to move away from direct service delivery and prioritized policy advocacy and lobbying (Hulme 2001). In the light of democratization process, the majority of new NGOs are usually engaged in specific issue and policy advocacy, such as the issues of good governance, electoral system reform, development watch, civil and political rights, civil

society, and other specific issues (Suharko, 2007). Some NGOs deal with more than one area for instance development of human capital through sponsoring the educational needs of orphans as well as fighting poverty through the provision of farming implements to poor families.

Lewis and Kanji (2011) explains that the role of partner reflects the growing trend for NGOs to work with Government, donors and the private sector on joint activities, such as providing specific inputs within a broader multi-agency programme or project. It also includes activities that take place among NGOs and with communities such as capacity-building work which seeks to develop and strengthen capabilities. The commonly used policy rhetoric of partnership poses an important challenge for NGOs to build mutually beneficial relationships that are effective, responsive and non-dependent. Suharko (2007) adds that the Indonesian NGOs have been involved in development activities since the colonial period. They generally used a bottom-up approach and stressed on participatory mechanisms. It is estimated that there are around twenty thousand NGOs throughout Indonesia concerned with community development and empowerment, advocacy, and litigation (Smeru, 2000).

For rural NGOs to be successful, they must attract employees who are relatively more empowered than their clients. These employees must have credibility with their marginalized clients to alter their ways of thinking on many long-standing traditional issues, such as dowries, child labour, and patriarchal subjugation (Handy and Kassam,2006).Most NGOs are also active in economic activities aimed at low-income groups, such as income generation, appropriate technology, agriculture, and micro-credit besides activities in social sectors especially in the issues of health, education and environment Sato (as cited in Suharko,2007). On this, it all depends on the mission and vision of the NGO. Apart from that, it depends on the financial strength of the organization.

While being very specific on the role of NGOs, Suharko (2007) cites that Bina Swadaya provides services to the people through two main activities: the first is to provide services in order to empower the community. Suharko adds that Bina Swadaya has engaged in developing human resource, local areas and agriculture, and increasing community health including sanitation and environment. Suharko explains that Bina Swadaya support these activities by establishing education and training centres, research centres, and consultancy

institutions. The second main activity is the development of micro-finance to increase the access of the poor to capital (Suharko, 2007). Bina Swadaya has developed bank institutions (5 rural banks), or in Indonesian acronym, Bank Perkreditan Rakyat and non-bank institutions (13 branch offices for serving micro-finance) to support this activity (Suharko, 2007).

In India, NGOs or voluntary agencies have a history of involvement in a wide range of social welfare and development work. In regard to the type of activities, almost all NGOs are engaged in education and campaign activities, with one-third involved in advocacy activities. Gram Vikas has been working in the State of Orissa since January 1979 (Suharko, 2007). From the beginning, the aim of Gram Vikas is to support the people to help themselves and most NGOs are also active in economic activities aimed at low-income groups, such as income generation, appropriate technology, agriculture, and micro-credit besides activities in social sectors especially in the issues of health, education and environment Sato (as cited in Suharko, 2007).

### **3.8 Rural communities**

There seems to be no consensus on national distinctions between urban and rural since the parameters used are subjective. The UN (1998) clarifies that the most common definition of the borderline is 5 000 persons, as in India; often it is 2 500 persons or fewer, as in Mexico, or 10 000 or more, as in Nigeria. Other countries, including Brazil and China, do not specify a population size but use various characteristics, from typical metropolitan facilities to legal or political status. Anríquez and Stamoulis (2007) clarifies what constitutes rural communities stating that a natural definition of rurality is to define it by exclusion, as that which is not urban, where urban is defined on the basis of population agglomerations. According to Anríquez and Stamoulis (2007) the first methodology is to use a geopolitical definition where urban is defined by law as all of the state, region, and district capitals and by exclusion all the rest is defined as rural. The other popular methodology proposed again by Anríquez and Stamoulis is to use observed population agglomeration to define urban. In this case populations that live within an area where contiguous households form populations larger than, say 2 000 inhabitants are considered urban, while by exclusion the rest is defined as rural.

### **3.8.1 Manonyane rural community**

Manonyane rural community council is found in Lesotho. It is situated 33km South East of Maseru city the capital city of Lesotho. It is within Maseru district. It is under the Manonyane community council administration. Its population is 22 491, basing on the 2006 census. It covers the Maama constituency. There is one Member of Parliament representing this community. There are 56 villages in this rural council. There are 14 councillors of which 9 are elected and 5 are nominated. Of the nominated ones, 2 belong to representatives of chiefs and 3 seats are reserved for women. It should be commended that the reserved seats for women is a move to ensure gender equality.

## **3.9 Theoretical framework**

The theoretical framework is the gender and development approach. Before elaborating on this approach, this section will first dwell on the approaches which came before the gender and development approach.

### **3.9.1 The gender and development approach**

The theoretical framework underpinning this study is the gender and development approach, henceforth the GAD. The study was aligned with the GAD perspective because the issues that were investigated were intertwined around empowerment and gender equality. Theoretical frameworks on gender and development are fundamental because they define problems and also propose different solutions. The GAD perspective has some predecessors. Various feminists and development theorists have been sceptical about the Women in Development (WID) and the Women and Development (WAD) approaches, highlighting that both of them were not removing gender inequalities. Parpart, Connelly, and Barriteau (2008) note that around the 1980s, these scholars turned to the GAD which is also referred to as the empowerment approach. Thus, the GAD replaced the WID and WAD. Unlike WID, the GAD approach is not concerned specifically with women, but with the way in which a society assigns roles, responsibilities and expectations to both women and men (Parpart et al, 2008).

Lind and Brzuzy (2008) highlight that "...in 1995 the GAD approach was institutionalized with the aim to bring about gender equality through challenging transforming power between women and men for socio-economic purposes," (p. 222). It holds that gender should be mainstreamed in every policy at all levels of Government taking into account the different

needs of women and men in the design and implementation of all state policies (Lind and Brzuzy, 2008). This approach is essential and it informed this study by channelling it to focus on both women and men, since poverty is a very multifaceted social problem with countless roots. The study investigated the enrolment and participation procedures employed by implementers of economic empowerment programmes. Participation can also be in developmental projects being implemented by either the Government or NGOs in the rural communities.

The notion of the GAD proposes for the emancipation of women and that the state has power to play a role in this regard. This perspective influenced the topic formulation, and to include the Government and unemployed adults since it is the duty of the state to avail jobs and other economic empowerment programmes. The GAD aided the researcher to understand the importance of investigating the poverty and gender challenges of both men and women. Thus, the inclusion of both males and females in this study was influenced by the GAD. Researchers, such as Mahdavi and Saburi (cited in Abdullahi and Maiunguwa, 2014) confirm that empowering both males and females makes the structure of the family in the household more democratic. While this study was aligned to the GAD approach, Lyonos, Smuts, and Stephens (2001) used the Solomon theory in linking participation, empowerment, and sustainability in urban studies.

The GAD approach embraces both women and men aboard the development ship. It is of paramount importance because failure to cater for both genders is a recipe for a vicious cycle of poverty in future. The study also looked at how the NGOs are incorporating women and men in their economic empowerment projects. This was prompted by the Lesotho Gender and Development Policy of 2003 which spells out that the mission of the policy is the advancement of gender equity and equality through capacity building, socio-economic and political empowerment as well as networking with Governmental and civil society groups, (GOL, 2003). All this is worthwhile since poverty remains a stark reality to more than 2.5 billion people around the world who live on 2 dollars a day or less (Watkins, 2005). When poverty reduction initiatives are targeted on the rural communities, it will contribute to the lowering of the number of poor people globally as well as uplifting the wellbeing of both male and female headed households in the rural communities. The fight against poverty and unemployment needs to be carried out with gender equality in mind so that it will not be an

issue of solving one problem and creating another one in the process. This explains why the World Bank (2005) emphasizes the full and equal participation of women and men, girls and boys. Hence, an investigation of the impact of economic empowerment of men and women is essential so as to identify the strengths and loopholes for the purpose of improving future economic empowerment programmes.

It is worth noting that the approach was useful throughout the study as a lens to shed more light on the different sections of the data analysis. It determined the units of analysis in the sense the study had to factor in the economic empowerment of both men and women. During questionnaire construction, the approach was useful by guiding the researcher to assess how gender equality was ensured in the process of economic empowerment. This approach brought insight into the data analysis process as well as the recommendations.

### **3.10 Conclusion**

The review of literature unearthed that the empowerment of women availed economic opportunities for women which led to better outcomes for families, societies and outcomes. A growing research trend has focused on income-generating activities of girls and women as a means of empowerment. Agriculture is undoubtedly one of the ways to combat poverty. However, agricultural production has been falling since 1970s despite the fact that 80 percent of the whole population depend on it and this has resulted in chronic food insecurity as a major problem facing poor households in Lesotho. Social protection is yet another poverty reduction strategy for many people across the globe. The other poverty reduction strategies include political reforms which enhances poverty reduction and also curbing corruption. The review of literature highlighted that most of the empowerment literature paid attention to women only. The studies above did not try to answer the question on the impact of economic programmes implemented by Government and NGOs. This chapter also expounded on the GAD, the theoretical framework of the research. This study will look at the empowerment of both men and women as epitomized by the GAD approach. This study anticipates contributing to literature on the economic empowerment of unemployed people for poverty reduction and gender equality.



## **CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter entails where and how the study was conducted. Firstly, it will show the research design adopted by the study. Thereafter, it will show the study site, study population, sample size and sampling procedure. It will indicate the data collection and data analysis techniques utilized by the study. In the methods of data selection section, an explanation was made on how the questionnaire was structured. Lastly, it will expound on the ethical considerations made in this study.

### **4.2 Research design**

The study adopted a quantitative approach for the unemployed adults. Quantitative research is that which uses numerical analysis, reducing the data into numbers (Andersen and Taylor, 2011). This approach enabled the evaluation of the economic empowerment impact through the use of questionnaires that elicited quantitative data from the unemployed adults. This quantitative approach also influenced the size of the sample because for one to evaluate the impact of economic empowerment programmes, the sample size has to be significantly large. Triangulation was employed since there were 120 unemployed adults (quantitative approach) and 12 Government and NGOs officials (qualitative). The last question of the questionnaire was also qualitative. Qualitative approach was used to provide a basis for the issues under investigation). In addition, the other benefits of a qualitative approach are that it enabled the researcher to get the comments and poverty reduction solutions prescribed by the participants. All this influenced the recommendations made to the Government and NGOs on how they can fight poverty.

### **4.3 The study site**

The study site was the Manonyane rural community. It is located in the central part of Maseru district. Maseru district is in the far Western portion of Lesotho. Manonyane community is made up of 56 villages. Its population is 22 491, basing on the 2006 census. It is under the Manonyane community council administration. Since poverty in Lesotho has a rural face, it was imperative to choose a rural community as the study site.

## **4.4 Sampling**

The section on sampling is composed of the study population, study sample, sample selection procedure, methods of data collection which are a questionnaire and an interview schedule. The section also entails data analysis techniques and ethical considerations.

### **4.4 .1 Study population**

According to Babbie (2007) a study population refers to “that aggregation of elements from which a sample is actually selected,” (p. 190). This implies that a study population is larger than a sample, Burchinal (2008) clarifies that all eligible people for the study constitute the population being studied. Andersen and Taylor, (2011) adds that ‘population is a relatively large collection of people (or groups or categories) that a researcher studies and about which generalizations are made (p, 62). Thus, for this study, the population was composed of the unemployed adults in Manonyane community who were between 21 and 64 years old. These unemployed adults were eligible for selection into the study sample and that is the group the researcher was interested in generalizing about. The significance of the 21 to 64 years age span cannot be overstated because this is the time when job-seekers have completed tertiary level and are also still employable since Lesotho pegged the retirement age at 65 years.

### **4.4 .2 Study sample**

Andersen and Taylor, (2011) define a sample as any subset of people (or groups or categories) of a population. Simply put, a sample is a component of a study population. For this study, the sample was made up of 120 unemployed adults in Manonyane community who are between 21 and 64 years old. The size of the sample had to be large for the evaluation of the impact to be authentic since a small sample size cannot yield a reliable evaluation. It also included six Government officials and six NGO officials as informants.

### **4.4.3 Sample selection procedure**

The 12 villages were selected using simple random sampling. All the 56 villages were first assigned numbers and then only 12 villages were picked, randomly. As for the unemployed adults, the research employed two non-probability sampling methods which are quota sampling and snowball sampling. Burchinal (2008) elucidates that quota sampling is when a certain number of persons is selected to represent subgroups that make up the population. With the quota sampling, the researcher identifies various strata of the population

(Rakotsoane, 2012). In this instance, the strata for the quota sampling were villages and gender. The researcher tried to ensure that all the villages and both genders are proportionately represented within the sample. This was of paramount importance so as to avoid any bias.

Thus, three methods of sampling were employed in this study. This was because each of them served a different function. Quota sampling was used to select 12 out of the 56 villages to ensure the generalizability of findings in Manonyane rural community. Snowball sampling was utilized to identify the unemployed adults. It was appropriate since the researcher was not having a list of the unemployed people. It is the unemployed adults themselves who directed the researcher to the next element and so forth until the target was reached. Capacity was ensured through the use of a research assistant who was more conversant with Sesotho language during the face to face interviews. Some of the officials' interviews were held in person, some of them through telephone and Skype to save money and time.

#### **4.5 Methods of data collection**

This study made use of two research instruments to collect both quantitative and qualitative data. A total of 120 questionnaires were used to collect mostly quantitative data from the unemployed adults. Two interview guides were utilized to collect qualitative data from six Government officials and six NGOs officials.

##### **4.5.1 Questionnaire**

In this study, survey questionnaires were used to collect primary data from the unemployed adults. These questionnaires answered all the three research questions. The interviews with the Government and NGO officials answered the first two research questions. The questionnaire for the unemployed adults had sections on biographic details, economic empowerment data, how gender equality was factored in the programmes, the impact of economic empowerment on poverty reduction, challenges faced by the unemployed adults, perceptions on poverty, how they were surviving poverty and lastly their proposed solutions to combat poverty. All questions were close-ended ones with the exception of the last one which was open-ended where the unemployed adults were supposed to make any other comments in line with poverty solutions.

#### **4.5.2 Interview schedule**

Two interview schedules were used to collect data from six Government officials and six NGOs officials. Brief interviews were held with the 12 officials. These Ministries were purposively identified. Interview schedules were used to collect data from both Government and NGOs officials. One official per Ministry was asked questions on the nature of economic empowerment programmes implemented in Manonyane between 2010 and 2015 and how gender equality was ensured, among others. The above was also done with the six NGOs officials. The same questions were asked which were also used to answer the first and the second research questions. The targeted NGOs were those dealing with poverty reduction in Maseru district. The Government Ministries and NGOs were informants, providing information on the economic empowerment programmes or poverty reduction interventions. The study aimed to evaluate the impact of these interventions on the lives of unemployed adults. Policy documents were also used to ascertain the pronouncements on economic empowerment programmes in place in the six Ministries.

#### **4.6 Data analysis techniques**

Quantitative data was analysed using Microsoft Excel 2007 program. The units of analysis were the 120 unemployed adults. Units of analysis may consist of individuals, groups, organizations, geographical places, or other entities (Burchinal, 2008). Qualitative data was organized into information by sorting it into emerging themes. This manner of sorting data is called coding, (Babbie and Mouton, 2001). To ensure reliability of the coding, the researcher asked a research assistant to code the same data and observed similar categories. Descriptive statistics were also utilised to present the demographic details of the unemployed adults.

#### **4.7 Ethical considerations**

Ethical clearance was sought and was granted by the University of KwaZulu-Natal's Humanities and Social Sciences committee on 22 January 2016. The ethical clearance number is HSS/0067/016M.

This study embraced several ethical considerations which include anonymity and confidentiality. According to Babbie (2010) anonymity is achieved in research when neither the researcher nor readers of the findings can identify a given response with a given respondent while confidentiality is guaranteed when the researcher can identify a given

person`s responses but promises not to do so publicly. In addition, research participants were asked to give their informed consent through signing before any responses were solicited from them.

#### **4.8 Conclusion**

The chapter clarified where and how the study was conducted. It commenced with an outline of the research design adopted by the study. Thereafter, it described the study site in detail. Then the study population, sample and sampling procedure were explained. Lastly, it indicated the data collection and data analysis techniques that the study employed. Lastly, the ethical considerations made were clarified.

## **CHAPTER 5: PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS**

### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents findings entailing the impact of Government and Non-Governmental Organizations' economic empowerment programmes to unemployed adults with respect to poverty reduction and gender equality. The chapter will be divided into five sections. Biographic and socio-economic characteristics of the respondents will be presented in two tables in the first section. This will be followed by the economic empowerment section where data about skills possessed by the respondents will be tabled as well as what the Government and the NGOs have done for unemployed adults in Manonyane since 2010. Other sections will be gender equality, unemployment challenges and poverty. The last section will present data collected from six Government and six NGO officials. Data was collected from 120 unemployed males and females in Manonyane rural community. In this study Microsoft Excel 2007 program was used to quantify data generated from the questionnaires. It enabled the researcher to determine frequencies in various responses to the questions. The results were then used to draw tables and graphs. The analysis of the data collected from unemployed adults was largely descriptive. Qualitative data was organized into information by sorting it into emerging themes.

### **5.2 Biographic and socio-economic details**

This section covers the profile of the respondents. It is composed of two tables which illustrate the biographic and socio-economic details of the 120 unemployed adults.

#### **5.2.1 Biographic details**

This section entails the univariate analysis of the biographic and socio-economic details of the respondents. These details include gender, mean age, marital status, educational status and family size, among others. The biographic and socio-economic characteristics of the respondents are shown in Table 1 below. With the exception of age, for each variable, the responses are presented in the form of the specific number of respondents (frequency) and as a percentage of the total number of respondents, (percentage).

**Table 1: Biographic details**

Variable	Attributes	Frequency	%	Age in years
Gender	Male	68	57	-
	Female	52	43	-
Age	Mean	-	-	33
Marital status	Single	57	47.50	-
	Married	44	36.67	-
	Widowed	12	10	-
	Divorced	7	5.83	-
	Other	0	0	-
Whether spouse is employed	Yes	16	37	-
	No	28	63.64	-
Whether a household head	Yes	58	48	-
	No	62	52	-

From Table 1 above, it can be observed that out of a total of 120 respondents, 68 (57%) of them were males and 52 (43%) were females. The mean age was found to be 33 years. The majority of them 57 (47.50%) were single, 44 (36.67%) were married, 12 (10%) were widowed and only 7 (5.83%) were divorced. Of the 44 married adults, 16 (37%) had spouses who were employed while 28 (63.64%) had unemployed spouses. Most of the respondents 62 (52%) were not household heads with 58 (48%) of them heading households.

### 5. 2.2 Socio-economic details

This section provides the univariate analysis of the socio-economic details of the respondents. It entails their educational statuses, family size, household average monthly, accommodation type, were employed before and their unemployment period. Table 2 on the next page presents the six socio-economic characteristics of the 120 respondents.

**Table 2: Socio-economic details**

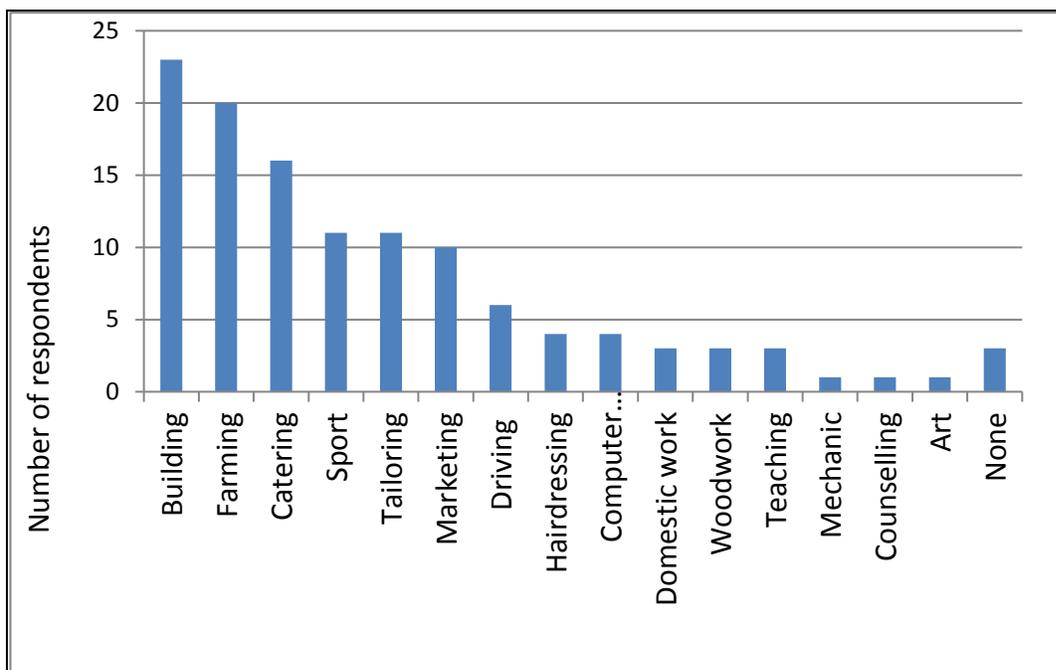
<b>Variable</b>	<b>Attributes</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Amount in Maloti</b>
Educational status	Primary	29	24.17	-
	Some high school	39	32.50	-
	Secondary complete	26	21.67	-
	Tertiary	25	20.83	-
	Never attended	1	0.83	-
Family size	Mean	5	-	-
Household monthly income	Mean	-	-	M1 575-00
Accommodation type	Own house	28	23	-
	Parent's house	66	55	-
	Renting	23	19	-
	Other	3	3	-
Whether employed before	Yes	74	61.67	-
	No	46	38.33	-
Unemployment period	Mean	5 years	-	-

In Table 2 above, the educational statuses of the respondents are displayed. The majority, 39 (32.50%) had gone up to high school level, while 29 (24.17%) had only primary level, with 26 (21.67%) having completed secondary level and 25 (20.83%) went as far as tertiary level. Only 1 (0.83%) had never attended school. The average family size for this sample was 5 people and each household average monthly income was M1 575-00, which is equivalent to (USD106.92). As for type of accommodation, most of them 66 (55%) stayed with their parents, 28 (23%) had their own houses, 23 (19%) were renting and only 3 (3%) were staying in other types of accommodation. More of the respondents 74 (61.67%) were employed before and 46 (38.33%) were never employed before. They have been unemployed for

an average period of 5 years. Even though these adults were unemployed, they possessed a diversity of crucial skills as shown in Figure 1 under the economic empowerment section.

### 5.3 Economic empowerment

The economic empowerment section is composed of the skills possessed by the unemployed adults. Regarding the impact of economic empowerment, respondents were asked questions on whether or not the Government paid for their education, whether they were enrolled in a project by either the Government or NGO, the extent of benefiting from the projects and whether the project is still running. Apart from that, unemployed adults were also asked whether or not they were ever assisted with capital, loans and inputs using the variables not at all, a little, average, a lot and all the time. Lastly, they were asked to rate Government and NGOs efforts to economically empower unemployed using the variables very poor, poor, average, good and very good. Figure 1 below illustrates the results of the skills possessed by the unemployed adults.



**Figure 1: Number of respondents versus skills possessed**

Figure 1 above presents a wide range of skills possessed by the unemployed adults. The majority 23 (19.17) had building skills and 20 (16.67%) knew about farming. The other skills were catering 16 (13.33), sport 11 (9.17%), tailoring 11 (9.17%), marketing 10 (8.33), driving

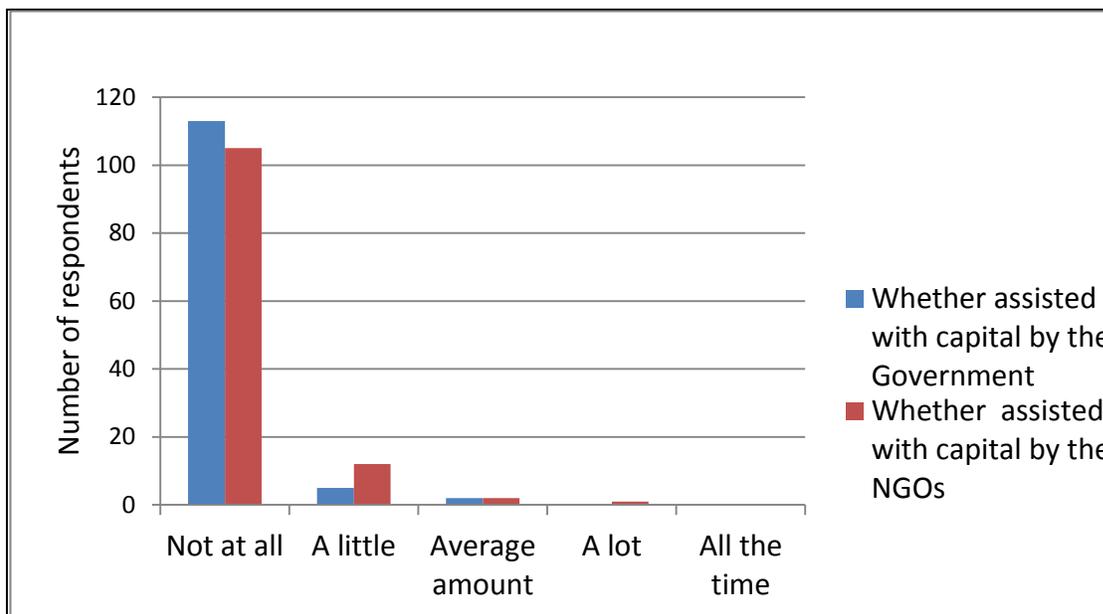
6 (5%), hairdressing 4 (3.33), computer technology 4 (3.33%), domestic work 3 (2.50%), woodwork 3 (2.50%), teaching 3 (2.50%), mechanic 1 (0.83%), counselling 1 (0.83), and art 1 (0.83%). Very few 3 (2.50%) did not have any skills. The impact of economic empowerment was measured by whether or not their education was paid for, enrolment in projects, and the extent to which they benefitted from the projects. The results are presented in Table 3 below.

**Table 3: Whether they were assisted with education bursaries and projects**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Attributes</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Whether Government paid for education	Yes	13	11
	No	95	79
	Only part of it	11	9
	Not applicable	1	1
Whether enrolled in a Government or NGO project	Yes	24	20
	No	96	80
The extent of benefitting from projects	Not at all	3	12.5
	A little bit	16	66.6
	A lot	5	20.8
Whether the project is still running	Yes	15	11.67
	No	9	6.67
	Not applicable	98	81.67

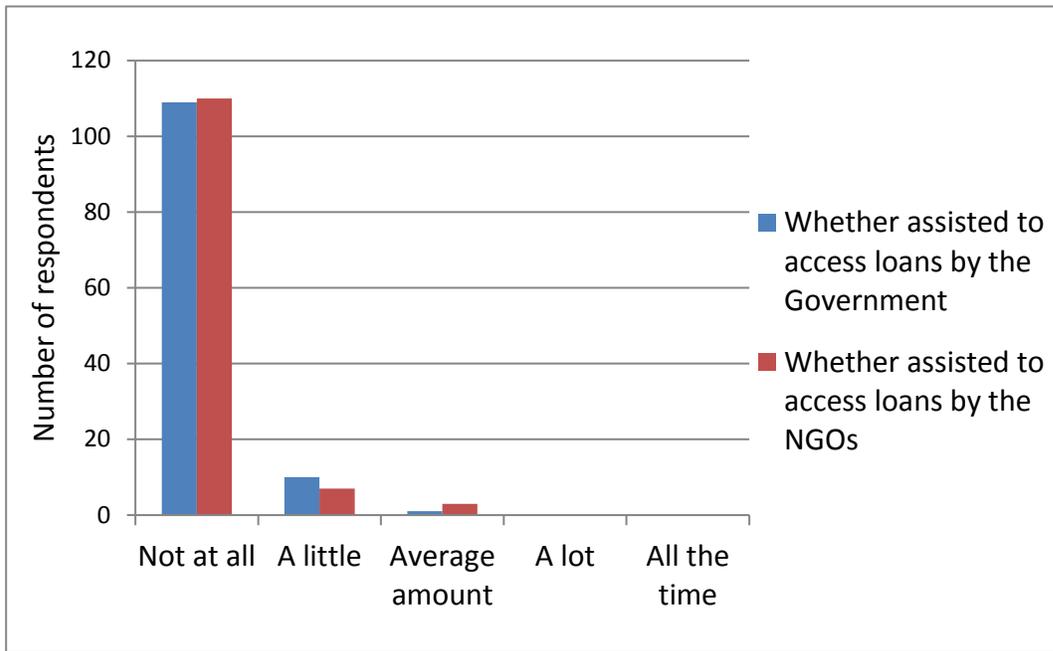
Table 3 above shows that more 95 (79%) respondents did not have their education paid for by the Government than 13 (11%) who got paid for. Others, 11 (9%) had only part of their education paid for. For 1 (1%), it was not applicable since the respondent had not attended school. As for whether respondents were enrolled in a Government or NGO project since 2010, 24 (20%) were enrolled and 96 (80%) were not enrolled. With regard to the extent of benefitting from the project, 3 respondents (12.5% of the beneficiaries) said they did not realize any benefit at all, while 16 respondents (66.6% of the beneficiaries) said they benefited a

little bit and only 5 respondents (20.8 % of the beneficiaries) said they benefited a lot. As for 97 (81% of the respondents) it was not applicable since they had never been enrolled in any project. On whether the project is still running, 15 (11.67%) respondents reported that the project is still running and for 9 (6.67%) the project is no longer running. As for 98 (81.67%) it was not applicable since they had never been enrolled in a project before. The unemployed adults were asked whether or not they were ever assisted with capital by either the Government or the NGOs and their responses are graphically shown below in Figure 2.



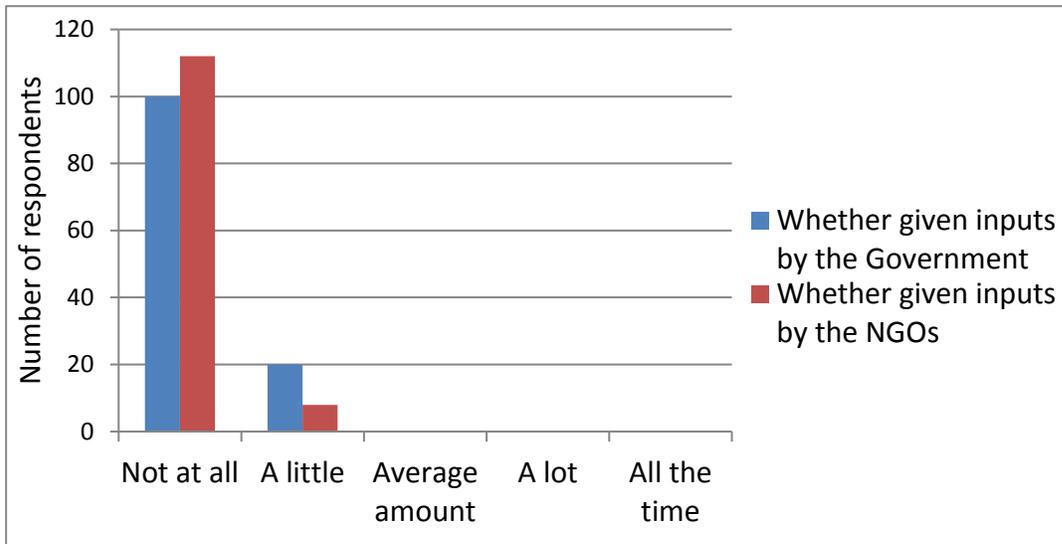
**Figure 2: Whether respondents were assisted with capital**

Figure 2 above depicts whether or not respondents were assisted with capital by either the Government or the NGOs. Overwhelming numbers indicated that they never received any capital from both Government 113 (94%) and NGOs 105 (87.5%). Only 5 (4%) and 12 (10%) received a little capital from the Government and NGOs respectively. Those who received an average amount were 2 (2%) from Government and also 2 (1.7%) from NGOs. There is only 1 (0.8%) respondent who got a lot of capital from the NGOs. None of the respondents received capital all the time from both the Government and the NGOs. Respondents were also asked whether or not the Government or NGOs ever assisted them to access loans. Their responses are presented in Figure 3 overleaf.



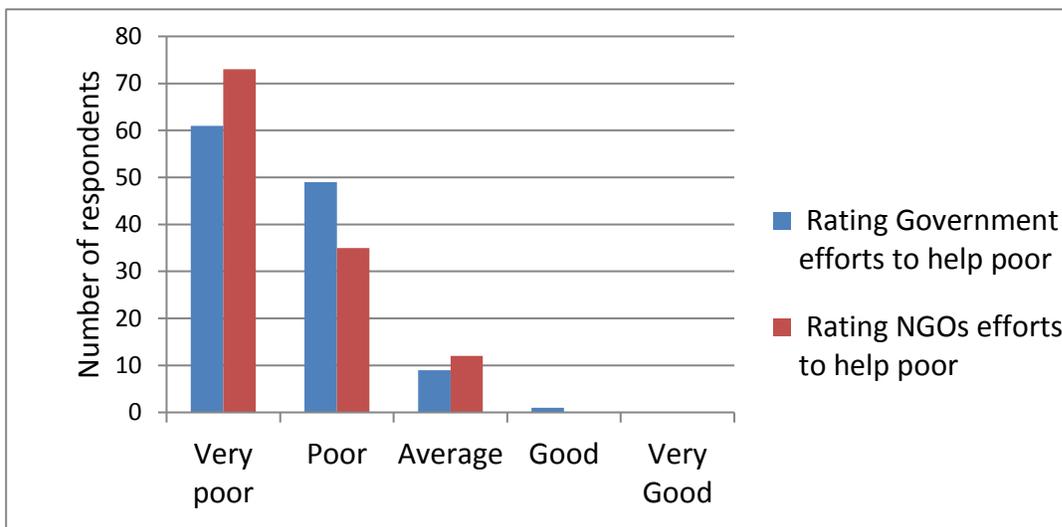
**Figure 3: Whether respondents were assisted to access loans**

From Figure 3 above, it can be observed that, again, the majority of the respondents 109 (91%) and 110 (92%) did not receive any assistance at all to access loans from both the Government and NGOs respectively. Those who received a little assistance were 10 (8%) and 7 (6%) respectively. Only 1 (0.8%) and 3 (3%) received an average amount. None of them received a lot of assistance or received assistance all the time. Again, in an attempt to check how economic empowerment was implemented in Manonyane rural community, respondents were asked whether or not they were given inputs by either the Government or NGOs. Figure 4 below shows their responses.



**Figure 4: Whether respondents were given inputs**

From Figure 4 above, it can be observed that 100 (83%) and 112 (93%) were not given any inputs at all by either the Government or NGOs. The others, 20 (17%) and 8 (7%) received a little inputs. None of the respondents received a lot of inputs or received inputs all the time from either the Government or NGOs. The respondents were asked to rate Government and NGOs efforts to economically empower unemployed people in Manonyane rural community. Below is Figure 5 which shows the outcome of the rating of efforts made.



**Figure 5: Rating Government and NGOs efforts**

Figure 5 illustrates the outcome of the respondents' rating of Government and NGO efforts using the variables very poor, poor, average, good and very good. The majority of them 61

(50.8%) and 73 (61%) indicated that the Government and the NGOs performed very poorly in their effort to economically empower unemployed people. More respondents 49 (40.8%) than 35 (29%) rated Government and NGOs efforts as poor. Only 1 (0.8%) respondent rated Government efforts as good. None of the respondents rated either the Government or NGOs as very good.

### **5. 3 Gender equality**

The results of the gender equality data are shown in this section. Table 4 below demonstrates the number of men and women in respondents' households who were enrolled in economic empowerment programmes in Manonyane rural community since 2010.

**Table 4: Enrolment in empowerment programmes**

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Men	56	55
Women	46	45

From Table 4 above it can be seen that more men 56 (55%) than women 46 (45%) in respondents' households were enrolled in economic empowerment programmes between 2010 and 2015.

### **5. 4 Unemployment challenges**

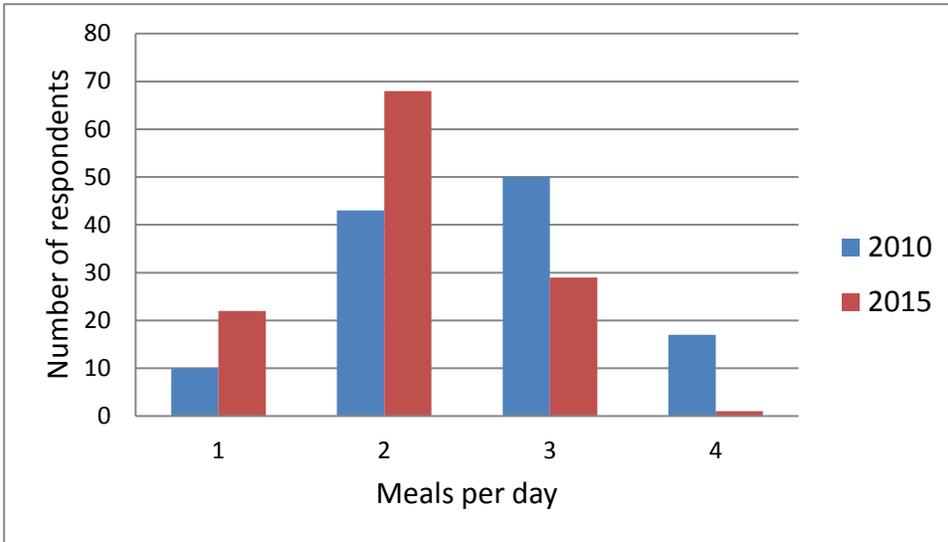
The results of the unemployment challenges faced by the respondents are displayed in this section. The challenges were measured in terms of how they defined poverty, how they rated themselves, how they rated their level of poverty since 2010, meals taken per day in 2010 and in 2015, portion of poor people in the village and lastly the degree of poverty in respondents' villages. Table 5 below illustrates how respondents defined poverty.

**Table 5: Unemployment challenges**

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Attributes</b>	<b>Frequenc y</b>	<b>Percentag e</b>
What does being poor mean to you?	Lack of income	58	48.33
	Lack of basic commodities	20	16.67
	Lack of democracy	2	1.67
	Lack of opportunities	38	31.67
	Other	2	1.67
Rating self	Rich	0	0
	Average	25	20.83
	Poor	51	42.50
	Very poor	42	35
	Other	2	1.67
Rating level of own poverty since 2010	Decreased	0	0
	Increased	89	74
	Remained the same	30	25
	Other	1	1
Portion of the poor in respondents' villages	None	0	0
	Quarter	11	9
	Half	50	42
	Three quarters	48	40
	All	11	9
Degree of poverty in respondents' villages	Decreased	0	0
	Remained the same	23	19
	Increased	97	81

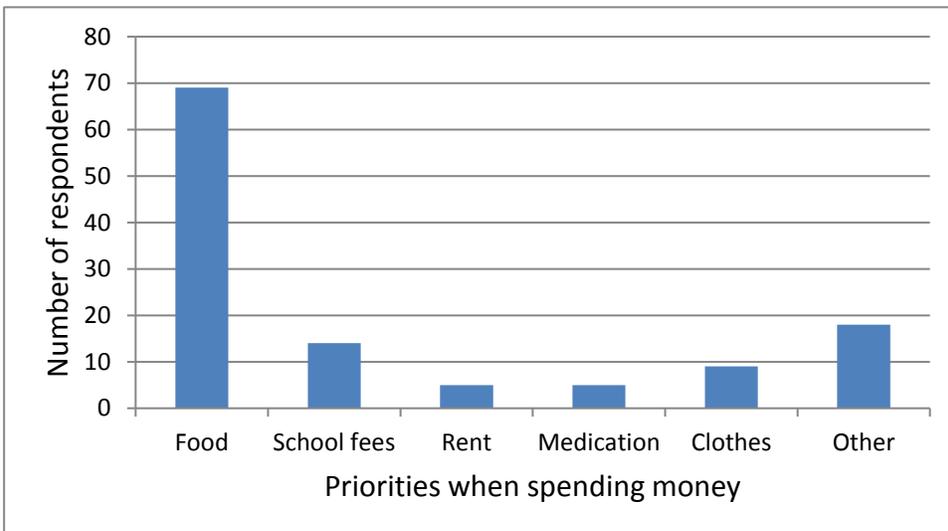
Table 5 reveals the respondents' definitions of poverty. Most of them 58 (48.33%) viewed poverty as lack of income while 38 (31.67%) viewed as lack of opportunities. Some of them 20 (16.67%) defined poverty in terms of lack of basic commodities and 2 (1.67%) saw it as lack of democracy. The rest, 2 (1.67%) had other definitions of their own. Participants were also asked to rate themselves in terms of whether or not they were rich, average, poor, very poor and other. The results of their ratings are shown in figure in figure 8 below. It can be observed that none of the respondents saw themselves as rich. However, 25 (20.83%) viewed themselves as being average. The majority of them 52 (42.5%) rated themselves as poor while 42 (35%) saw themselves as very poor. Very few of them 2 (1.67%) rated themselves otherwise.

In relation to rating themselves, respondents were also asked to rate their level of poverty since 2010. It can be observed that none of the respondents reported that the level of poverty had decreased since 2010. Nevertheless, 30 (25%) of them indicated that their level of poverty remained the same ever since 2010. The majority of them 89 (74%) acknowledged that the level had increased. Only 1 (1%) did not see the level of poverty as having increased, remained the same or increased. Furthermore, the respondents were asked to estimate the portion of poor people in their various villages. Table 5 above depicts that no respondent reported that there are no poor in the village, 11 (9%) saw a quarter of the village being poor. Those who saw half of their villages as poor were 50 (42%) and 48 (40%) viewed three quarters of the village as poor. The rest, 11 (9%) saw that all the villagers were poor. Lastly, each respondent was asked to rate the degree of poverty in one's village. It can be observed that none of the respondents indicated that the degree of poverty in the village had decreased. Nevertheless, 23 (19%) saw the degree as still the same as in 2010. Most, 97 (81%) stated that the degree of poverty in the village has increased. As mentioned earlier, unemployment challenges were also measured by looking at the number of meals taken by respondents in 2010 as well as in 2015. The findings are displayed in Figure 6.



**Figure 6: Distribution of respondents by meals per day**

It can be observed from Figure 6 that in 2010 more people 17 (14%) than only 1 (1%) used to take more than 4 meals per day. The same applies again in 2010 where more people 50 (42%) were taking three meals per day than 29 (24%). In 2015, the opposite was occurring that most people 68 (57%) were taking two meals than 43 (36%) in 2010. Again in 2015, more people 22 (18%) were taking only one meal per day than 10 (8%) in 2010. When respondents get hold of money, they tend to give first priority to different things as revealed by Figure 7.



**Figure 7: Respondents' major priorities when spending money**

From Figure 7 it can be observed that most of the respondents 69 (58%) prioritized food over everything else. Some of them 14 (12%) spent their money on school fees first while those who prioritized rent and medication were both 5 (4%). Those who prioritized clothes were 9 (8%) and the remainder 18 (15%) preferred to spend their money on other things apart from food, school fees, rent, medication and clothes. The next section entails the respondents' views on the causes of poverty.

## 5. 5 Poverty

An understanding of what the respondents think about poverty is important in that it sheds light on what they think on who is to blame for their plight and also what should be the poverty reduction measures. This section presents findings on perceptions on causes of poverty, respondents' ratings of rating Government and NGO efforts, how they were surviving poverty and lastly respondents' poverty solutions.

### 5. 5.1 Perceptions on causes of poverty

In order to get the perceptions about causes of poverty, respondents were asked to rate eight aspects,, each of them using a scale of 0 to 10, with 0 being 'not at all,' 'never' etc., 5 being 'middle' or 'average,' and 10 being 'always.' There was also N/A for not applicable. Table 6 which follows presents respondents' views on what they perceived as causes of poverty, basing on the mean for each aspect.

**Table 6: Respondents' ratings of causes of poverty**

Causes of poverty	Mean score
Poverty is caused by laziness	4
Poverty is caused by lack of education	5
Poverty is caused by Government failure	7
Poverty is caused by political instability	7
Poverty is caused by lack of inputs	7
Poverty is caused by too few NGOs	5
Poverty is caused by poor health	6
Poverty is caused by lack of opportunities	6

From Table 6 above, it is evident that few of the respondents hold that poverty is caused by laziness. On average, they thought that it is caused by lack of education and too few NGOs. Most of them thought that poverty is caused by Government failure, political instability and lack of inputs. Some also attributed poverty to poor health and lack of opportunities, rating these two aspects a little bit more than average. Their views on causes of poverty are linked to their perceptions about the reduction of poverty and gender inequalities by the Government and NGOs as shown in Table 7 below.

### 5. 5.2 Respondents’ ratings of rating Government and NGO efforts

The study sought to establish respondents perceptions on Government and NGO efforts to reduce poverty and gender inequalities. Presented below are the results of their ratings.

**Table 7: Respondents’ ratings of rating Government and NGO efforts**

<b>Perceptions</b>	<b>Mean score</b>
Government does a lot to reduce poverty	2
Government does a lot to reduce gender inequalities	4
Government does a lot to economically empower unemployed adults	3
NGOs do a lot to reduce poverty	3
NGOs do a lot to reduce gender inequalities	3
NGOs do a lot to economically empower unemployed adults	3

Table 7 above reveals that respondents have a low opinion of what the Government and NGOs are doing towards poverty reduction. The majority of them perceived that Government is not doing a lot to reduce poverty. The majority also rated less than average for the perceptions that Government is doing a lot to reduce gender inequalities and to economically empower unemployed adults. The same low rating was also given for perceptions that NGOs do a lot to reduce poverty, to reduce gender inequalities and to economically empower unemployed adults. Table8 below presents the results on how respondents were surviving poverty.

### 5. 5.3 Respondents' ratings of how they were surviving poverty

The study sought to establish how the unemployed adults were surviving poverty. The respondents used the same scale of 0 to 10 to rate. Presented underneath are the results of their ratings.

**Table 8: Respondents' ratings of how they were surviving poverty**

<b>Surviving poverty</b>	<b>Mean score</b>
When spouses are not employed life is tough	9
Lack of food is a major challenge	8
I am managing to reduce poverty on my own	5
Unemployment can be solved through economic empowerment	7

Table 8 above illustrates how respondents were surviving poverty. The majority stated that when spouses are not employed life is tough. Lack of food was said to be a major challenge to most of them. On whether respondents were able to reduce poverty on their own, most rated average. A greater number agreed with the notion that unemployment can be solved through economic empowerment.

### 5. 5.4 Respondents' poverty solutions

A majority of the respondents, 78 (65%), agreed with the notion that unemployment can be solved through economic empowerment; and their preferred forms of economic empowerment by the Government were articulated. With regard to the preferred forms of economic empowerment, 54 respondents (45%) indicated that they wanted jobs, 3 (2.5%) cited need for capital, and 14 (11.67%) were in need of inputs (such as seeds, irrigation pipes, fertilizers, sewing machines and cooking stoves), 1 (0.83%) expected the Government to build houses for poor people, 2 (1.67%) wanted unemployment grants, 2 (1.67%) wanted an increase in forest development projects (fato-fato), and 7 (5.83%) preferred free high school or secondary education. The rest (with regards to Government) 16 (13.33%) also expressed various possible poverty solutions, which the researcher does not classify under economic empowerment though. Of these, 8 (6.67%) stressed that Government must fulfil election promises, 5 (4.17%) needed Government to provide proximity water services as they were fetching water from very far places, the other 2 (1.67%) wanted the construction of bridges,

and another 1(0.83%) said the Government should stop nepotism. The respondents also expressed what they expected from the NGOs. Out of the 120 respondents, 9 (7.50%) were in need of capital, 2 (1.67%) saw food as an urgent need, with 6 of them preferring to be enrolled in projects, and then 2 (1.67%) were in need of toilets. Lastly, there were 2 (1.67%) respondents who reserved their comments.

## **5.6 Government and NGO officials' data**

This section will cover definitions of gender equality and poverty, how gender equality was factored in the projects implemented, economic empowerment and its extent, what rural people can do to economically empower themselves,

### **5. 6.1 Definitions of gender equality and poverty**

All the Ministries did not have definitions of gender equality except the Ministry of Gender, Youth and Recreation. This Ministry defines gender equality as equal access to and control over resources for both males and females. The Ministry of Gender, Youth and Recreation looks at poverty as a lack of resources. What became apparent is that the Government of Lesotho does not have a specific definition of poverty. Most of the Ministries referred the researcher to the Ministry of Development Planning for clarifications on definitions. The Ministry of Development Planning confirms that all Ministries align with the Lesotho National Strategic Development Planning document. The same applied with the NGOs, most did not have specific definition of both gender equality and poverty. Send a cow Lesotho holds that males and females should be given equal opportunities to benefit from the projects. As for the definition of poverty, the Lesotho Home-makers Association uses a holistic definition of poverty which covers lack of income, basic commodities and opportunities.

### **5.6.2 How gender equality was factored in the projects implemented**

This section provides an answer to the second research question on how gender equality was ensured in the economic empowerment programmes. All the NGOs highlighted that they help both genders. No discrimination based on gender was reported by both the Government Ministries and NGOs. The Ministry of Forestry and Land Reclamation aims to enrol equal numbers of men and women in the projects implemented. However, it also depends on the nature of projects. The Ministry of Gender and Youth, Sports and Recreation points out that most of their programmes and projects target women since most of the women in the rural

areas had husbands who were working in the South African mines and they were being nicknamed *gold widows*. Currently, with the closure of the South African mines, the former miners are now jobless and the Ministry of Gender now chips in through imparting skills to them. Consequently, both men and women are incorporated in all the programmes and projects run by the Ministry of Gender, Youth and Sports and Recreation.

### **5.6. 3 Economic empowerment and its extent**

Various strategies were employed by both the Ministries and the NGOs in an effort to economically empower unemployed people in Lesotho. It is worth noting that this section provides an answer to the first research question on the impact of the economic empowerment programmes. The Gender, Youth and Sports and Recreation empower unemployed people economically through skills development in jewellery production, shoe making, crocheting, sewing, agriculture, among others. The Ministry of Forestry and Land Reclamation economically empowers unemployed people through its tree planting programme. This programme operates in different ways. Firstly, the Ministry supplies the beneficiaries with forest trees and the trees will be theirs to use as, among others, firewood, construction material, commodities to sell. The Ministry also encourages people to grow trees and then sell to the Ministry. Technical know-how is also imparted to unemployed people to economically empower them. Skills taught include the following, bee-keeping, nurturing, harvesting, processing and marketing. These skills are given to interested groups who normally organise themselves into co-operatives. They will be encouraged to keep the data on quantities produced. The Ministry of Social Development's economic empowerment programmes are in the form of public assistance which is given either in cash or in kind. Currently, assistance in cash form is M250-00 per month and the one in kind is in the form of food packages and clothes. The public assistance programme has always been in place. Beneficiaries are selected upon an assessment by the social workers.

Apart from public assistance, the Ministry of Social Development also has a cash grant programme which was instituted in 2009. This programme targets those households which are taking care of orphans. A household that takes care of one or two orphans is given M360-00 per quarter. A household that takes care of three or four orphans is given M600-00 per quarter. Lastly, a household that takes care of five or more orphans is given M750-00 per quarter. Beneficiaries are selected by the village assessment committee. Economic

empowerment is also realized through a bursary programme. In this programme, the Ministry pays fees for high school students who are vulnerable. Again, is given upon assessment to determine the needy students. The criterion is that a student should either be a double orphan or has a single parent who is not working. Again, the orphan should be attending any class among from A to form E at a public school. Subventions are also given to orphanages and old age homes since the Government does not own either orphanages or old age homes. Lastly, this Ministry also runs Ithuseng Vocational Rehabilitation Centre where various skills are imparted to disabled people to ensure self-sustenance.

The Ministry of Agriculture and food security does not have any economic empowerment programmes for the unemployed people. It only sells farming inputs and products at subsidised prices. The Ministry of Small Business Development, Co-operatives and Marketing ensures economic empowerment through the introduction of entrepreneurship. They train unemployed adults to come up with livelihood programmes. Adults who are unemployed are made to join cooperatives and trained in good governance and best management practices. Those who will not have formed co-operatives are given information through public gatherings

The NGOs also employ various strategies in an effort to economically empower unemployed people in rural areas. The Ex-miners Association's main way of economically empowering the unemployed is through the provision of social security benefits from the Mine workers provident fund. Caritas train orphaned and vulnerable children (OVC) in woodwork, farming and other technical skills. The aim will be to guarantee self-employment. This NGO also offers career guidance to vulnerable children since there is lack of such information in rural areas. The United Textile Employees also imparts various skills to unemployed people. With regard to students, this NGO trains them sporting and life skills. Lesotho Homemakers Association economically empower the unemployed through imparting skills such as tie and dye, knitting, cooking, gardening, tailoring, and crocheting among others. Send a cow Lesotho offers input support to the beneficiaries in a form of vegetable seeds, beans, fodder seeds, poultry, fruit tree seedlings and rabbits depending on donor funding. The RSDA builds the unemployed people's capacity on advocacy and lobbying to hold Government and co-operates accountable. Again, they capacitate them on savings and loans.

#### **5.6. 4 What rural people can do to economically empower themselves**

Both the Government and NGO officials echoed the same sentiments on what rural people should do on their own to reduce poverty. The issue of self-employment also came out in which unemployed people were expected to generate employment for themselves instead of waiting for the Government and NGOs to spoon-feed them. Firstly, they need to use locally available resources. On this, they can use grass, for instance, to make clay pots, brooms, mats and hats for sale. They can also sell traditional vegetables which grow in the fields such as *xela*, *seruoe*, *tjoto* and *bobatsi*. These vegetables are considered to be nutritious, delicious and very healthy. Additionally, these vegetables are usually sorted after by the urban dwellers. Agriculture is also another poverty reduction strategy especially if farmers grow crops for home consumption and also access for sale. In line with this, it was also suggested that unemployed people in rural areas can also eke a living through planting trees, canning peaches and drying peaches and vegetables for sale.

Greenhouse farming technology using recycled material such as plastic papers was cited for them to use in winter since Lesotho experience very low temperatures in winter. What was also more pronounced was the issue of cooperatives. Unemployed people can form cooperatives. This helps to pull resources together to secure capital for income generating projects. Getting into informal business was said to be easier for the unemployed since there are no legal requirements. They also indicated that the unemployed need to change their mind set through discarding the notion that the Government and NGOs should be the ones to do everything for them and start embracing new ideas of innovativeness. Basically, the unemployed were expected to be hardworking, enterprising and pro-active.

#### **5.6.5 Challenges encountered while assisting the rural poor**

Government- Some of the unemployed are not willing to join the running economic empowerment programmes. For some they will be having the zeal to participate but they will not be having resources such as land, dams and capital among others. Thus, there will be a gap between the Ministries and the poor people. The main challenge is that the allocated budget will not suffice since there are more people needing help compared to available resources. Beneficiaries also complain about the targeting tools used to identify those in need of assistance citing inconsistencies. Those who will be complaining will be those who will have been left out of the programmes. Only the Ministry of Labour and Employment

indicated that it does not have a policy framework hence there is no specific point of reference. Some of the challenges cited are external for instance droughts, failure to access markets and lack of interest. The adverse weather conditions experienced in Lesotho during the winter season was cited as detrimental for agricultural production.

Like the Government Ministries, NGOs also face various challenges. Top of their problems was lack of political will. Political party leaders were said to be not co-operative with some of them always wanting to dictate who the beneficiaries should be during the implementation of projects. Local authorities at times include their relatives in the lists of vulnerable children. The rural poor were said to be less willing to work, to take risks, to venture into new ground with some failing even to attend meetings. Inadequate funding was also a common challenge.

## **5.7 Conclusion**

This chapter presented data from 120 unemployed adults of whom 68 were males and 52 were females. Most of the respondents were single and were also not household heads. On average households had five members and with an average monthly income of M1 575-00, which is equivalent to (USD106.92). The economic empowerment revealed that the unemployed adults had a variety of skills. Concerning what the Government and the NGOs have done for unemployed adults in Manonyane since 2010, the study found out that the majority did not at all get any form of assistance. A total of 102 males and females who were household members of the respondents have been enrolled in economic empowerment programmes since 2010.

As for unemployment challenges, many of them reported that their level of poverty has increased. The majority attributed their poverty to Government failure, political instability and lack of inputs. Very few agreed that poverty is caused by laziness. Overall, many hold the view that both Government and NGOs have not done much to reduce poverty in Manonyane. The last section presented data collected from six Government and six NGO officials. Most Government and NGOs confirmed that they have economic empowerment programmes in place. However, their major challenge was lack of resources to implement them throughout the country. Hence very few of them have not rendered any assistance to the unemployed adults in Manonyane since 2010.



## **CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION**

### **6.1 Introduction**

In this chapter, the findings that were presented in the preceding chapter will be interpreted and discussed. The subsequent discussion will be done in line with the general aim, which is to evaluate the impact of economic empowerment programmes by Government and NGOs to the livelihoods of Manonyane community members with respect to poverty reduction and gender equality over the six year period 2010 to 2015. Furthermore, the discussion will specifically be centred around the three fundamental objectives of this study which are, firstly, to evaluate the impact of Government and NGO efforts in economically empowering unemployed adults in Manonyane rural community to ensure poverty reduction between 2010 and 2015; secondly, to assess the extent to which gender equality was factored in the economic empowerment programmes implemented in Manonyane rural community between 2010 and 2015; and lastly, to ascertain the unemployed adults' challenges and their proposed solutions. The discussion therefore constitutes three major topics which are, firstly, the impact of economic empowerment, secondly, how gender was factored in the economic empowerment programmes and lastly, challenges faced by the unemployed adults and their proposed solutions. It is worth reiterating that the GAD approach will give insights to this discussion.

The study holds that it is imperative to economically empower both males and females equally because the empowerment of one gender or any gender biased and unbalanced empowerment tends to breed gender inequalities in the long run. The findings discussed in this chapter used data which was collected using a questionnaire for the unemployed adults and an interview schedule for both Government and NGOs officials. The sample for the unemployed adults consisted of 120 individuals who were identified using snowball sampling technique and responded to the questionnaire. On the other hand, six Government officials and six NGOs officials were selected using purposive sampling method and were interviewed as informants.

## **6. 2 Biographic and socio-economic details of the unemployed adults**

A number of distinctive and interesting features were observed about the unemployed adults' sample. To begin with, there were more male respondents (57%) than females (43%). As such, on face value one would conclude that there are more unemployed males than females in the Manonyane rural community. However, it would be rather too simplistic to take such an inference as a fact because other factors, such as the sampling method used, could have caused that. In fact, the sampling method used is a non-probability sampling method; hence there is no way of ensuring equity representation of gender. With snowball sampling, which was applied, once a researcher has identified a participant, it is that participant who will direct the researcher to the next participant. Arguably, this could create gender biases as a male respondent, for instance, would be more likely to refer you to a male colleague whom he can easily know where the researcher could find him; the same applies to female respondents too.

The other trend that was observable in the course of data collection was that the researcher was always meeting unemployed males in groups, chatting, playing cards or some other games and takes the opportunity to sample them in their numbers. Arguably, it cannot be ruled out that their female counterparts could have been indoors or around their homes dutifully immersed in the usual house chores as epitomized by a patriarchal society. On the other hand, the conclusion could actually be a true depiction of the Lesotho's scenario whereby women are the ones mostly employed in the light industries that dominate the country as well as in the shops and as domestic workers too. Actually, the BOS (2008) and Rantšo (2015) state that in Lesotho, more females than males are employed in the country textile industry, which is the biggest formal employer in the country. The African Development Bank (2005) established that women make up of over 80% of manufacturing employees in the export garment sector in Lesotho. Hence, in general, women dominate the clothing, textile industries and manufacturing, retail and service sectors.

However, in another study by Green and Leduka (as cited in Rantšo, 2015) it was observed that there were less females entrepreneurs than males in Lesotho. The researchers attributed their observation to the proliferation of illegal migration of Basotho women to South Africa where they are mostly engaged as domestic workers. To note is that, in the 1980s it used to be a different scenario because there used to be an influx of Basotho men to South Africa to work in the mines, leaving their wives behind to take care of their families. This aspect,

among others, could also explain why there seems to be more unemployed males in Manonyane than females, as observed by this research.

The majority of the unemployed adults are relatively young, with the average age of the population sample being 33 years. The age variable was notably in line with a number of other related characteristics. For instance, the proportion of household heads (48%) which is significantly less than that of non-household heads (52%). It is rational to argue that since majority are on the youthful side (i.e. 33 years and below) then most of them have not assumed the responsibility of household headship. Coupled with being young and not heading households, most (47.50%) of the unemployed adults are also single. Furthermore, most (55%) of them still stay in their parents' houses. These variables are very well intertwined, signifying a normal societal scenario. It is considered a normal situation in the sense that when one is young, he is likely to be unmarried and also not a household head. Consequently, wherever all these characteristics are present, that individual is most likely living under the roof of his or her parents. Usually unemployed young people cannot be able to sustain their living alone; and living with their families will cushion them from poverty since some of the household members will be employed. That also shows the importance of family. Effectively, because of the families that they can fall back on, the unemployed people are likely not to feel the impact of unemployment as much as they would if they were staying on their own.

Another interesting feature of the characteristics of the sample is that the respondents mostly come from large families, with the sample average being five (5) family members per household. A number of issues can emanate from this observed scenario. Firstly, it may signify a high dependency ratio. In this case, considering the mean age of the respondents, it's probable that most of the respondents' siblings are also still young. If that is true, it therefore follows that the preponderance of these young family members will pose a challenge to the one or the ones employed within those households. It will clearly be a case whereby a small economically active group or one gainfully employed adult in the family bearing the burden of taking care of a large number of economically inactive household members. Effectively, such a scenario has the potential to perpetuate poverty even among the supposedly gainfully employed members as they go out of their way to share with the family members who should otherwise be independent and fending for themselves. Apart from that, it can also be argued that if the unemployment situation in Manonyane remains the same,

more and more young family members will unfortunately continue to complete their education and fail to penetrate the labour market, culminating in a vicious cycle of poverty.

### **6.3 Skills possessed by the unemployed adults**

This section dwells on the skills possessed by the unemployed adults in Manonyane rural community. This study unearthed that although the participants were unemployed, almost all of them, 117 of out of 120 (~98%) were having a divergence of skills. Among them were even what one may consider as high level professionals who professed to possess qualifications and skills in areas such as counselling, teaching, computer technology and mechanical engineering, just to name a few. This demonstrates that the unemployment status of these Manonyane rural community adults cannot be explained by lack of skills, but rather lack of employment opportunities in their community; and in the country as a whole. Ideally, when one possesses skills, he or she should be marketable and be absorbed into the job market for him/her to apply the skills to his/her own benefit and to the benefit of the larger community. A failure in this regard effectively means a loss to the individual, the family, the community and the nation at large.

It cannot be a fallacy to say that the most potent resource for every nation is its skilled human resources. In any case, the qualifications and skills are often acquired at a high cost to the families and the country. Suffice to say, it is worthwhile that this research established the skills possessed by the unemployed people in Manonyane community. Presumably, it will make it easier for any interested parties to come and tap that talent. At least the study can serve as a valuable starting point for the Government or any NGOs that may intend to assist the unemployed people in Manonyane rural community through empowerment and/or poverty reduction programmes. Noting the skills levels among the unemployed in Manonyane together with the respondents' views on poverty solutions, it can be observed that some of them, 54, believe in their potential to create value for themselves, their communities and the country, hence they preferred to be assisted with jobs by the Government for them to effectively participate and contribute to the country's economy. More so, the people generally demonstrated knowledge of what they expected from the Government, in line with their skills. For example, those with teaching skills mostly highlighted their expectation for the Government to offer them employment, which resonates

very well with the fact that Government is the main employer for such individuals in the country as it owns the bulk of primary and secondary schools.

On the other hand, those with technical skills such as building, marketing and tailoring, just to name a few, mostly highlighted start-up capital as their main expectation from either Government or NGOs. Accordingly, such individuals are yearning to be employment creators because they already have the skills needed to venture into businesses within their specialties, but they lack capital. Again, the ones with agricultural skills mostly (11.7%) asked to be assisted with their relevant inputs such as land, seeds, pesticides, ploughs and fertilizer, among others. Those with catering skills might be in need of inputs such as cooking pots, stoves, mobile kitchens, microwaves and any other cooking utensils. It is the availability of such inputs which will enable the unemployed adults to make use of their talents and for their business ventures to kick off. On a positive note, it could be noted that the unemployed people in Manonyane community are generally skilled and are not mentally condemned for the perpetual dependency on Government and/or any other organization. Rather, they seem to exhibit a strong will to live an economically independent life; provided Government and any other institutions come in and facilitate the realization of their noble dreams.

While all the above observations and the respondents' proclamations can be true, it should be noted that it does not always follow that poverty can be reduced by the availability of whatever nature and/or quantities of inputs. In reality, it takes far much more than one's wishful thinking and the availing of inputs from the benefactor(s). Actually, it is the researcher's view that whilst all of us can dream, it is not all of us who can make their luminous dreams happen even if all the dream fantasies happen to be present. Fact is, it often takes a lot of hard work than what individuals imagine before they get into it. This is confounded by the fact that these unemployed and mostly young adults generally do not have business or industrial experience. Most of them are armed with their diplomas from institutions of tertiary education and in all fairness have never ventured into the vagaries of the real world. The real business environment may actually turn out to be insurmountable especially for the inexperienced. Generally, entrepreneurship, or getting into business, demands a lot of unique qualities on the individual, including commitment, hard work, business ethics, sacrificing some routine socio-economic engagements, being proactive and also being self-disciplined and organized, just to name a few. Needless to say, if one is not

totally committed, disciplined and focused, they might divert the capital to other immediate needs and ultimately a supposedly plausible business venture may even fail to kick start after getting a huge start-up capital.

Laziness can also cause the business to flop – readiness to work hard is an attribute that cannot be over-emphasized when it comes to starting new businesses and managing them. Unfortunately, these are fundamental things which could not be unveiled in this study since it was largely a quantitative study. Overall, it is the researcher's view that whilst most of the respondents' zeal to be in charge of their own destiny once they are given seed resources, such zeal should be accepted with caution, cognizant of the fact that there are mostly young people who are very energetic but largely oblivious of how the real business world works. As such, it can be argued that more work would actually need to be done by Government and/or NGOs to effectively tackle poverty and unemployment in Manonyane than the widely proposed solutions. It is the author's submission that any endeavours to tackle this scourge would better be accompanied by appropriate mechanisms prior and after the disbursement of capital and/or inputs to the unemployed people to give them sufficient capacity, effective and efficient use such resources. Failing of that, there is high likelihood that poverty will still be glaring after investing whatever amounts of resources for the same course.

#### **6.4 Impact of economic empowerment**

This section will focus on the impact of economic empowerment on the unemployed adults. However, before looking at the impact of economic empowerment, it is imperative to first shed some light on the economic empowerment programmes that were in place between 2010 and 2015 that were instituted by either the Government or the NGOs. This study was set to evaluate the impact of economic empowerment programmes in Manonyane rural community between 2010 and 2015 for the purpose of reducing poverty and gender inequalities. The data discussed here was drawn from the six Government officials and six NGOs officials in which interview schedules were used as data collection tools. Later, the discussion will focus on whether the unemployed adults were enrolled in these programmes or in projects under these programmes and to what extent they benefited from them.

#### **6.4.1 The economic empowerment programmes by Government**

A number of economic empowerment programmes were and are still in place since 2010 across the country in general. Inter alia, the Ministry of Gender empowers unemployed people economically through skills development, especially in technical fields such as jewellery production, shoe making, crocheting, sewing and agriculture. The Ministry of Forestry and Land Reclamation also economically empowers unemployed people through its tree planting programme. Basically, this programme applies two different models of empowering rural communities. One of the models is for the Ministry to supply the target beneficiaries with forest nursery trees for them to plant and have their own woodlots from which they can derive various benefits which include personal use as firewood and/or, construction materials and even get some cash from selling. In some cases, the Ministry also encourages people to grow nurseries for both forestry and fruit trees and even run free training programmes on how to grow and maintain the nurseries and then sell the nursery plants to the Ministry. The Ministry will grow these trees in the communities for people to eat the fruits and forest trees are used to curb soil erosion. Actually it is a cyclic programme since it is the same nursery plants bought from communities which are subsequently distributed to recipient communities which are in turn encouraged to grow woodlots.

The Ministry of Social Development's economic empowerment programmes are in the form of public assistance in cash or in kind. Currently, the assistance in cash form is M250-00 per month and the one in kind is in the form of food packages and clothes. According to the official narrative, the public assistance programme has always been in place – in other words it has been in existence for a long time and could not be easily specified when it started. The beneficiaries are selected upon an assessment and recommendation by the social workers. Apart from such public assistance, the Ministry also runs a cash grant programme which was instituted in 2009. The cash grant programme specifically targets those households taking care of orphans. The amount of cash grants paid out to eligible families are divided into three categories, which are M360-00 per quarter, M600-00 per quarter and M750-00 per quarter (i.e. per 3 months). Those households taking care of one or two orphans fall into first category, while those taking care of three or four orphans fall into the second category and finally those taking care of five or more orphans fall into the third category. These programmes are crucial for poverty reduction. Twala (2012) asserts that poverty reduction

and alleviation aims at reducing the negative impact of poverty on the lives of poor people and it includes the state's social grant programmes which could reduce the impact of poverty for many people. Twala further highlights that the state's social policies have also been found to provide a developmental stimulus by empowering people to look for jobs who live in households in which members receive social grants, or start their own small businesses.

The Ministry of Small Business Development, Co-operatives and Marketing promotes economic empowerment through the introduction of entrepreneurship skills to the unemployed people for purposes of making them job creators and not job hunters. The Ministry trains unemployed adults to come up with innovative and sustainable livelihood programmes. This appears to be a noble programme since unemployment is soaring in Lesotho; and such a paradigm shift from grooming job hunters to creating job creators could not have come at a better time. However, only time will tell whether or not such a novel endeavour will have a notable impact on the livelihoods of the poor and the country in general.

The Ministry of Labour and Employment has an employment programme. This programme encourages people to form self-financing groups and venture into income generating projects. The unemployed people are encouraged to organize themselves into groupings and pull their resources together by contributing a mutually agreed amount of cash to venture into income generating projects. Furthermore, the Ministry provides such groups and individual unemployed people with business skills such as financial management, how to identify business gaps and how to market their produce. It can be said that for such a programme to be successful, it requires a lot of cooperation from the unemployed people. They have to be committed so that they will be in a position to participate in the programme.

Apart from that, the Ministry also links unemployed people with potential employers by keeping a database and curriculum vitae (CVs) of all those interested and unemployed people, liaising with potential employers and checking job adverts for possible matches to any CVs in their files. The Ministry argues that this is a vital programme in the sense that it ensures that people will not be underemployed since they will always be placed in the most suitable jobs. However, this appears very sound on paper but the gruesome reality is that the suitable jobs are simply not there in the country. Lesotho has a small economy and very little

production is taking place. As such, it could be argued that noble as it may seem, the programme tends to create false hope, especially among newly graduated adults from training or learning institutions, only to be frustrated and dejected after along and fruitless wait for a job.

Apart from the above programmes, Rantšo (2015) the Government of Lesotho has partnered with some private organisations such as the Lesotho Revenue Authority (LRA), Standard Lesotho Bank and Basotho Enterprise Development Corporation (BEDCO) to fight the scourge of youth unemployment through a programme called ‘Bacha Entrepreneurship’ which is being financed with money amounting to M500 000.00 (USD37 313.43) per year. Rantšo adds that the call for proposals was made in December 2014 for youth business groups to apply for the start-up capital. This study makes mention of this programme because it falls within the scope and study period since it entails empowering the unemployed now.

#### **6.4.2 The economic empowerment programmes by NGOs**

There are various NGOs operating in Lesotho, employing various strategies in their efforts to economically empower unemployed people in rural areas of Lesotho. One such NGO is the Ex-miners’ Association. Its major way of economically empowering the unemployed is through the provision of social security benefits from the Mine workers provident fund to the miners, the spouses or children in the case of a deceased miner. Caritas is another NGO whose main focus is to train orphaned and vulnerable children (OVC) in technical fields such as woodwork, and farming, among others, with the aim of guaranteeing self-employment. Lesotho textile workers Association is also another NGO focusing on imparting various skills to unemployed people. The NGO also train students in sporting and life-skills. Lesotho Homemaker’s Association economically empowers the unemployed through imparting various home-craft skills such as tie and dye, knitting, cooking, gardening, tailoring, and crocheting, among others. Send-a-Cow Lesotho also offers various input support to beneficiaries in the form of vegetable seeds, beans, fodder seeds, poultry, fruit tree seedlings and rabbits depending on availability of donor funding. The RSDA builds the unemployed people’s capacity on advocacy and lobbying to hold Government and co-operates accountable. Again, they capacitate them on savings and loans. These are sound programmes which can have the knack to transform the unemployed adults’ lives

### **6.4.3 Impact of economic empowerment on the unemployed adults**

In this section the discussion will be centred on what the participants viewed as the impact of economic empowerment programmes. The impact will be measured in terms of various forms and levels of assistance received from Government and/or NGOs within the period covered by this study - 2010 to 2015. This includes education and training sponsorship received, whether or not they were ever enrolled in economic empowerment projects, and the extent to which they benefited from the economic empowerment programmes. The impact of economic empowerment will also be discussed in terms of whether or not they were ever assisted with capital, accessing loans, and inputs from either the Government or the NGOs. In addition, the discussion will also focus research participants' rating of Government and NGOs efforts in reducing poverty in Manonyane rural community vis-a-viz the proclamations by both Government and NGO officials regarding the institutions' economic empower endeavours towards the unemployed adults in Manonyane rural community over the period 2010 to 2015. In discussing all this, the aim will be to answer the first research question on the impact of economic empowerment in Manonyane since 2010. Suffice to say, earlier on, in the literature review chapter; economic empowerment was conceptualized to mean assistance with payment of education, assistance with capital, accessing loans, inputs and being enrolled in economic empowerment programmes.

#### **6.4.2.1 Assistance with sponsorship towards education and training**

The impact of economic empowerment was minimal when one looks at the assistance given by the Government towards the educational needs of the unemployed adults. With regard to assistance with education sponsorship, the study revealed that 95 out of 120 respondents (79%) did not receive any assistance towards the cost of their education from Government. On the other hand, only 13 respondents (11%) acknowledged that their education was paid for by the Government, and as such, the respondents are mostly those who also reported their highest level of education as primary school level. In 1999, the GOL introduced a Free Primary Education Policy (FPE). But it was to be implemented in a phased fashion so that fees were abolished one standard every year starting from 2000, (African Development Bank, 2005; Morojele, 2012). Thus, it generally explains the 11% of respondents who acknowledged Government sponsorship.

On the other hand, the majority who did not benefit from the programme can only be accounted for by the fact that they had already finished primary education when the programme came into being, which generally tallies the ages group of such respondents. On the contrary, Lesotho does not sponsor secondary and high school education. The other 11 respondents (9%) reported that only a part of their education was paid for by the Government. This group is mainly comprised of those who went as far as the tertiary level; and indeed, Lesotho even to date offers a loan-grant package sponsorship towards tertiary education to its citizens who will have qualified and enrolled at state owned institutions. Generally, that happens to be a very small number compared to those who fail to reach such higher levels. Effectively, this adds weight to the assertion that most unemployed adults did not benefit from education and training sponsorship programmes.

Furthermore, it can be argued that since all this investment towards primary and tertiary education is ideally geared at ensuring national human capital, then the viability and sustainability of such programmes is questionable. Cognizant of the fact that the beneficiaries end up without jobs and consequently failing to contribute towards the tax base or national economy, and even failing to repay the loans. Notably, 1 respondent (0.8%) reported never being economically empowered by the Government and also never attended school. Admittedly, this form of economic empowerment is inapplicable for such a respondent. The form of economic empowerment relevant to such people is skills training on practical things they are passionate about for instance poultry, farming and crocheting. Then, later, they can be assisted with capital or other inputs to start their own income generating projects along the areas they would have shown some grasp. The researcher strongly believes that, with appropriate economic empowerment programmes in place, even the uneducated people can still live honest and decent lives despite their lack of education.

#### **6.4.2.2 Enrolment in empowerment programmes**

Economic empowerment of the unemployed in Manonyane rural community was also measured according to enrolment or participation in projects implemented by either Government or NGOs within the duration covered by this study, 2010 to 2015. It is worth noting that the term project is used cognizant of the fact that when it comes to

implementation, most programmes are implemented in form of projects. It emerged that only 24 respondents (20%) were enrolled in some empowerment project(s) within the 6 year period, while 96 respondents (80%) were not enrolled (see Table 3). This shows that the Government and NGOs economic empowered efforts can only reach as much as 20% of the legitimate beneficiaries in a period of 6 years excluding the large majority of 80%. This raises serious questions as to why such a small proportion (20%) of eligible people could have benefited from the economic empowerment programmes given the existence of a huge range of such programmes as cited by both the Government and NGOs. Needless to say, six (6) years is too long a time for such a huge number (80%) of eligible targets to have not been offered the opportunity to participate in any economic empowerment project(s) of whatever nature.

With regard to NGOs, the researcher could to some extent attribute the observed low impact to funding challenges which they generally pointed out as a key stumbling block to implementation of their desired programmes on a large scale. But the same cannot be said with regard to Government, yet the study reveals that economic empowerment projects were virtually not running in any significant way, in Manonyane rural communities. At best they were running at a very low scale which could hardly impact much on the livelihoods of the unemployed community members. This may point to, among other possible reasons, lack of political will and paying lip-service on economic empowerment issues. Otherwise, one would expect a significant number of the Ministries that pronounced their involvement in a myriad of economic empowerment programmes to have worked with unemployed people in Manonyane in at least one of the years under review. In that case the proportion of beneficiaries could have been significantly bigger than the 20%. However, only the Ministry of Forestry and Land Reclamation and Ministry of Social Development confirmed that they have worked in Manonyane. It is worth noting that the observed low impact of economic empowerment programmes is not confined to Lesotho, it is also a problem even in other countries which are even more endowed with resources to assist their unemployed people. A case in point and closer to home is South Africa, where a study by Sikrweqe (2013) also revealed that only about 22% of the respondents had participated in projects implemented in their neighbourhood whilst the majority 78% had not been accorded the opportunity to participate.

An even more worrying picture was unveiled when the few (24) who were enrolled in economic empowerment programmes were asked to rate the extent to which they benefited from the projects. In response to that question, 3 respondents (12.5% of the beneficiaries) said they did not realize any benefit at all, while 16 respondents (66.6% of beneficiaries) said they benefited a little bit and only 5 respondents (20.8 % of the beneficiaries) said they benefited a lot. It may be speculated, that those who said they did not benefit at all are most probably those who enrolled in very short-term project(s) possibly running for periods of one month or less, and at the same time earned very little for their efforts. While those ones who said they benefited a little bit could be those who enrolled in projects which had relatively longer time frames. Generally, if a project has a long timeframe, even if the returns are low, it may yield more benefits to the participants because that consistence will enable beneficiaries to have something to look forward to for a long period and at times even accumulate some savings. However, whether it will lift people from poverty or not will depend on the amount of benefits accrued from the projects, and individual attributes.

But, going by the beneficiaries expressed sentiments, in this regard, it can be argued that, the impact of economic empowerment programmes in Manonyane was not only low and constrained in terms of accessibility to the target group(s), but even more so in terms of uplifting the very few people who participated. Moreover, given that a very small proportion of the unemployed got the opportunity to participate then the expectation would be having the majority of that small group befitting a lot since at least they had the opportunity to be enrolled in some project(s). Yet, to the contrary, the majority of that very small group did not even benefit much from those economic empowerment projects they participated in. This, taken together with the fact that majority of the unemployed (80%) had already been excluded from participation amply highlights that the impact of economic empowerment was overallly very low. Generally, where there is low impact in economic empowerment of the people, there are high chances of the majority of the people, particularly the unemployed, sinking into abject poverty. Under normal circumstances, economic empowerment is supposed to lift people out of poverty or to contribute significantly to poverty reduction.

Again, another question which was relevant and directed to those (24 respondents) who asserted to have enrolled in economic empowerment projects was, whether the project they participated in is still running. In their responses, 15 respondents (62.5%) reported that the

projects were still running while 9 (i.e. 37.5%) stated that the project is no longer running. The fact that more respondents indicated that the projects were, still running could be viewed as positive and commendable as it shows that one way or another there are some members of Manonyane community who were still befitting even though it might be at a low scale. However, the ideal situation could have been to have all projects still running so that people can continue to be productive in their lives, given that for most of the unemployed adults such projects are hopefully viewed as vital vehicles for combating poverty. On the contrary, Sikrweqe (2013) found out that the majority of respondents (66%) agreed that there were municipal projects that were undertaken in their neighbourhood in the past two years as part of the implementation of the Reconstruction and Development Programme in South Africa.

#### **6.4.2.3 Assistance with capital**

When conceptualising economic empowerment, this study included capital as another major form of economic empowerment. Against this background, the respondents were asked to state whether or not they were assisted with capital by either Government or NGOs within the focus period - 2010 to 2015. The outcome was overwhelmingly on the negative, as 113 of the respondents (~94%) indicated that they never received capital from Government while only 7 (8.3%) attested to have received Government assistance in the form of capital. Furthermore, 5 of the 7 described the capital assistance as a little and only 2 recipients (i.e. 1.7%) described the assistance as average amounts. It is likely that majority who received capital assistance (i.e. 5 out of 7) could have received amounts that were hardly enough to start any income generating venture and all they could do was to use the supposed capital for consumption purposes. Hence, it did not translate into capital at all. On the other hand, a total of 15 respondents confirmed receiving assistance in the form of capital from NGOs.

However, in a rather similar trend the majority of the group, 12 out of 15 (80%) the amounts given were little, while 2 of them (13.3%) described them as average and only 1 recipient (6.7% of the beneficiaries) got a lot of capital. Effectively the efforts by both Government and NGOs only benefited 22 respondents (i.e. ~18.3%) while the majority (~81.7%) did not benefit. Then considering that most of those who benefited described the capital they got as a little, it could be argued that may be only those who depicted what they got as average or as a lot got amounts that could suffice as capital to venture into income generating projects and overallly these were only 5 constituting ~4.2% of the respondents. Again, the fact that

overall only 18.3% of the unemployed in Manonyane received some form of capital assistance over the 6 year duration signifies that the people of Manonyane were, at least during that time, overlooked and left to struggle with poverty largely on their own without much external assistance from either Government or NGOs. If it is further considered that only a meagre 4.2% could have received amounts that would qualify as capital to start some sort of sustainable income generating project(s) or ventures, the picture gets even shoddier. Just like with the other forms of economic empowerment, only very few individuals among the target group(s) benefited. This was a serious blow, as Rantšo (2015) also expounds that unemployed youth in Lesotho are faced with many challenges such as lack of start-up capital and market outlets

It is also this researcher's view that whilst provision of any amount of capital to the unemployed can always be viewed as a positive contribution by the benefactors, it requires some thought as to whether the provided amounts really constitute viable capital for the beneficiaries to actually start-up income generating projects or ventures. Other factors such as capacity building also come in, which brings into question whether the recipients were given and/or assessed to have the requisite skills to venture into those areas for which the capital funding was provided for. Without taking care of these fundamentals, among others, all capital injections regardless of the quantities may not result in the desired empowerment effects. Admittedly and in general, the availability of capital is critical for enabling the unemployed to implement income generating ventures or projects; especially those with their scope of skills. Indeed, on this particular aspect, it can be argued that, largely the lack of capital assistance and in the very few cases observed the availing of inadequate capital assistance from Government and/or NGOs generally explains why most respondents passionately pleaded if the Government and/or the NGOs could provide them with capital to engage in ventures that would enable them live economically independent lives.. Again, this aspect of the study, like other preceding aspects, still signifies a low impact of the economic empowerment endeavours by the key players – namely Government and NGOs, with specific reference to the Manonyane rural community.

#### **6.4.2.4 Assistance to access loans**

Another measure of economic empowerment employed in this study was whether the respondents received any assistance to access loans from either the Government or the NGOs.

Evidence from the study shows that just as with capital assistance, the majority of the respondents did not receive any assistance at all to access loans from either the Government or NGOs (see Figure 3). In specific terms 109 of the respondents (~91%) indicated that they did not receive such assistance from the Government, and only 11 respondents (~9%) did. Again, majority of the few recipients (10 out of 11) depicted the amounts accessed as a little and only 1 recipient (i.e. ~0.8% of the respondents) got an average amount. Similarly, 110 respondents (~92%) indicated that they did not receive any assistance to access loans from NGOs, and only 10 respondents (~8%) received this form of assistance from NGOs over the 6 year duration.; Again, 7 out of 10 received a little, while 3 (i.e. 2.5% of the respondents) got average amounts. It could be argued that, only 4 out of 120 respondents (~3.3%) were assisted by both Government and NGOs to sizeable access loans that could possibly enable recipients to kick-start sustainable income generating ventures.

As elsewhere, in the world with very little assistance from Government and/or any other organizations, the lending institutions (i.e. the banks) are highly unlikely to risk the investors' money by issuing loans to unemployed people. Hence, this means majority of the unemployed (~96.7%) in Manonyane did not manage to secure any loans that they could have required especially to venture into income generating projects and become economically active. Notably, this empowerment aspect by both Government and NGOs only accommodated 21 respondents (~17%) over the 6 year period while the rest ~83% was left out. Effectively, the programme had very limited impact in terms of its accessibility, and overallly the impact further shrinks as the majority recipients (13 out of the 17) only got a little while only 4 recipients (~3.3%) got average amounts and none got a lot. Therefore, it can be argued that just like all the other preceding economic empowerment efforts this one also could hardly have had any impact on the unemployed people in Manonyane in terms improving livelihood and poverty reduction in general.

The above observations notwithstanding, it remains of utmost importance for Government and NGOs to render assistance to the unemployed if these people are to be liberated from the vicious cycle of poverty in which majority of them are entangled. With adequate loans and capacitation, the unemployed adults will be in a position to explore new channels of earning a living. The availability of loans has the potential to even elevate these people from their main-stream economy inactivity to employers, hence benefiting the wide society and not only

themselves. When this plausible scenario is visible, then the impact of economic empowerment effort can be viewed as high. Furthermore, assistance with accessing loans by Government or any other economic empowerment institutions is vital because accessing of loans alone by individuals who are unemployed and poor is generally impossible; and may be in very rare instances possible but rather difficult and tedious. The Lesotho Government effectively summed this up over a decade ago by stating that, small-scale entrepreneurs failed to secure finance from commercial banks because of a lack of collateral (Ministry of Trade and Industry, Cooperatives and Marketing, 2002). The statement applies even now, and foreseeably, will continue to apply way into the future of Lesotho as a country, if not everywhere elsewhere across the continent or the world for that matter.

#### **6.4.2.5 Assistance with inputs**

Apart from education, enrolment in projects capital and loans, economic empowerment can also be measured in terms of assistance with inputs (such as seeds, irrigation pipes, fertilizers sewing machines and cooking stoves). The results (see Figure 4) indicate that only 20 respondents (~17%) received inputs from the Government and (~83%) did not. On the other hand, only 8 respondents (~7%) got inputs from NGOs while 112 (~93%) were not given any inputs from the NGOs. Effectively, and assuming there were no repetitive beneficiaries, only 28 out of 120 unemployed respondents (~24%) in Manonyane rural accessed this form of economic empowerment assistance over the 6 year period. This again is low in terms of its reach given the 6 year time-frame under consideration. If this rather constrained outreach level is considered together with the fact that all the recipients indicated that they only received a little inputs, then the impact rating of this empowerment effort sinks to very low levels, and presumably amounts to insignificance.

In this case, the majority of the unemployed in Manonyane did not get any inputs which they can use to eke a living. Furthermore, none of the few recipients attested to have had received a lot of inputs or to receiving inputs all the time from either the Government and/or NGOs. This explains why a sizable number 14 (11.7%) passionately pleaded for inputs in their final comments, which is a very positive and progressive mentality as opposed to situations where poor people expect some kind of ready-to-eat handouts from Government and/or NGOs. It can therefore be argued that for the unemployed in Manonyane rural area, inputs are generally the kind of stepping stones they need towards poverty reduction and gender equality. In terms

of rating this particular aspect of economic empowerment, one can argue that the highly limited and inadequate assistance rendered to the unemployed in Manonyane rural community simply means the impact of this economic empowerment effort was so low that it could even be inconsequential.

#### **6.4.3 Rating Government and NGOs efforts to help the poor**

In order to evaluate the impact of economic empowerment in Manonyane, the study asked the respondents to rate the overall Government and NGO efforts to help the poor. As shown in Figure 5, the majority of the respondents, that is 61 out of 120 (~50.8%) rated Government performance as very poor, while 49 (~40.8%) rated it as poor and only 1 respondent (~0.8%) rated the Government performance as good. Similarly, the majority, that is 73 out of 120 (~61%) rated the NGOs performance as very poor, while 35 (~29%) rated it as poor and 12 (10%) rated the NGOs' performance as average. Notably, only 0.8% of the respondents who rated Government efforts as good and none of them rated NGOs' performance as either good or very good. Hence, from these findings, it can be realized that a huge majority (87.2%) of the unemployed adults in Manonyane rural community viewed the overall performance of both Government and NGOs put together as very poor or poor, while 10% considered it as average and only 0.8% viewed it as good.

While the negative picture painted could be worrying, it is very much in line with the majority of the respondents' pronouncements on all other issues such as a huge majority never received any assistance in form of education, never enrolled in projects, never got capital, never accessed loans and never received inputs from either Government or NGOs. The rating by the respondents themselves just over-emphasizes what all the other aspects of the study have already indicated, which is that the impact of economic empowerment in Manonyane is rather low. Apart from that, it also suggests that poverty reduction was not achieved. In another study in King Sabata Dalindyebo municipality, Eastern Cape Province in South Africa, Sikrweqe (2013) unearthed a very similar trend as majority of respondents (88%) indicated that there were no projects taking place in their neighbourhood. It may be argued that this highlights the need for Governments and NGOs to be more effective or results oriented when it comes to implementing economic empowerment and poverty reduction measures. Putting policies and other sound official pronouncements in place alone, with very little or nothing to show on implementation, will not change the livelihoods of the poor.

#### **6.4.4 Perceptions on what Government and NGOs did to reduce poverty**

To find out the perceptions of the unemployed on what Government and NGOs did in Manonyane community, the respondents were asked to articulate their perceptions. The respondents' perceptions were captured using an arbitrary scale which was ranging from 0 to 10; where for instance 0 represents “not at all or never or total lack of satisfaction”, 5 represents “middle or average” and 10 represents “always or maximum satisfaction.” Recorded in Table 7 are the average (mean) values of the scores by the 120 respondents on each of the stated points, in line with the specified arbitrary scale. The study revealed that respondents have a low opinion or perception of what the Government and NGOs are doing towards poverty reduction, economic empowerment and promoting gender equality, with all the mean scores being less than average; worse still with 6 out of 7 mean scores being almost at the mid-point between 0 and 5 i.e. between “not at all” and “average” and only one aspect being rated 4 which is closer to 5 (average). Hence, the common perception is that both the Government and the NGOs did not do much in fighting poverty, empowering people economically and fighting gender inequality in their community. The perception rating is very much in line with respondents' ratings in all the other preceding aspects of the study. For instance, it would have been contradictory for Government or NGOs to get a high perception rating when all the other key contributory factors such as presence and accessibility of economic empowerment projects in the same community was rated very low. It therefore follows that the impact of the Government' and NGOs' economic empowerment programmes with regard to poverty reduction was low.

In a way, it can be argued that these observed trends are to some extent supported by official observations and pronouncements by Lesotho Government institutions. For instance, in a study carried out to assess the impact of some economic empowerment programmes focused on supporting a youth enterprises with start-up capital, the Central Bank of Lesotho (2012) established that the empowerment efforts did not make a significant impact on reducing youth unemployment in the country. This was a tacit admission of the failure of such programmes to achieve the desired objectives, though at the same time the institution went on to attribute the problem to the fact that a large number of youth from tertiary institutions was being released into the labour market each year, hence wiping out any impact made by such empowerment efforts.

In another research in Uganda, Busiinge (2010) set out to establish the impact of donor aided projects on the social and economic well-being of the grassroots communities in the Rwenzori Sub-region of Uganda. The study found some evidence indicating that some social and economic welfare effects had indeed accrued to the beneficiaries but to a very minimal extent. Specifically, the research established that on average, 5 out of 15 project beneficiaries (i.e. ~ 33%) had been economically and socially impacted upon by the donor-funded projects they participated in. However, the larger proportion (~67%) of the project beneficiaries continued to struggle to realize any economic and social effects, which the researcher attributed mainly to the structural approach favoured by both the NGO and the donors. In concurrence with Busiinge (2010), it can be argued that the approach by any benefactor – Government or NGO – is a significant determinant to the level of impact any empowerment programme(s) will ultimately have on the target group(s).

## **6.5 Gender equality**

This section discusses the findings on the impact of economic empowerment programmes on gender equality. It also discusses how gender was incorporated in the economic empowerment programmes that were implemented in Manonyane rural community between 2010 and 2015. The impact of economic empowerment programme on gender equality will be assessed by looking at the number of men and women in the respondents' households who were enrolled in economic empowerment programmes in Manonyane rural community since 2010. It will also be assessed by examining how the respondents perceived Government and NGOs efforts in economically empowering the unemployed in Manonyane between 2010 and 2015. The discussion on how gender was incorporated in the economic empowerment programmes that were implemented will be based on the findings from the Government and NGOs officials. All this is geared to answering the first and the second research questions.

### **6.5.1 Number of people enrolled in economic empowerment programmes**

As has been mentioned earlier, the impact of economic empowerment programmes was measured by looking at the number of men and women from the respondents' household who were enrolled in economic empowerment programmes in Manonyane between 2010 and 2015. On this aspect, the respondents were asked to indicate number of all household members and their gender who participated in any economic empowerment programmes. It emerged that a total of 102 household members of the respondents participated of which 56

(~54.9 %) were male and 46 (~45.1%) were female (Table 8). On face value, the gender balance may seem relatively fair though it is still skewed in favour of men. However, if this slight gender empowerment imbalance is considered together with Lesotho's gender ratio which is generally reported to be ~51% women to ~49% men, then the issue of gender equality clearly comes to the fore and effectively increases the disparity in the gender empowerment processes.

Therefore, if more men than women continue to be enrolled in economic empowerment programmes, it is likely that economic empowerment will be skewed towards men. This may ultimately be a source of gender inequalities or worse still a further entrenchment of the scourge. This will be against what the GAD holds. On the overall, again, this finding shows that the number of men and women who were enrolled in the programmes is very low given the number of the respondents (120) and the household family size of 5 giving a total number of 600 household members. Effectively only 102 out of 600 people (17%) enrolled in economic empowerment programmes in the 6 year duration. This is a very small number or proportion considering the length of the duration. The period under review is very long hence the expectation was to get a much larger number than 102. For instance, one can imagine, if just 1 household member per respondent were enrolled each year, then the total number of beneficiaries was going to be 720 for the six years, which is a far cry from the reported 102 beneficiaries over the same period.

### **6.5. 2 How the Government factored in gender equality**

This section discusses the findings on how gender was incorporated in the economic empowerment programmes. These findings are derived from the interview schedule for the Government officials. The Ministry of Gender and Youth, Sports and Recreation points out that most of their programmes and projects target rural women since most of the women in the rural areas had husbands who were working in the South African mines, who generally neglect their families back home, to the extent that the wives are given various unpleasant nicknames such as "*gold widows*". Also, the Ministry added that when things stopped working well, even the same men come back home to Lesotho. The scenario is currently very visible with the closure of many South African mines, rendering the former miners jobless. The former miners are coming home in large numbers and the Ministry of Gender and Youth, Sports and Recreation is burdened with imparting new survival skills to them even to those

former miners. Hence both men and women are incorporated in all the programmes and projects of the Ministry without any gender discrimination. This is encouraged since this study is aligned to the GAD. On the other hand, the Ministry of Forestry and Land Reclamation aims to enrol equal numbers of men and women in the projects they implement provided the nature of projects allows it. The other Ministries highlighted they just assist any citizen in need, subject to availability of resources.

### **6.5. 3 How NGOs factored in gender equality**

In this section, the discussion will be centred on how gender was incorporated in the economic empowerment programmes by the NGOs. These findings came from interviews with NGOs officials. Suffice to say, the entire respondent NGOs highlighted that they incorporate both genders when implementing their projects; and no gender discrimination is accepted both in principle and practice. This is commendable since it is in line with the GAD. While the proclamation sounds very noble, with regard to Manonyane rural community the same assertion was not proved. This could be because there is very low or virtually nothing that the NGOs are doing for the unemployed people of this community. At this point, it is worth highlighting that most, 5 respondent NGOs (~83.3%) acknowledged that they had never conducted any empowerment activities in Manonyane rural community since 2010. It is indeed the researcher's view that this is a true reflection of the situation in Manonyane, where by NGO visibility is practically non-existent. As such, one can argue that the Manonyane community remains very much excluded from most empowerment programmes the NGOs. To that end, the calling will not only be for NGOs to incorporate but to prioritize this community in their future economic empowerment endeavours.

### **6.5. 4 Perceptions on Government efforts to reduce gender inequalities**

In line with the above, the perceptions of the respondents on Government efforts to reduce gender inequalities reveals that respondents have a low opinion of what the Government did towards economic empowerment in Manonyane between 2010 and 2015, see Table 7. Their perceptions seem to be justified given the low number of respondents' household members that were enrolled in economic empowerment programmes during that period. Apart from that, the respondents themselves reported earlier on that the majority of them were not enrolled in economic empowerment programmes since 2010.

### **6.5.5 Perceptions on NGO efforts**

In Table 7 the same low rating was also given regarding what NGOs did to reduce gender inequalities by economically empowering unemployed adults. The respondents rated lowly on NGOs efforts because small number of their household members was enrolled in economic empowerment programmes since 2010. This is a surprising finding given that NGOs are generally well known for their tremendous work in poverty reduction as well as ensuring gender equality. One of the possible explanations for the low rating is that NGOs are simply not there in Manonyane rural community. That is why this study finally made a recommendation that research has to be conducted to establish why NGOs are not covering this area.

### **6.6 Challenges faced by the unemployed adults**

The challenges faced by the unemployed respondents will be discussed in this section. The challenges were measured in terms of how the respondents themselves defined poverty and how they rated themselves in terms of either being rich, average, poor, very poor or other. It will also include how they rated their levels of poverty since 2010, by specifically comparing the number of meals taken per day in 2010 to those for 2015. Respondents were also asked to make an approximation of the portion of poor people in their respective villages in descriptive terms - none, a quarter, half, three quarters or all. Lastly, the section will discuss the findings which came out in relation to their responses on the degree of poverty in their villages, that is, whether it had remained the same, decreased, increased or other. This part of the discussion provides an answer to the third research question which focuses on challenges faced by the unemployed people. An investigation of the challenges faced by the unemployed people is crucial because it is through articulating those challenges that appropriate solutions to their plight can be drawn. Armed with such information, Governments and NGOs will be able to identify the urgent needs of the unemployed as well as coming up with relevant interventions to arrest accompanying social problems.

#### **6.6.1 Meals taken per day in 2010 and in 2015**

The number of meals taken by an individual per day usually indicates their poverty levels or standard of life. This study therefore looked at the number of meals taken per day by the respondents in 2010 and also in 2015 in an effort to get some insights on the respondents' standard of life, and the direction in which the poverty levels could have shifted over that

period. The outcome, (see Figure 6) shows that in 2010 the number and proportion of people who used to take 4, 3, 2 and 1 meal(s) per day were, 17 (~14%), 50 (~42%), 43 (~36%) and 10 (~8%), respectively. On the other hand, in 2015 the number and proportion of those people taking 4, 3, 2 and 1 meal(s) per day 1 (~0.8%), 29 (~24%), 68(~57%) and 22 (~18%), respectively. Again, in 2015 more than half of the respondents 68 (57%) were taking 2 meals per day with only 35% affording more than 2 meals per day. Yet in 2010 half of the people (50%) could afford more than 2 meals per day. This again is in line with the fact that more people (18%) survived on 1 meal per day in 2015 as compare to (8%) who survived on 1 meal per day in 2010.

Needless to say, having to survive on one meal per day usually makes poor people vulnerable to social problems such as prostitution, human trafficking, drug abuse and drug abuse, among others. Some might end up committing crimes such as theft, housebreaking, robbery and hijacking. Consequently, it can be argued that since a much bigger number of unemployed people could afford to eat more food in 2010 than in 2015, this indicates that the unemployed were worse off in 2015 than they were in 2010. However, this does not preclude other factors such as the changes in food prices and changes in status of the respondents – for example some who had become part of the unemployed by 2015, were actually on employment in 2010 hence they could afford to have more meals per day. But on the overall, it remains the researcher's view that the revealed trend serves as a strong indicator that the standard of living for the unemployed in Manonyane has gone down over period 2010 to 2015.

### **6.6.2 What respondents prioritized when spending money**

People usually spend money according to their level of poverty or capacity. The study attempted to establish the priorities of the unemployed when it comes to spending their money. As expected, in response, the majority 69 (~58%) indicated food as their first priority over everything else (see Figure 6). The rest (~42%) indicated other priorities broken down as follows: school fees - 14 (12%), rent -5(~4%), medication -5(~4%), clothing- 9 (~8%) and other things- 18 (~15%). What is really encouraging and poignant at the same time is the fact that altogether, 85% of the respondents prioritize the very basic needs for all human beings - food, accommodation, health, education and clothing. It can be argued that these are largely people who are greatly focused and pretty much aware of the need to move themselves out of the poverty situation in which they find themselves. Of course, their specific priority of

items depends very much on the individual's specific situation. For example those staying in their own accommodation would naturally not talk of rent as a priority but other basic items such as school fees and food; yet for the ones who did not have their own houses rentals are really a big issue, the among others. Then for those with chronic sicknesses, medication is obviously among their top priorities. Maslow's need hierarchy theory sheds light on why respondents prioritized those items when spending money. Maslow (as cited in Kaur (2013) expounds that physiological needs are the needs at the bottom of the triangle and include the lowest order needs and most basic which includes the need to satisfy the fundamental biological drives such as food, air, water and shelter. To note is that these needs are arranged in a hierarchical order hence one will have to buy food first and only after that will he or she think of buying other things such as new clothes and paying for school fees.

### **6.6.3 Respondents' definition of poverty**

The meaning of poverty, according to the respondents themselves, was also used to gauge their level of poverty and ultimately their challenges. As shown in Table 5, poverty was defined differently by the respondents. Slightly less than half of the respondents, that is 58 (~48.33%) viewed poverty as lack of income, while 38 (~31.67%) viewed it as lack of opportunities, 20 (~16.67%) defined poverty in terms of lack of basic commodities, 2 (~1.67%) saw it as lack of democracy, and the other 2 (~1.67%) had other definitions of their own. Suffice to say, those who defined poverty as lack of opportunities could have been referring to opportunities such as jobs and capital. Respondents were defining poverty as they saw or experienced it. It can be deduced that, since the majority (~78%) of the respondents rated themselves as either poor or very poor, it is therefore most likely that they largely lack income and opportunities; and in any case the lack of basic commodities is largely part and parcel of these two factors. This suggests that since they did not have income, which is also largely determined by lack of opportunities, then they are poor as the rating confirms. Moreover, with neither income nor opportunities, one is bound to find it difficult to get basic commodities, unless one resorts to unorthodox means of getting such things – in that case deviant and/or illicit activities.

### **6.6.4 How respondents rated themselves**

From Table 5 it can be observed that none of the respondents considered themselves as rich. Only 25 respondents (~20.8%) viewed themselves as average – that is being somewhere

between what they viewed as being poor and being rich. The majority of them 51 (~42.5%) rated themselves as poor while 42 (~35%) saw themselves as very poor. Very few of them 2 (~1.67%) rated themselves otherwise. Effectively a huge majority (~77.5%) of the unemployed fall into the category of being poor or extremely poor, with only about 22.5% falling outside that category. The finding on this particular aspect co-relates well with all other preceding findings; generally revealing that the unemployed in this community were experiencing tougher times – living under poverty or abject poverty conditions. For instance, the majority (75%) was eating 2 or less meals per day in 2015, which on its own is an indicator of poverty or extreme poverty, and again a huge majority also reported that they never got assistance from both the Government and NGOs. Those (1.67%) who rated themselves otherwise might be those having very fluctuating lifestyles, hence they found it difficult to view themselves as poor, average or rich. Maybe, they knew that they are generally on and off employment, hence their reported unemployment status was only a temporary status and/or maybe here and there they get some lucrative opportunities to enable them to live any lifestyle of their choices.

It is also worth noting that, apart from employment status, there are other various factors that are likely to have compounded their poverty status. Such factors include family size and household income. Studies in other countries have revealed an unfortunate correlation between poverty and family sizes. For example, the Cambodian CSES of 1993/94 highlights that the poor tend to live in larger households, with an average family size of 6.6 persons in the poorest quintile, compared to 4.9 in the richest quintile (Kanbur et al., 2003). A similar observation was made by Okurut et al (2002) who found that poor households in Uganda have bigger household sizes compared with non-poor households. The Manonyane study also revealed an average household size of 5 persons, which is arguably on the higher side.

Observably, when family sizes are large, the burden will be heavy since few resources will be spread over many household members. In this study, the unemployed adults' average household monthly income was M1 575-00 which translated to USD106.92 per household per month (using the prevalent exchange rate of 1USD to M14.73), which is very low by any standards. Since the average family size was 5, then the monthly income translated to USD21.38 per person per month and lastly to USD0.71 per person per day. According to the World Bank definition of poverty which specifies 1USD per person per day as the poverty

line, these unemployed people, together with their household members, were below the poverty line. For that reason, they were poor or even extremely poor. This situation indicates the need for social support and economic empowerment of this rural community, by both the Government and NGOs, to ensure poverty reduction.

### **6.6.5 How respondents rated their level of poverty since 2010**

The study specifically asked the respondents to descriptively rate their degree of poverty as from 2010 to 2015, as shown in Table 5. An overwhelming majority 89 (~74%) said their level of poverty had increased, 30 (~25%) indicated that their level of poverty had remained the same and 1 (~1%) did not go with any of the suggested specific trends - increased, remained the same or decreased – and opted for other. Of critical importance though is that the outcome is very consistent with the other findings already discussed and it also paints a negative picture of the current standard of life for the unemployed, and worse still deterioration is revealed. For instance, an increase in the level of poverty goes hand in hand with less capacity in the access of basic needs which was highlighted by a decrease in the number of meals these people ate per day in 2015. While it is apparent that Government and NGOs have really not done enough for this community, also, on a large scale, it can be said that their poverty levels could also have been exacerbated by the prevailing global recession together with other various global and/or regional economic dynamics. Effectively, even the country's GDP had been on a decreasing trend over the period covered by this research, with the GDP figures being reported as US\$2,52 billion for 2011, US\$2,38 billion for 2012, US\$2,22 billion for 2013 and US\$2,18 billion for 2014 (UNDP, 2016 ).

### **6.6.6 Proportion of poor people in respondents' villages**

The study also sought the views of the respondents on the prevalence of poverty in their respective villages in general by asking them to indicate their rating of proportion of poor people (see Table 5). In this regard, 11 respondents (~9%) viewed all (100%) of the people in their village as poor, 48 (~40%) viewed three quarters (75%) of the people in their village as poor, 50 (~42%) viewed half (50%) of the village as poor, and 11 (~9%) viewed a quarter of the village as poor. It can be deduced that a huge majority, 109 out of 120 (~91%), rated the proportion of poor people in Manonyane community at 50% and above, with only ~9% rating it below 50%. Combining the above figures together, a weighted average proportion of poor people in the Manonyane community was determined to be ~62%. Hence it can be

said; overall, the respondents viewed the majority (62%) of the people in their community as poor. Although this figure is purely derived from the respondents' individual perceptions, it seems to be very much in line with the widely acknowledged high levels of poverty among rural communities in general, and not only in Lesotho but even the rest of Africa. So, effectively the respondents concurred that there was widespread poverty within their villages and this is also in agreement with the manner in which they rated themselves. In a way, this revelation also signifies the low impact of economic empowerment programmes by Government and NGOs since indications are that most people in this community are still living in poverty.

### **6.6.7 Rating the trend of degree of poverty in respondents' villages**

The respondents were asked to rate the degree of poverty in their villages over the period under study, in terms of whether it had increased, remained the same, or decreased, as shown in Table 5. What came out was very consistent with the way they also rated their degree of poverty, to some extent indicating that the respondents were generally truthful in their response to the different questions. In this case, 97 of the respondents (~81%) stated that the level of poverty in their villages had actually increased, while 23 (~19%) considered the poverty levels to have remained the same, over the period 2010 to 2015; and of course none of the respondents viewed the level of poverty in their village to have decreased. The response to this question corresponded with the respondents' rating of their own degree of poverty, to which a similarly huge majority indicated that they were worse off in 2015 than they were in 2010.

### **6.6.8 Coping with poverty**

Respondents were also asked to state how they were coping or surviving with poverty since 2010, using an arbitrary rating scale of 0 to 10, where for example 0 denotes 'not at all or never', 5 denotes 'the middle or average' and 10 denotes 'always or strongly agree.' This aspect was explored using four different questions, to each the respondents had to put their own scores, and the average scores are recorded in Table 8. A huge majority strongly affirmed that when spouses are also not employed life is tough, as highlighted by the average score of 9. This is expected because if both spouses are unemployed then there will be little or no source of income, hence life is bound to be a big challenge for such couples or families. Lack

of food was also strongly affirmed as a major challenge to most of them with an average rating of 8 and this agrees with the earlier observed reduction in the number of meals per day.

The item on whether respondents were managing to reduce poverty on their own got an average rating (5) which could mean that at times they manage at times they do not manage, or the chances of individuals managing to reduce poverty on their own was about 50%. It may be highlighted that the question referred to just reducing it and not really getting out of poverty. It can therefore be argued that the people really need external help if they are to improve their status and even more so get out of poverty. The aspect of whether unemployment can be solved through economic empowered was rated above average with a mean score of 7, but not very high or not as high as what would ideally be expected. Whilst it cannot be stated as fact, it can still be argued that the lack of strong affirmation to this aspect was very much influenced by the respondents' previously expressed misgivings regarding the impact of such programmes by Government and NGOs; and such perceptions being informed by their previous experiences. Hence, it is more of an expression of lack of faith in such programmes.

### **5.7 Perceptions on causes of poverty**

Perceptions on causes of poverty were also asked in order to understand the respondents' views on what they think contributed to their status especially for those who rated themselves as poor and also as an explanation to their rating on the level of poverty in their village. It is vital to get people's sentiments on these issues so that measures can be sought beforehand. Failure to contain poverty has serious consequences which will in the long run haunt the communities and the nation as a whole. The responses to this question will also assist the researcher to make recommendations as to what needs to be done in order to fight poverty, cognizant of the fact that a problem correctly identified and diagnosed is a problem half solved.

Again, the various statements were to be rated on an arbitrary scale of 0 to 10 with exactly same meaning as defined in Section 5.6.7 above; and Table 6 shows the average rating of each item calculated from scores of the 120 respondents. The mean rating for the proposition that poverty is caused by laziness was 4, which means that very few of the respondents, if any, strongly holds the view that poverty is caused by laziness; and clearly the majority disagrees

with that view. To a great extent the researcher agrees with the respondents' view. The researcher's view is that poverty is often a result of multifaceted factors and dimensions of which, in most cases, the immediate victim has no control over. Such factors could include political instability, misgovernance, corruption, nepotism and neglect by immediate past family generation, just to name a few.

The two propositions, namely lack of education and too few NGOs received an equal rating of 5. This also sounds reasonable because lack of formal education necessarily mean lack of applied and/or skills for one to be a successful entrepreneur or at least lead an average life provided the environment is conducive. On the issue of NGOs, one can argue that if a country starts believing that the success of its citizens is in NGOs' hands, then it is no longer worth to be a country at all. In the same vein, the citizens would be chasing the winds if they start believing that NGOs extricate them from poverty. More often than not, these organizations are very effective in assisting worst case scenarios to avert and/or minimize loss of life. The highest average rating of 7 was obtained for each of the three propositions, namely poverty is caused by Government failure, poverty is caused by political instability and poverty is caused lack of inputs.

Again, majority earlier reported that the Government has not done much to assist them. Hence, that explains why they attributed poverty to Government failure. In any case, it is the duty of the Government to ensure prosperity of the country's citizens, and not NGOs or any other external institutions. At the same time, the other equally rated items (that is, political instability and lack of inputs) are almost inseparable from Government and governance – it can be argued that the three are just but one full package. Some also attributed poverty to poor health and lack of opportunities rating these two aspects a little bit more than average. On this, it also explains why earlier they pointed out that poverty means lack of opportunities; and also the poorer one's health is the more the individual's opportunities are diminished. So, there is also synergistic relationship between these two aspects. But more importantly, the availing of opportunities rests with those who are tasked with the duty of serving the people, which is Government.

### **6.7. 1 Respondents' views on poverty solutions**

This section discusses respondents' responses to the last question in the questionnaire which required them to make any other comments. Most of the comments were what they viewed as solutions to their situation. A majority of the respondents, 54 respondents (45%) indicated that they wanted jobs, 3 (2.5%) cited a need for capital, and 14 (11.67%) were in need of inputs (such as seeds, irrigation pipes, fertilizers, sewing machines and cooking stoves), 1 (0.83%) expected the Government to build houses for poor people, 2 (1.67%) wanted unemployment grants, 2 (1.67%) wanted an increase in the income from forest development projects (*fato-fato*), and 7 (5.83%) preferred free high school or secondary education. The rest (with regards to Government) 16 (13.33%) also expressed various possible poverty solutions, which the researcher does not classify under economic empowerment though. Of these, 8 (6.67%) stressed that Government must fulfil election promises, 5 (4.17%) needed Government to provide proximity water services as they were fetching water from very far places, the other 2 (1.67%) wanted the construction of bridges, and another 1(0.83%) said the Government should stop nepotism. It could be argued that, this group by and large seems to be rallies on one thematic point, namely the fulfilment of election promises by those who will ultimately win the majority vote to govern.

Most, if not all, of the expectations expressed by this minority 13.33% generally resonates with the usual political campaign messages by politicians, loaded with all sorts of fantastic promises, including eradication of vices such as corruption and nepotism, building house for the poor, construction of bridges across every other stream, and giving people cash in form of unemployment grants, or any other forms of grants. Hence, in a way these people are saying if every Government of the day could make good of its extraordinary pre-election promises, then poverty would be minimized or better still eradicated. Again, some of their expectations were not far-fetched, for instance being provided with houses. This is because there is such a programme in neighbouring South Africa, as indicated by Sikrweqe, (2013) that 88% of the households were living in formal houses which were either provided by the Government through Government subsidies or built by the owners themselves, 11% of the households are living in the houses provided by the municipality through the reconstruction and development programme. Again those who requested an increase in the income from

forest development projects echoed what was said by what was also found by Zibambele programme beneficiaries in a study by Naidoo (2010) in Kwa-Zulu Natal in South Africa.

Furthermore, unemployment grants are a common phenomenon in some of the developed countries, Bawden, Penketh, Connolly and McDonald (2015) gave the following examples of such countries, Estonia, France, Germany and Ireland, among others. Bawden et al adds that the grants are mostly given out with conditions such as people on low incomes who have worked, been self-employed, or studied for at least 180 days of the year, to be out of work involuntarily, and claimants have to be registered unemployed with the unemployment Insurance Fund. France's unemployment benefits are among the most generous in Europe, payable even for net salaries of €6,959 (£5,021) per month (Bawden et al., 2015). The respondents also expressed what they expected from the NGOs. Out of the 120 respondents, 9 (7.50%) were in need of capital, 2 (1.67%) saw food as an urgent need, with 6 of them preferring to be enrolled in projects, and then 2 (1.67%) were in need of toilets. Lastly, there were 2 (1.67%) respondents who reserved their comments and this might reflect a high rate of disillusionment where they see a bleak future with no assistance coming their way from any quarter.

## **6.8 Government and NGOs officials' data**

In this section, the discussion will be based on the findings from the Government and NGO officials using data which was collected using an interview schedule. It is worth noting that the findings on how unemployed people were economically empowered, the extent of that assistance in Manonyane was covered earlier on in this discussion. The issues of how they were economically empowered and the impact of such empowerment were specifically covered in chapter 5 under section 5.6.3. The issue of how gender was incorporated in the programmes was also covered in chapter 5 under section 5.6.2. The interview schedule had ten items, and in this discussion these will be compressed into three thematic subjects, namely definitions of gender equality and poverty, what rural people can do to economically empower themselves, and challenges encountered while assisting the rural poor.

### **6.8.1 Definitions of gender equality and poverty**

The study intended to establish how the Lesotho Government defines gender equality and poverty. Definitions are crucial because they give a basis on how to assess as well as rectify

a given phenomenon. All the respondent Ministries except one did not have definitions of gender equality of their own. The Ministry of Gender, Youth and Recreation, which has one, defines gender equality as equal access to and control over resources for both males and females. Send a Cow Lesotho holds that gender equality is whereby males and females are given equal opportunities to benefit from the project. The rest of the NGOs operate without a specific definition.

As for the definition of poverty, the Lesotho Homemakers Association uses a holistic definition of poverty which covers lack of income, basic commodities and opportunities. The other NGOs do not have a specific definition in place. On the other hand, the Government of Lesotho does not have a specific definition of poverty; which is rather problematic. In such a case, one cannot help wondering as to how the Government, which has the full responsibility of fighting poverty, can ever effectively execute its responsibility without some kind of standard definition in place. This kind of scenario can only lead to different definitions, evaluation approaches, prioritization and measures by different Ministries and/or departments of the same Government, resulting in chaotic, uncoordinated, wasteful and ineffective efforts. More so, the situation creates a fertile ground for negative societal vices such as corruption and nepotism to prevail, as individuals in decision making positions can safely use personal discretion as to which communities and/or individuals are to be assisted with state resources supposedly meant to fight poverty.

### **6.8.2 What rural people can do to economically empower themselves**

Both the Government and NGO officials echoed the same sentiments on what rural people should do on their own to reduce poverty, in which self-employment was predominantly emphasized. Various officials emphasized that there was need for the unemployed people to strive to be self-reliant by generating employment for themselves instead of waiting for either Government or NGOs to spoon-feed them. While the importance of self-employment and/or self-reliance as stressed can never be over emphasized, the fact that more often than it requires start-up capital, which is not available, should never be overlooked. However, some officials tried to somewhat downplay, or to some extent refute, the issue of start-up capital by highlighting the use locally available resources to make simple hand-made items for sale - such use of grass to make clay pots, brooms, mats and hats.

Some also propose that unemployed people could also gather and sell traditional vegetables which naturally grow in the fields, such as *xela*, *seruoe*, *tjoto* and *bobatsi*. According to the official, those vegetables are very, nutritious, delicious and healthy, hence are usually sort after by the urban dwellers. However, it can be argued that whilst all these official proportions are noble, they can never take away the Government responsibility to facilitate creation of more and more formal employment opportunities and effectively grow the national economy for the benefits of all citizens. To some extent, the same can be said of the NGOs. It can be further argued that these high sounding officially proposed solutions more often than not tend to only sustain a kind of hand-to-mouth livelihood rather than pulling someone out of poverty. Moreover, majority of the people in Lesotho are already working in the informal industry, and one cannot imagine that the informal industry does not also have its own saturation limit.

Agriculture was also cited as another potential poverty reduction strategy if farmers could grow crops for home consumption as well as for sale. In line with this, it was also suggested that unemployed people in rural areas can also eke a living through planting trees, canning peaches and drying peaches and vegetables for sale. Greenhouse farming technology using recycled material such as plastic papers was cited for them to use in winter since Lesotho experience very low temperatures in winter. Yes, the possibility of people deriving a decent life or even creating employment from agriculture can also not be disputed. In fact, in a study conducted in Mozambique, Cumbe (2010) unearthed that through the encouragement of traditional leaders some communities had, in addition to traditional crops, planted fruit trees from which they were generating cash through selling the fruit (such as cashew nuts and oranges) and other products.

Nevertheless, the issue of inputs, in the form of seeds, training fertilizers and water sources and irrigation equipment, still calls for Government and NGOs assistance if the people are to do it at a scale that can impact on their socio-economic lives. For instance, it is common knowledge that Lesotho is a drought prone country. Consequently, the issue of irrigation is critical for any significant agricultural ventures. Again, agriculture demands knowledge and skills if people are to earn a decent living from it, beyond just subsistence farming. In fact, the importance of inputs and skills in agriculture is amply demonstrated by the disastrous effects of Zimbabwe's land reform programme, whereby highly productive land was massively acquired from those with inputs and skills and distributed to the majority with

neither inputs nor skills (Hapazari, 2015). Hapazari further warns the South African Government not to follow in the same footsteps.

The issue of cooperatives was also articulated. The main proposition in that regard was that the unemployed people had to espouse the idea of coming together as cooperatives to pull resources together to secure sufficient capital for income generating projects. In buttressing this point, some pointed out that, in Lesotho, getting into informal business was easier for the unemployed since there were no legal requirements. On the overall, it can be said the official line of thought was that the unemployed needed to change their mind set through discarding the notion that the Government and NGOs should be the ones to do everything for them and start embracing new ideas of innovativeness. Basically, the unemployed were expected to be hardworking, enterprising and pro-active. Such sentiments, to an extent are plausible but it's the implementation, which is fraught with challenges. Furthermore, the situation is not helped by the discordance created by political office seekers, during election fever moments when all and sundry are not spared the promise of manna from heaven once some individuals and political parties get into office. It is only when they are in office that they start talking reality, but even so that reality is publicly emphasized because when the next election comes, the same colourful and attractive campaign promises might still need to be rehashed.

### **6.8.3 Challenges encountered while assisting the rural poor**

A look at challenges faced by the Government and NGOs was necessary so as to establish the factors which impede the economic empowerment of unemployed adults. The investigation revealed a host of challenges faced by both the Government and NGOs in their empowerment efforts. The Government highlighted unwillingness by some of the unemployed to join the running economic empowerment programmes as one big challenge. Although the research did not investigate the possible reasons for the cited resistance, it can be hypothesized that the reason could be multifaceted including laziness on the part of the individuals, though earlier on the majority strongly disputed the notion of laziness on their part; paltry returns – if individuals viewed what they will get too little compared to the returns and time committed, naturally they will resist; and mistrust. Some may actually have previous experiences where promised benefits were not fulfilled at all or partially fulfilled to their disappointment. This is just to highlight a few possible causes of the reported lethargic attitude towards Government initiatives.

The Ministry of Labour and Employment also pointed out that it does not have a policy framework; hence there is no specific point of reference for the Ministry. This was effectively detrimental to the smooth running of the Ministry, and therefore it is a huge challenge. Finally, most Ministries also cited lack of sufficient resources as an insurmountable challenge on their part. This is pretty obvious as one can only give away what they have. Effectively, this was pushing the matter to the Government budget's allocation mechanisms – acknowledging that as much as they saw the need to do more in their areas of focus, they were constrained by their share of the national cake.

Like the Government Ministries, NGOs also face various challenges. Top of their problems was lack of political will to do things properly and/or outside the political box. Consequently, political party leaders tend to be unco-operative with some of them always wanting to dictate who the beneficiaries should be. Local authorities were also cited as a challenge to smooth running of programmes because at times they insist on inclusion of their undeserving relatives, especially when it comes to drawing lists of vulnerable children. This creates friction between the NGO staff and the leadership or disadvantages the intended beneficiaries in the case whereby the NGO staff giving in.

The other challenge pointed out was that, the rural poor were generally less willing to work (i.e. laziness), to take risks, to venture into new ground with some failing even to attend meetings. Interestingly, the issue of laziness was also highlighted by Government officials, although the people themselves strongly denied it. Suffice to say, one is tempted to assume that indeed there could be some substance on this aspect of laziness. However, the strong rebuttable of such an assertion by those said to be lazy could be an honest perception on their part – for, in any case, it is only by reflection of other eternal objects or human beings that we can become more aware of whom we are. Inadequate funding was also a commonly cited challenge, which indeed hampers implementation of economic empowerment programmes by the organizations. However, Kraak (2000) argues that the so-called funding crisis in the NGOs sector is more “myth than reality” since there is a shortage of convincing evidence in the research findings that development aid has declined (p.18). One wonders if the same argument would not hold even at this particular juncture.

## **6.9 Conclusion**

The preceding discussion evaluated the economic empowerment of unemployed adults for poverty reduction and gender equality. The first section discussed the distinctive features of the unemployed adults highlighting that most of them were young. The discussion was also centred around the three fundamental objectives of this study. With the first objective it emerged that the impact of Government and NGO efforts in economically empowering unemployed adults in Manonyane rural community to ensure poverty reduction between 2010 and 2015 was low since the majority of the unemployed attested that they never received any economic empowerment.

The second objective was achieved and the result was that the extent to which gender equality was factored in the economic empowerment programmes implemented in Manonyane rural community was generally good since there was no huge difference between the numbers of males and females enrolled in the programmes. The third objective was also achieved as the study revealed that the unemployed adults faced numerous challenges. There was a relationship between their challenges and their proposed solutions. They faced challenges such as having to eat less numbers of meals per day than in 2010, lack of and inadequate access to assistance with education, capital, loans and inputs. Their proposed solutions to their plight include being given job opportunities, unemployment grant, free high school education, houses and for the Government to fulfil promises. From the NGOs, they requested for assistance with capital, projects, inputs toilets, and food.

Data from Government and NGOs officials revealed that there is no specific definition of poverty in place. As for gender equality the Ministry of Gender operates with a definition. The study unearthed that between 2010 and 2015, there were a number of economic empowerment programmes in place but very few numbers of people in Manonyane were enrolled. The challenges confronting the Government and NGOs include lack of cooperation from the unemployed, political will and funds, among others. They suggested that unemployed people can also fight poverty on their own through the use of local resources as inputs, forming co-operatives and start income generating projects as well as changing their mind-sets.



## **CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **7.1 Conclusions**

The study's succinct overall goal was to evaluate the impact of economic empowerment programmes by Government and NGOs on the livelihoods of unemployed adults in Lesotho's Manonyane rural community, with specific reference to poverty reduction and gender equality. To that end, the study was guided by the following three specific objectives, namely: to evaluate the impact of Government and NGO efforts in economically empowering unemployed adults in Manonyane rural community to ensure poverty reduction between 2010 and 2015; to assess the extent to which gender equality was factored in the economic empowerment programmes implemented in Manonyane rural community between 2010 and 2015 and to ascertain the unemployed adults' challenges and their proposed solutions.

Firstly, the research revealed that most of the unemployed were young adults, who can be deemed to be at the peak of a normal working life. Hence the country was losing out on human capital. With regard to the first objective, the findings revealed that the impact of both Government and NGO efforts in economically empowering the unemployed adults in Manonyane to ensure poverty reduction between 2010 and 2015 was very low or non-existent. In fact, the majority of the unemployed attested that they never received any economic empowerment, a point which was not refuted by either Government or NGOs. In addition, most NGOs acknowledged their complete absence from Manonyane rural community, while the ones who affirmed to have worked in Manonyane could not point out any visible and specific outcomes of their efforts. In the same vein, the Government generally talked about national programmes in general, and again nothing specific for Manonyane rural community was pointed out. In fact, it could also be concluded that the Government tacitly conceded that it could only have very little, if anything, to economically empower the unemployed of Manonyane community, or even anywhere else across the country, since the officials generally cited lack of political will and low budgetary allocations as their key challenges to executing their community development mandates. Certainly, with neither sufficient funding nor sufficient support from their powerful superiors, who are the politicians, what would the Government technocrats and/or bureaucrats ever do to impact on any vulnerable groups.

On a positive note, it can be concluded that the findings reflected a good gender balance in the implementation of economic empowerment programmes targeting the unemployed in Manonyane rural community. The balance was clearly authenticated by the fact that the ratio of unemployed beneficiaries, which was 56% males to 46% females, was almost equal to the ratio of unemployed males (57%) to unemployed females (43%) in this community as established in this study. Furthermore, both Government and NGO officials stressed their non-discriminatory approach when implementing economic empowerment programmes, and such assertions were not refuted by the unemployed respondents either.

Thirdly, it can be concluded that the study revealed that the unemployed adults in this community faced numerous challenges, highlighted by lack of and/or insufficiency of the most basic human needs – food, shelter and sanitation. Also, to some extent, there was a correlation between the challenges faced by the unemployed in Manonyane and their proposed solutions, which predominantly centred pleas to Government and NGOs to provide them with the basics, such as food, housing, toilets, water, free post-primary education and jobs. Another notable plea was for the same institution to assist with income generating ventures through provision of capital and inputs. It is worth noting that the outcomes of this study could also act as a barometer for responsible authorities to gauge the level of happiness or discontent among those they are meant to serve.

## **7.2 Limitations of the study**

The major limitation of this study emanated from the sampling method employed. Since the study resorted to non-probability sampling, there was lack of random selection of the sampling elements hence there was no control or protection against bias in the selection of the sample. For instance the researcher could see a group of unemployed men playing draft and upon interviewing the first one; he would direct the researcher to his friend who will also point to the next person sitting with him and so forth. The other limitation was that since the variation that certainly occurs in sampling cannot be estimated, results from a non-probability sample cannot be safely generalized beyond the 120 unemployed adults that formed the sample of this study. However, the 12 villages were selected using simple random sampling. The study also intended to use a much larger sample than 120 but time was a limiting factor.

## **7.3 Recommendations**

There are a number of the recommendations that can be drawn from the analysis of findings and discussion. The following recommendations are directed to the unemployed adults, Manonyane local leadership, Government, NGOs, and lastly to the academia as suggestions for further research.

### **7.3.1 To the unemployed adults**

On the basis of the findings, the researcher considers it worthwhile to make the following recommendations with regard to the unemployed adults of Manonyane community:

- They should seriously espouse the idea of forming co-operatives in order to pull their resources together and start income generating ventures.
- They should be proactive, ready to take their lives into their hands, willing to work hard and to take risks if they are to change their livelihoods in some significant way.
- They need a significant change of their mindset from the current Government and NGO dependent one to a more self-reliant oriented mind set.
- They should be more proactive in seeking advice regarding opportunities and income generating ventures within own their scope of funds, skills and other capabilities.
- They should be innovative and make use of local resources to eke a decent living.

### **7.3.2 To the Manonyane local leadership**

Given the concerns raised by both Government and NGOs the researcher directs the following recommendations to the local leadership and politicians:

- They should as much as possible desist from any undue interference with Government and/or NGOs programmes, which make the work of qualified designated officers unnecessarily difficult.
- They need to be proactive and play facilitatory roles, such as highlighting the economic challenges faced by their people and inviting Government and NGO officials to their villages to address the villagers on the available programmes, or giving training on self-help projects.

- They should be in the forefront pushing the Government to be accountable with regards to development and poverty reduction issues.

### **7.3.3 To the Government**

It appears that the Government has various economic empowerment programmes; however, the programmes are largely unknown to the people on the ground. The researcher therefore recommends the Government be more aggressive in publicizing the programmes through various forms of publicity campaigns. Also, the Government needs to design its economic empowerment programmes in consultation with the target groups if such programmes are to result in high impact effects. To that end, Government ought to rely on well researched information when formulating any interventions to effectively ensure poverty reduction and gender equality.

### **7.3.4 To the NGO community**

The NGOs chosen for this study were those that included Maseru district which encompassed Manonyane, in their activities. However, almost all those sampled NGOs attested to have never assisted the Manonyane community. Therefore, the researcher recommends that the NGO community needs to seriously consider prioritizing this particular community which has been virtually excluded from their efforts of dealing with poverty reduction and gender equality.

## **7.4 Suggestions for further research**

Since this study employed quantitative approach with the unemployed adults, only quantitative data was derived. There is need for a qualitative research to be conducted so that an in-depth understanding of economic empowerment issues can be brought to the fore. Furthermore, it is also this researcher's view that similar studies on the impact of social empowerment and the impact of political empowerment of unemployed adults in Manonyane also needs to be conducted, because economic empowerment alone is never adequate for the overall empowerment of the unemployed. Research is also needed to establish why there are no NGOs operating in Manonyane rural community.

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## Appendices

### Appendix A: Informed consent form

Dear Participant,

My name is Josphine Hapazari. I am a Masters candidate studying at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Howard College. The title of my research is: **The impact of Government and Non-Government Organizations' economic empowerment programmes with respect to poverty reduction and gender equality in Manonyane rural community between 2010 and 2015.** The aim of the study is to make an evaluation of the Lesotho Government and NGO efforts in empowering adults economically in the Manonyane rural community. I am interested in interviewing you so as to share your experiences and observations on the subject matter.

Please note that:

- The information that you provide will be used for scholarly research only.
- Your participation is entirely voluntary. You have a choice to participate, not to participate or stop participating in the research. You will not be penalized for taking such an action.
- Your views in this interview will be presented anonymously. Neither your name nor identity will be disclosed in any form in the study.
- The interview will take about 15 minutes.
- The record as well as other items associated with the interview will be held in a password-protected file accessible only to myself and my supervisors. After a period of 5 years, in line with the rules of the university, it will be disposed by shredding and burning.
- If you agree to participate please sign the declaration attached to this statement (a separate sheet will be provided for signatures)

I can be contacted at: School of Social Sciences, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Howard College Campus, Durban. Email: [jhapazari@gmail.com](mailto:jhapazari@gmail.com) Cell: +266 58827097

My supervisor is Dr. Noleen Loubser who is located at the School of Social Sciences, Pietermaritzburg Campus of the University of KwaZulu-Natal. Contact details: email: [loubsern@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:loubsern@ukzn.ac.za) Phone number: +27(0)33 260 5321

My co-supervisor is.....N/A.....who is located at the School of Social Sciences, Howard College Campus/ Howard College Campus of the University of KwaZulu-Natal. Contact details: email ...N/A.....Phone number...N/A.....

The Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee contact details are as follows: Ms Phumelele Ximba, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Research Office,

E-mail:[ximbap@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:ximbap@ukzn.ac.za), Phone number: +27312603587.

Thank you for your contribution to this research.

## DECLARATION

I..... (*full names of participant*) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project, and I consent to participating in the research project.

I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the project at anytime, should I so desire. I understand the intention of the research. I hereby agree to participate.

I consent / do not consent to have this interview recorded (if applicable)

SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT

DATE.....

## Appendix B: Questionnaire for unemployed adults

My name is Josphine Hapazari, a Master of Social Science (Sociology) student with the University of KwaZulu-Natal, RSA. I am a resident of Lesotho (residing at NUL Staff Village). My studies are by research and my topic is: “The impact of Government and Non-Government Organizations’ economic empowerment programmes with respect to poverty reduction and gender equality in Manonyane rural community between 2010 and 2015.” I kindly request your assistance in my academic endeavours by answering the following questions:

Please indicate your answers by either marking a tick (√) in the appropriate box or filling blank spaces.

### Section A: Biographic details

1. Gender		2. Age	3. Marital status				
Male	Female		Single	Married	Widowed	Divorced	Other

4. If married, is your spouse employed?			5. Are you a household head?	
Yes	No	Other	Yes	No

### Section B: Socio-economic data

1. Educational Status				2. Family size	3. Household monthly income
Primary	Some High school	Secondary complete	Tertiary	people	

4. Type of accommodation				5. Have you been employed before?		6. For how long have you been unemployed?
Own house	Parents’ house	Renting	Other	Yes	No	

### **Section C: Economic empowerment data**

1. Which skills do you possess?

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2. Did the Government pay for your education?			3. Have you ever been enrolled in a project by the Government/NGO since 2010?		4. To what extent did you benefit from the projects?			5. Is the project still running?	
Yes	No	Only part of it	Yes	No	Not at all	A little bit	A lot	Yes	No

*The following questions require you to rate from 'not at all' to 'all the time'.*

6. Have you ever been assisted with capital by the Government?	Not at all	A little	Average amount	A lot	All the time
7. Have you ever been assisted with capital by the NGOs?	Not at all	A little	Average amount	A lot	All the time
8. Have you been assisted to access loans by the Government?	Not at all	A little	Average amount	A lot	All the time
9. Have you been assisted to access loans by the NGOs?	Not at all	A little	Average amount	A lot	All the time
10. Have you been given inputs by the Government?	Not at all	A little	Average amount	A lot	All the time
11. Have you been given inputs by the NGOs?	Not at all	A little	Average amount	A lot	All the time
12. How do you rate Government efforts to help poor people in Manonyane community?	Very poor	Poor	Average	Good	Very Good
13. How can you rate NGOs efforts to help poor people in Manonyane community?	Very poor	Poor	Average	Good	Very Good

**Section D: Gender equality data**

<b>1. How many men in your household have been enrolled in economic empowerment programmes?</b>	<b>2. How many women in your household have been enrolled in economic empowerment programmes?</b>

**Section E: Unemployment challenges**

<b>1. What does being poor mean to you?</b>					<b>2. Do you consider yourself</b>				
Lack of income	Lack of basic commodities	Lack of democracy	Lack of opportunities	Other	Rich	Average	Poor	Very Poor	Other

<b>3. Since 2010, how do you rate your level of poverty?</b>				<b>4. When you have money what do you use it for first?</b>					
Decreased	Remained the same	Increased	Other	Food	School fees	Rent	Medication	Clothes	Other

<b>5. How many meals did you used to eat per day in 2010?</b>				<b>6. How many meals do you eat per day now?</b>			
1	2	3	More than 3	1	2	3	More than 3

<b>7. In your village what portion of people are poor?</b>					<b>8. The degree of poverty in your village has</b>		
None	Quarter	Half	Three quarters	All	Decreased	Remained the same	Increased

## **Section F: Poverty**

**The following questions require you to rate the causes of poverty. The rating scales are all 0-10, with 0 being ‘not at all’, ‘never’, etc., 5 being a ‘middle ‘or ‘average’, and 10 being ‘always’. Please rate each aspect out of 10. N/A means not applicable.**

<b>Causes of Poverty</b>													
1. Poverty is caused by laziness	0	1	2	3	4	5	5	7	8	9	10	N/A	
2. Poverty is caused by lack of education	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	N/A	
3. Poverty is caused by Government failure	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	N/A	
4. Poverty is caused by political instability	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	N/A	
5. Poverty is caused by lack of inputs	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	N/A	
6. Poverty is caused by too few NGOs	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	N/A	
7. Poverty is caused by poor health	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	N/A	
8. Poverty is caused by lack of opportunities	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	N/A	

**The following questions require you to rate perceptions of poverty. The rating scales are all 0-10, with 0 being ‘not at all’, ‘never’, etc., 5 being a ‘middle ‘or ‘average’, and 10 being ‘always’. Please rate each aspect out of 10. N/A means not applicable.**

<b>Perceptions</b>													
9. Government does a lot to reduce poverty	0	1	2	3	4	5	5	7	8	9	10	N/A	
10. Government does a lot to reduce gender inequalities	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	N/A	
11. Government does a lot to economically empower unemployed adults	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	N/A	
12. NGOs do a lot to reduce poverty	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	N/A	
13. NGOs do a lot to reduce gender inequalities	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	N/A	
14. NGOs do a lot to economically empower unemployed adults	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	N/A	

**The following questions require you to rate surviving of poverty. The rating scales are all 0-10, with 0 being ‘not at all’, ‘never’, etc., 5 being a ‘middle ‘or ‘average’, and 10 being ‘always’. Please rate each aspect out of 10. N/A means not applicable.**

Surviving poverty												
15. When spouses are not employed life is tough	0	1	2	3	4	5	5	7	8	9	10	N/A
16. Lack of food is a major challenge	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	N/A
17. I am managing to reduce poverty on my own	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	N/A
18. Unemployment can be solved through economic empowerment	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	N/A

**19. Do you have any other comments?**

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*Thank you for your time, co-operation and patience.*

## **Appendix C: Interview schedule for the Government officials**

1. What is your working definition of gender equality?
2. What is your working definition of poverty?
3. What are your policy pronouncements on gender equality?
4. What are your policy pronouncements on poverty reduction in rural areas?
5. How do you factor in gender equality among beneficiaries in the projects you implement?
6. Explain how you economically empower unemployed adults and the impact it had on gender inequalities?
7. What do you think rural people can do to economically empower themselves?
8. To what extent have you assisted the unemployed adults in Manonyane Community?
9. Explain the challenges you encounter in your endeavour to assist the rural poor?
10. Do you have any statistics related to this topic?

## **Appendix D: Interview schedule for the NGOs officials**

1. What is your working definition of gender equality?
2. What is your working definition of poverty?
3. What are your organization pronouncements on gender equality?
4. What are your organization pronouncements on poverty reduction in rural areas?
5. How do you factor in gender equality among beneficiaries in the projects you implement?
6. Explain how you economically empower unemployed adults and the impact it had on gender inequalities?
7. What do you think rural people can do to economically empower themselves?
8. To what extent have you assisted the unemployed adults in Manonyane Community?
9. Explain the challenges you encounter in your endeavour to assist the rural poor?
10. Do you have any statistics related to this topic?