

UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL

ASSESSMENT OF CRDP IN EMPOWERING WOMEN AT UMHLONTLO LOCAL
MUNICIPALITY IN THE EASTERN CAPE PROVINCE

By

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PREFACE AND DECLARATION

I, Ms Nomakatini Msutwana, proclaim that:

1. The work contained in this work has not been submitted to any institution of higher learning, including the University of KwaZulu Natal, on the grounds of attaining any academic qualification, by myself, the writer or otherwise. *In the case where any other researcher has prepared a thesis related to this work or essentially emanated from a similar project, has to be annotated in this work, as well as to be complemented by furnishing the academic particulars and details of the person as cited in this work. As a result the examiner can be assured that a single body of this work is not being used to justify any degree other than this one.*

2. My inputs to the entire project were a result of *a concise description of my participation and contribution to the project, in a detailed manner, so that the examiner is assured of the extent of my contribution.*

3. The contributions of other people to this project were *complemented by the list of all the other people who academically contributed to this work through source referencing.*

Signed

Date

DEDICATION

This degree is dedicated to my children and my late mother, *Weziwe Ngqongwa*, who believed in education, an opportunity that was never afforded to her. Her courage to make things happen, despite unfavourable circumstances at the time.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to acknowledge the following people who assisted in making this piece of work a success for me:

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Some of the acronyms and abbreviations used in this thesis are clarified as below:

ACCRONYM & ABBREVIATION	MEANING
ANC	African National Congress
APTC_{CoP}	Advanced Professional Trade and Competency Program
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women
CRDP	Comprehensive Rural Development Programme
CWP	Community Works Programme
DRDLR	Department of Rural Development and Agrarian Reform
EWPP	Expanded Public Works Programme
GAD	Gender and Development
IDP	Intergrated Development Plan
LED	Local Economic Development
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
NARYSEC	National Rural Youth Service Cooperatives
NDP	National Development Plan
RDP	Reconstruction and Development Programme
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SMME	Small Medium Micro Enterprises
SONA	State of the Nation's Address
SOPA	State of the Provincial Address
WAD	Women and Development
WID	Women in Development
WSU	Walter Sisulu University

ABSTRACT

Most rural areas of South Africa are characterised by abject poverty, low levels of literacy amongst adult women, under-utilisation of natural resources, compromised access to socio-economic infrastructure, non-availability of clean water for agricultural development and services, and a high dependency on social grants and unresolved land restitution and tenure issues as in the view by (Hart & Jacobs, 2012). A closer look at the Eastern Cape Province shows that the rural areas are characterised by gross under-development in specific areas in all respects. These areas include the former homeland areas, which are being characterised by huge infrastructure backlog, high poverty levels, food insecurity, economic and skills shortages.

In 2009, the South African government undertook an initiative to resolve the challenges facing rural areas, thereby establishing a programme called the Comprehensive Rural Development Programme (CRDP). Obadire, et al. (2014) postulates that the Department of Rural Development and Agrarian Reform (DRDAR) have introduced this programme in an attempt to fight poverty, hunger, unemployment and lack of development in rural areas. In the view of DRDAR (2013), the programme has a vision of creating vibrant, equitable and sustainable rural livelihoods.

This study is premised on the pathetic status of women, which has its origins from the apartheid past. Black African women have been discriminated and disadvantaged on cultural, business and political perspectives, and the poverty levels amongst women are higher than that of male-headed households. However, even though rural women have evolved to contribute in socio-economic roles to support their families; the development processes have been seen as inadequate (Osita-Njoku and Princewill, 2015:258). StatsSA (2014) stipulates that there is an increase in female-headed households in South Africa. This brings out a compelling reason for coming up with a study of this nature.

The main aim of this study was to assess the influence of the CRDP in empowering women in the development site of the Umhlontlo local municipality. To achieve this aim, the research objectives have been created: firstly, to assess how the women of the rural municipality area have been developed through literacy and empowerment programmes, and how well the

transformation has impacted their lives. Secondly, to assess the influence of the remedial programmes of the government in addressing the issues of discrimination and subordination against women. Lastly, to investigate the effects of development programmes in the fight against poverty and towards the development of the local economy. This study utilised a qualitative research approach. This is because the nature of the study required deeper understanding, illuminating and examining the participant's experiences, ideas and attitudes in an etymological form. A non-probability technique, purposive sampling, and face-to-face interview as well as the focus groups were used in this study.

The findings of the study revealed that rural women within the jurisdiction of the Umhlontlo Local Municipality benefited from the CRDP, and the government should continue implementing programmes of such a nature within the rural areas. The empowerment of women has resulted in improved living standards for their dependants and the community in general. It is clear from the findings that through the CRDP, the residents of the uMhlontlo local municipality, have obtained many benefits. In order to ensure that programmes such as the CRDP succeed and supported, it is recommended that the government create a good relationship with key, local, economic development stakeholders.

Key words: CRDP, development, empowerment, local municipality, poverty, women.

CHAPTER ONE

GENERAL INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

1.1 Introductory background

According to Hart and Jacobs (2012) the majority of the rural communities in South Africa are characterised by severe poverty, very low literacy rates amongst adult women, poor natural resource utilisation, poor infrastructure, as well as a lack of the availability of clean water for basic household services and agricultural development. The researcher further states that the majority of the rural population in particular, are highly dependent on the government's social grants and are faced with unresolved land issues. Chambers (2013) in his work experiences in Eastern Africa concurs and further elaborates, that these people live, find, and make their living in the rural areas. The land deprivation and other means of self-support have negatively influenced the living of the black majority.

The past South African government of discrimination implemented repressive laws, which forbid the rights of black South Africans to land ownership. This has brought undesirable effects to the black people who encompass an overwhelming population of the country. Land deprivation has negatively backed the situation with most of the black South African citizens being trapped in the poverty cycle and powerlessness. Women were largely affected by the repressive laws of the apartheid regime, which were also supported by traditional principles and practices (Wittmann, 2012). Furthermore, poverty in the country has a sexually characteristic element, which defies the equal status of women in all areas, such as economically, politically and socially (Seekings, 2008). Walsh (2006) maintains that South Africa can be applauded for the democratic transition in terms of the representation of women in parliament. However, Seekings (2008) maintains that hardship, poverty and economic inequality continue to manifest in the rural areas.

According to Luswazi (2012) the province of the Eastern Cape shows that rural areas are characterised by the lack of development in certain areas in all respects. According to the Municipal Turnaround Strategy Report (2013), these areas include the former Bantustans, which are characterised by huge infrastructure backlog, abject poverty, food diffidence,

economic and skills shortages. The rural economy, in any society is characterised and driven by multiple activities, which mirror the adversity of livelihoods of the rural poor (Obadire et al., 2014; Ruhiiga, 2013). Chabane (2014) emphasised the commitment of the new South African government to lay the foundations for a new society, thereby undoing the gross inequalities and skewed basic service delivery, because of the apartheid regime. Hart and Jacobs (2012) reveal that in 2009, the South African government had embarked on an initiative to resolve the challenges facing rural areas, with the establishment of the programme called the Comprehensive Rural Development Programme (CRDP). Obadire, et al. (2014) concur and reveal that the programme was introduced to counteract issues, such as poverty, hunger, joblessness, and compromised growth in the rural areas of South Africa. Furthermore, Obadire et al. (2014) stipulates that the programme was designed to improve the status of the poorest of the poor who reside in rural areas.

The CRDP pointed out the challenges that the former homeland rural areas are facing namely, hunger related matters, limited access to educational facilities for rural dwellers, lack of accessibility to health services and facilities, limited empowerment for the rural population, poor infrastructure, limited financial services and other services, which contribute to their development. In the view of Hart and Jacobs (2012) the Department of Rural Development and Agrarian Reform (DRDLR) presented this programme in an effort to progress and confront socio-economic matters in the rural areas.

According to the DRDLR (2013) the programme is envisioned to create vibrant, equitable and workable rural livelihoods. The DRDLR (2013) further outlines that the vision of the programme is supported by:

- Effective land reform which supports development in agriculture;
- Progressive land use planning which promotes optimum land exploitation and production;
- Enhancement of human capacity through an expansive rural skills base;
- Infrastructural development for the support of the provisional access to better services, as well as economic opportunities; and
- Sustained agricultural businesses by rural markets.

The South African rural municipalities were targeted to benefit from this programme (Obadire, et al., 2014), where the uMhlontlo local municipality was recognised and included amongst the

municipalities to benefit from the development programme. According to Giyose (2015); StatsSA (2014) the total number of the entire population is 188 226 with a population decrease rate at 7.3 per cent. The decrease is believed to be as a result of the search for a better life in the big cities. Out of that, 95 per cent live in the rural areas with 87 per cent of the total population comprising of women. StatsSA (2014) reveals that, 14.7 per cent of the population has no or limited education, which in turn directly influences the level of development in the community, where women form the greater part of the population. It further reports that, the Gini Coefficient of the local area as 0.54 by 2011, with 15 per cent of the households with no income, thus surviving through subsistence farming. Luswazi (2012) reveals that the mining industry has been the major source of employment for the majority of the males from the former homeland areas. However, Honkalaskar, Sohoni, and Bhandarkar (2017) posit that the decline of employment source for rural men as bread winners in the mines, has ultimately forced rural women to take leadership roles, so as to provide for their families.

According to Quagliarello (2009) implementing the enabling processes, which supports women to effectively play their roles regarding food security issues and the management of natural resources, is the fundamental basis for sustainable development. Considering the background information as discussed, the study aims to measure and analyse the effect of the CRDP in capacitating rural women in the development area of the uMhlontlo local municipality.

1.2 Rationale of the study

Wittman (2012) postulates that the South African community is faced with different conflictious patterns, where social and political patterns are related and influenced by the background of the country, which supported the institutionalised form of discrimination in sex and race. Adato et al. (2006); Wittman (2012) concur that the democratic government of 1994 was faced with the need to transform the state in all areas to ensure a more developmental state for all. This investigation is founded on the weak position of women, which emanates from the legacy of the apartheid government. Firstly, black African women have been differentiated against and deprived in cultural, economic and political areas; while on the other hand female-headed households are faced with abject poverty, more than the households headed by men. However, even though rural women have evolved to contribute in socio-economic roles to support their families, the development processes have been seen as inadequate (Osita-Njoku and Princewill, 2015:258). Secondly, StatsSA (2014) in the census report confirmed that the majority of households in South Africa are led by females. Luswazi, (2012) revealed that there

are achievements, as well as shortfalls to the CRDP implementation in the past seven years, mainly in the former Transkei area.

The gaps and failures in the programme implementation encompass the lack of mass mobilisation strategies to rope in and motivate a big number of women to be part of the development initiative. Furthermore, the limited number of development initiatives and projects were noted as the challenge by the researcher. Davies and Saltmarsh (2007) posit that development initiatives tailored for women should be more concentrated on marketing and agro-processing at an advanced level, with the provisional support through the establishment of rural community banks, as well as other diversified forms of savings, which include the participation of rural women in the stock exchange to contribute towards economic development. According to the view of Kalita and Makar (2008:30) great and successful economic development will be accomplished when the majority of women participate in the economic development initiatives. Hart and Jacobs (2012); Rad et al. (2012); Creswell (2013); Bertaux and Crable (2007) concur that women constitute a larger population of the total adult world's population and; Rad, et al. (2012) further maintain that it is essential to improve women's skills and education to ensure growth and development.

The above arguments and discussions brought a compelling information base to conduct an investigation of this nature at the uMhlontlo local municipality. The study investigated the extent and impact of the Comprehensive Rural Development Programme and how well it contributed to fight poverty through its empowerment initiatives, such as women's entrepreneurship, the reduction of illiteracy and the economic development of the uMhlontlo local municipality area. The study is further encouraged by the aspiration to find obstacles encountered by the CRDP towards empowering rural women with specific reference to the uMhlontlo local municipality area. It is envisioned that the findings of such encounters can bring about the formulation and implementation of strategies, which will further enhance the socio-economic position of women in general and in the area of the uMhlontlo local municipality area.

1.3 Problem statement

Wittman (2012) reveals that a number of studies on women show that women suffer relegation and discrimination in a number of areas. Rad et al. (2011) concurs and maintains that much attention is required to address issues of marginalisation and discrimination against women. In

addition to that, Quagliariello (2009) reveals that issues of gender empowerment have generally been recognised around the world and correspond with the determinations of strategies and policies to develop women.

The South African government has established numerous legislative prescripts to counteract issues of disparity, subordination and discrimination against women and ensure general equality. These legislative prescripts include the Bill of Rights, which is provided in the South African Constitution Act 108 of 1996, the National Action Plan, the domestic laws, institutions of the rule law for safeguarding, which includes the South African Human Rights Commission and the policies (Folbre, 2006). Czarniawska (2006) revealed that because of gender differential treatment culturally, men's roles, desires and objectives were largely more valued than those of their counterparts. The researcher further elaborates that the established legislative prescripts were mainly to deal with the rooted issues of gender differential treatment.

Wittmann (2012) argues that despite the formulation of legislative framework and strategic provision to support women, marginalisation continues to prevail against rural women. Quagliariello (2009); Wittmann (2012) concur and posit that gender empowerment developments should not only be designed for self-realisation of individual women, but also include the socio-economic transformation of the marginalised rural communities; which is where the majority of the population is found. In the study view of Luswazi (2012), uMhlontlo is characterised by severe poverty and poor development in a number of areas. It is in this regard where Hart and Jacobs (2012); Luswazi (2012) concur that skills development initiatives should be pursued to bridge the skills gap, which tends to be the general challenge amongst rural communities.

1.4 Research objectives

The general objective of the investigation is to objectively ascertain the effects of the CRDP in empowering women in the area of uMhlontlo, as one of the CRDP pilots in the Eastern Cape Province. The study aims at further documenting the findings, which will serve as a future source of reference and contribute towards the development of the body of knowledge. Therefore, the objectives of this investigation are mainly to:

- Discover the gains of the CRDP in developing rural women in the uMhlontlo local municipality;

- Establish the role of the CRDP towards reducing the illiteracy rate amongst the rural women in the uMhlontlo local municipality;
- Determine the role of the CRDP in empowering rural women in the uMhlontlo local municipality;
- Determine the impacts of the CRDP in stimulating local economy in the uMhlontlo local municipality; and
- To get a realisation on the challenges, which inhibit the success of the CRDP and suggest measures to counteract them.

1.5 Research questions

The research questions of this study are as follows:

- How do the women in the development site benefit from the CRDP?
- What is the role of the CRDP in reducing the illiteracy rate amongst the rural women in the uMhlontlo local municipality?
- What role has the CRDP played towards empowering rural women in the uMhlontlo local municipality?
- What is the impact of the CRDP in inspiring the local economy in the uMhlontlo local municipality?
- What are the CRDP challenges which pose to obstruct the success of the CRDP?

1.6 Literature review

A number of studies, which include Siyo-Pepetheka (2014); Lahiff and Cousins (2005), report that South Africa is a country whose democratic government was born in 1994. Siyo-Pepetheka (2014) further elaborates that the emancipation of the new democracy was faced with the need to transform all government's spheres. These included the legislation and all the institutional changes, which would bring about the transformation of the state and society. Marais (2013) views the African National Congress (ANC) led government as being pushed to the limit towards transformation in all areas, which included the governmental, political, social and economic areas. The researcher further reveals that the new democratic state has brought about a distinct focus on the government and its functions to respond to the needs of the previously underprivileged and relegated South Africans, including rural areas.

According to Siyo-Pepetheka (2014), the new democratic era has brought about the emancipation of rural areas with limited resources, whose residents are mainly blacks. Hart and Jacobs (2012) strongly maintain that a significantly large proportion of the country's population still resides in rural areas and the large composition of the rural population is poor. Kalita (2008) argues that women are the largest of the adult population in the whole country, while at the same time; they are the largest group facing exclusion, subordination and discrimination. Several initiatives worldwide have been engaged to narrow down discrimination in the fundamental areas of the development of women. Initiatives include more participation of women in economic and entrepreneurial activities, as in the case of India and Japan (Jamal et al., 2014).

The South African government emancipated from the democratic era has formulated pro-poor policies in an attempt to reduce hunger (StatsSA, 2014). Hart and Jacobs (2012) maintain that about 70 per cent of the poor rural population is still poor and largely depends on social grants with an overpowering portion comprising of females. Apart from that, women worldwide fulfil several roles from domestic and child-minding roles to more economic roles outside their households, (Zawada and Jiyane, 2013:47).

Luswazi (2012) views the Eastern Cape as the core of the focus of development with particular reference to the former homeland. This study discusses gender issues, focusing on the empowerment of women in the development site of the uMhlontlo local municipality within the intervention programmes of the DRDAR.

1.6.1 Definition of terms

The definition of the major terms and their meaning applied in this study are as follows:

a) Empowerment

In the work of Wittmann (2012); Manzini (2009) describes empowerment as the process, which affords and enables individuals an opportunity to control their lives successfully. The researcher further elaborates that, it enables one to gain capabilities to accomplish one's own set of personal programmes, which in turn affords some form of changing, and controls various areas of life to improve what was previously deficient. De Beer (2006:30) concurs and further elaborates by viewing empowerment, as the skills and information provision, to enhance the ability to take well-versed decisions.

b) Gender

Jamal et al. (2014) view and define gender as a set of social and cultural constructs used to differentiate between male and female entities. Tchouassi (2012) concurs and further elaborates, that gender can be defined as a set of features, roles and behavioural patterns, which differentiate between women and men, which are socially and culturally created, and not created biologically.

c) Rural

A number of studies reveal that the concept 'rural' does not have or is not provided with the actual meaning, but rather the attributes associated with it. However, the DRDLR (2013) defines rural areas as the parsimoniously populated areas, where agricultural activities are practiced, with the majority of its people being largely dependent on natural possessions.

d) Poverty

Poverty is defined as a relational concept for both individuals and communities. It is further clarified where both individuals and communities are groups of people without income, and are unable to maintain themselves, and the provision of a meal is extremely critical to such an extent that, it means life (De Beer and Swanepoel, 2006:2).

1.6.2 Socio-economic issues prior-1994 in South Africa

According to Fabricius et al. (2013), developing rural areas is of prime importance and should be emphatic and central to designing and implementing strategies, which align to poverty alleviation. Chambers (2013) concurs and further postulates, that such strategies should aim at the betterment of the quality of rural people's lives, such as, the implementation of the strategic programme, which will curb an enormous rural-urban migration; as it ultimately results in rural depopulation by stimulating the advancement of additional income and improved opportunities for rural people. Shinde and Joshi (2016) argue that poverty, subordination, and socio-economic inequalities relate to patterns of racial inequality, which strengthens gender inequality. Wittman (2012) reveals that poverty in developing countries mainly affects women, which imposes threats and contestations to the equal status of women. The situation is reported to be dire with rural women, as they encounter under representation, a high unemployment rate and largely depend on remittances (Walsh, 2006). A number of scholars concur and argue that women in rural areas are deprived of access to services, economic opportunities and other

resources, as well as effective participation regarding issues of sustainable development to their benefit [Muhammad, Njanjua & Ullah (2014) and Osita-Njoku & Princewill (2015)].

For effective development in any country, Osita-Njoku and Princewill (2015) strongly advocate for the full integration and active participation of women in the issues of sustainable development and decision-making on issues affecting them. Moyo (2014) views the full inclusion of people from rural areas in developmental issues, as an essential factor for effective development. Mashagwa (2012) in the work of Moyo (2014), shares similar sentiments that rural women should be included and encouraged to participate in the developmental programmes, which will help them, create a better quality life. The author further argues that without the full participation of rural women in developmental initiatives and processes, as well as decision-making in the attainment of sustainable developmental goals. Furthermore, Ford, (2014) emphasise the main agenda of Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) in post 2015, as being to completely and comprehensively eradicate poverty, and fight relegation and inequality. The SDG further aims at ending discrimination between men and women, as well as transforming economies for jobs and inclusive growth for a secure living for all (Yudhoyono, Sirleaf and Cameron, 2013).

The South African democratic government perceived the development of rural areas as a strategic priority for the 2009-2014 administration and found expression in Outcome Seven, which achieved vibrant, equitable and sustainable communities. As a result, the Department of Rural Development and Agrarian Reform was strategically established in 2009 to formulate policies, which would attend to rural under-development (Hart and Jacobs, 2012).

The Comprehensive Rural Development Programme, which was introduced in 2009 and kick-started the identification of rural municipalities, with huge infrastructure backlog and low levels of human development indicators. The identified rural municipalities in the Eastern Cape were mainly those of the former Bantustans with a need for large public scale investment. The UMhlontlo local municipality in the OR Tambo district municipality is one of the municipalities in which the programme was piloted (DRAR, 2013). However, gender empowerment is the focal point of discussion.

1.6.3 Policy provisions and gender empowerment

South Africa has introduced legislative prescripts and adopted international policies to protect the rights of women (Czarniawska, 2006). According to Britton (2010), the South African parliament in its debates should focus at rooting out practices, which continued to weaken women. The issues of gender equality and empowerment have been widely noted in the international platforms, which include the Beijing Convention, which aimed at fighting the subordination of women. However, Folbre (2006) has argued that the stagnation in the implementation of the critical policies of the government acknowledges potential developmental delays in South Africa. On the other hand, Jamal et al., (2014) believes that the policies should clarify issues of resource allocation.

The Millennium Developmental Goals (MDG) has progressed well in their commitment to reduce poverty and infant mortality by 30 per cent worldwide. The progress was backed by initiatives in economic growth and better policies in the countries of the world. The progress is witnessed in several reports, where South Africa in particular has introduced and implemented pro-poor policies, which contributed to a decline in poverty; such as the provision of social security services to a large population of the country (MDG 2013:22; StatsSA (2014).

Addressing gender, issues can improve sustainable development and empower women. The solidification of institutional and stakeholder capacities may add value in the acceleration and implementation of gender-sensitive policies across all countries (Mlambo-Ngcuka, 2014). In September 2015, world leaders convened at the United Nations headquarters in New York City and committed to achieve 17 Sustainable Developmental Goals (SDGs). Following an extensive multi-year deliberation, member states identified the SDGs and targets designed to end poverty and hunger, improve health and education, and enhance environmental and economic development (Ford, 2015). Mlambo-Ngcuka (2017) maintains that women should not be viewed as victims, but as central factors in moving towards sustainability, thereby linking gender equality with sustainable development.

However, unlike the MDGs, the SDGs present a much broader scope by fully incorporating economic and environmental sustainability, as well as the aspiration of many countries for peaceful and inclusive societies. In this regard, the 2030 agenda for sustainable development is more determined in visualising complete poverty eradication, and focuses on building peaceful, resilient, equitable and inclusive societies. The SDG's agenda has a stand-alone goal

on gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. Furthermore, gender issues cut across many goals specifically, Goals One to Five are aligning and call for sex disaggregation across a number of indicators. Following is the list of the SDGs however, much concern is on Goal Five (Atkinson et al., 2014).

- Complete eradication of various forms of poverty in all the countries of the world.
- Culminate hunger and accomplish food security, improved nutrition, as well as promote sustainable agriculture.
- Safeguard healthy lives and promote well-being for human beings of all ages.
- Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote life-long learning opportunities for all.
- Achieve gender equity and empower all women and girls.

Tchouassi (2012) believes that ending gender-based discrimination can successfully end poverty. Tchouassi (2012) further alluded that generally, gender disparity makes and keeps women in poverty traps and deprives them of basic rights and prospects for a better life. The sustainable developmental goals aim at transforming the 21st century, thereby attending and resolving inequality, poverty and violence against women, as critical issues facing women. The empowerment of women and the achievement of equality between women and men, as equal partners and beneficiaries of development, are critical outcomes of the SDG Goal Five. The focus is on:

- Increasing women's leadership and participation.
- Improving women's economic empowerment.
- End violence against women.

The development of good governance, institutions which uphold the rule of law, free expression and an accountable government, are the focal areas of the new developmental agenda. It further focuses on inclusive growth to provide jobs, so as to leave no one behind in poverty in the face of the world (Ford, 2015). The United Nation's initiative worldwide is seen as fighting and addressing inequalities in critical areas of development, such as education, economic and political areas (Jamal, Ismail and Rasdi, 2014).

It is further believed that people who live in poverty are always on the edge of development. As a result, the South African Government has introduced initiatives and programmes, which

are aimed at reaching the marginalised rural residents. South Africa embraced the international policies, as part of the commitment by world leaders, to respond to issues undermining human development.

In line with all international policies, as well as the SDGs, the National Development Plan was established in South Africa with broad goals, which also include:

- Complete poverty eradication, unemployment and inequality.
- Improve the quality of life for all South Africans and attend to issues of historical injustices, as supported by the Constitution of 1996.
- Speed up economic and social change.

The CRDP aligns with the National Development Plan, in that it has a vision on the creation of lively, equitable and sustained rural communities. It also aims at ensuring the provision of human development, through increasing and diversifying the rural skills base, as one of the critical elements of the study, towards developing rural communities through empowerment of women in the CRDP. The Rural Development framework aims at the development of infrastructure and enterprise to stimulate and support the rural economy and job creation (RDF, 2013:10-11).

Capa (2009) views the South African legislative framework as the national policy, which is established to improve human rights. This framework views gender equality as an essential means of developing women and it addresses the basic and underlying causes of subordination and discernment (Summod, 2014:634). All sectors and role players in the CDRP should fully participate in the programme to ensure its success.

Despite all the efforts and the increase of women in the economic issues and positions of power and parliament, women are still under represented within the democratic system of this country, South Africa (Bauer and Britton, 2006). However, Wittman (2012) posits that South Africa underlies the ongoing economic marginalisation of women.

1.6.4 Gender and empowerment

Generally, the commitment of every country, including South Africa, is to have the programmes of gender empowerment accorded with the realisation of developmental goals, strategies and policies, which are universally adopted. According to Zawada and Jiyane (2013), measures aimed at addressing poverty issues through literacy, are critical to bring about growth in a country's economy. Connecting women and the development with the world's

developmental plans, irrespective of race and gender, to fight under-development is the sign of an important tradition, emancipating an education and awareness on the growing roles of women in the countries, which are lagging socially, culturally, and economically (Quagliariello, 2009). It is widely supported that implementing empowerment processes, which enable women to play more effective roles, is a pre-requisite for sustainable and lasting development [Makar & Kalita (2008) and Jamal, Ismail & Rasdi (2014)].

Wittman (2012:248) reveals that South Africa is no exception from other countries of the world, including the African continent, on the issues of social, cultural, and economic backwardness to women. In the South African context, this was due to the institutionalised systems of the apartheid regime. Honkalaskar, Sohoni and Bhandarkar, (2017) further explain that black women in the rural areas are rooted in traditional practices and physical truths, which possess a history of downgrading and discrimination against them. It is widely maintained that the South African political and economic make-over is related to unstable livelihood strategies. The lack of employment opportunities in the mining industry for rural men forces rural women to take a leading role in their families and communities (Luswazi, 2012).

1.6.5 Effects of gender empowerment

Women fulfil several activities in their families, ranging from domestic child-minding activities to economic activities. Economic activities of women take the shape of both formal and informal activities to make a living. These rural women are mostly characterised by low skills level, poor education, limited access to markets and unstable income, despite the need to support their families (Jiyane and Zawada, 2013). Empowering women is believed to be vital in decreasing the susceptibility to food shortages and hunger among households in the rural areas (Shangura et al., 2015). Quagliariello (2009:87-85) posit that the attributes of an educated and well informed woman socially, economically, politically, and culturally, literate and illiterate share the following:

- Greater self-esteem.
- Strengthened decision-making.
- Greater contribution in society's decision-making, within the societal sphere.

The important movements towards strengthening the role of rural women in rural areas respond to several basic priorities. These include the increased reach to resources, support to self-determination, raising awareness and partaking in production output. In the main, the

empowerment of women would undoubtedly yield economic returns for their families and communities.

1.6.6 Theoretical/conceptual framework

The proposed research is anchored on several approaches. The Gender and Development (GAD), forms the critical part, while the Wad and Development (WAD) and Women in Development (WID) approaches have been highlighted, as the phases of development towards addressing the issues of discrimination and subordination against women. The Women in Development, and Women and Development approaches, have gained recognition whereby equal participation of both men and women is crucial, (Gender Equity Bill, 2007). However, the Gender and Development approach has gained prominence since the early 1980's. In the context of South Africa, the apartheid regime has created discrimination at the political, social, and economic, as well as, at the constitutional level. Apartheid laws were passed to segregate along the lines of race and sex (Witmann, 2012:248).

The Women in Development approach was focused on the inclusion, which is backed with the full participation of women in all developmental issues, as well as their status development globally, including the developing countries. The WID approach focused at integrating women into the existing projects. The approach further viewed women as a special group for absorption in the pre-determined developmental programmes, while other means of subordination of women, was neglected. The neglect had somehow resulted in the exploitation of women in the workforce [Witmann (2012) and Gender & Equity (2007)]. The approach was criticised for the potential manipulation and increase in women's labour burdens (Osita-Njoku and Princewill, 2015). The WID approach was strongly criticised by various women activists and non-governmental organisations (NGOs). It was to this effect that the WAD approach emanated to counteract the weaknesses of the WID approach. The WAD activists argued against the unequal treatment of women, while being integrated in the developmental processes. These activists advocated for how well women, together with other disadvantaged groups, can work well in the social, economic, political, and cultural areas.

On the other hand, the GAD approach has evolved with a focus on the socially constructed basis of differences for both women and men. The new focus was the shift from efficiently integrating women in developmental programmes to equity and empowerment [Gender Equity Bill (2007) and Witmann (2012)]. The GAD approach does not assume that women have seamless information and thoughtfulness regarding their situation. The approach also

recognises disparities, which exist within gender and communities while Manzini in Wittmann (2012) argues that as much as women are aware of their subordinate position, in turn they do not understand the fundamental causes of their discrimination and relegation.

The approach understands that woman's experiences of discrimination and domination differs according to their background, class and historical background, as well as the current financial situation. The approach maintains that a sustainable improvement of the women's situation through radical change and meaningful empowerment should be:

- An ongoing process, which produces a favorable environment for marginalised women, and those women to effectively engage in the development of their own communities.
- Gender activities should examine the living conditions of women in the context of various historical, social, political, and economic conditions of their lives.
- Gender and empowerment programmes to be integral parts of the entire democratisation, developmental process, which society is undertaking.

Fundamental to the GAD approach is the concern on gender mainstreaming to ensure gender empowerment and equity to eliminate poverty and achieve sustainable development (Entwicklungsbank and Bauer, 2006). Poverty eradication and sustainable development are the universal goals of the United Nations to which South Africa contributes through the CRDP. Amongst the three approaches, the GAD is adopted in the study, as it places more emphasis on the inclusion and participation of both women and men in the developmental processes. Its core principles justify its relevance for adoption in the study.

According to Walsh (2006:85), South Africa can be credited to what women can achieve in the democratic transition. This is evident in the dramatic increase of women in leadership roles in the African National congress to a quota of 27.7 per cent seats in parliament. However, Honkalaskar, Sohoni and Bhandarkar (2017) maintains that livelihoods for women in the rural areas still require a lot of transformation, hence this proposed investigation on the impact assessment of the CRDP in uMhlontlo. The three approaches consider development in various ways. With literacy as a means of empowerment, they are considered as the conceptual framework to support this study. However, this study adopts the GAD approach for its attempt and emphasis on the holistic inclusion and participation of both women and men in the development processes.

1.7 Research methods and methodology

This study has adopted a qualitative research methodology. According to De Vos et al., (2010), research methodology entails a systematic process, which considers and explains the logic behind the research techniques and methods. Kothari (2012) further supports that research methodology provides the toolkit of the research to be done and investigated. The three main research methodologies, which are normally used when conducting research, include the quantitative, qualitative and the mixed methods. According to Wellman (2010), a quantitative methodology of study may be used when the researcher wants to investigate the measurement and analysis on causal relationships between variables, as well as the abstraction of reality.

Barbie and Mouton (2011:49) posits that the quantitative research method is utilised when the researcher believes that the best way of measuring properties of a phenomenon is through quantitative measurement. The author further states that the process includes assigning numbers to the apparent qualities of effects, where the major emphasis is the quantification of constructs. On the basis of the application of the quantitative research methodologies, they usually make use of large samples, which require time and sufficient budget availability. Because of time and budget constraints, quantitative research methodologies are considered undesirable (Kothari, 2012). This does not disrepute the quantitative research methodology as inadequate, because it has the merit that its findings can be generalised.

Trochim (2012:13) defines the qualitative research methods as the methods focused on unfolding, illuminating, as well as examining the participant's experiences, ideas and attitudes in an etymological form. Wellman (2010) continues to say that the qualitative method is to establish the socially constructed nature of reality, to stress the relationship between the researcher and the object of study, as well as the value-laden nature of investigation. The mixed methods research methodology has recently gained importance. However, for the purpose of this study, the qualitative method has been utilised. It has been noted that some research phenomena need the utilisation of both quantitative and qualitative methods, as in mixed methods, to provide significant results (Piergiorgio, 2013). The strongholds of the mixed method are in the utilisation and employment of the strengths of both research methodologies (Piergiorgio, 2013).

However, for the purposes of this study, a qualitative research methodology was chosen. The reason for choosing qualitative research methods was based on and determined by the nature of the investigation, various types of anticipated participants, as well as the area where the research was conducted (Mouton and Marais, 2009). A qualitative research methodology allows for the collection of more detailed data on the area of interest (Mason, 2011).

Joffe (2012) maintains that a qualitative research methodology consists of interviews, focus groups, as well as the participants' observations. This study has utilised the semi-structured face-to-face interviews, as well as the focus groups. The face-to-face, open-ended questions have allowed the participants to fully and freely participate on the issue under investigation with clarities provided, when necessary.

1.7.1 Population

The population of the study is the community of the uMhlontlo local municipality, including all the role players in the CRDP site, the Department of Rural Development, and Agrarian Reform. The uMhlontlo local municipality is a B4 rural municipality incorporating the rural towns of Qumbu and Tsolo. The municipality is found on the north east side of the Eastern Cape Provincial border, alongside the N2 route, between Mthatha and Mt. Frere and route 396 between the town and areas of Tsolo and Maclear.

uMhlontlo local municipality is one of the OR Tambo district municipality that has a population of 188 226 StatsSA (2014). About 95 per cent of the population live in rural areas, with about 71 per cent of the household dwellings comprising of traditional dwellings. The population of the local municipality is marked by the decrease in the population, because of migration in search of a better life and opportunities (Giyose, 2015).

According to the StatsSA (2014) the area is characterised by poor literacy and low levels of formal education is due to the high dropout rate, which is mainly a combination of social factors, which include poverty, teenage pregnancy and HIV/AIDS prevalence. Women constitute 87 per cent of the uMhlontlo local municipality.

1.7.2 Sampling

According to Brynard, Hanekom and Brynard (2014:56), sampling is the technique to select a small group with the view of determining the characteristics of the entire population. Some

issues need to be taken into consideration when choosing the size of the sample. Critical elements were identified by Wellman (2010) when choosing the size of the sample. These include the total population size from which the sample is being withdrawn, the high accuracy level required for the estimate made to the sample, analyses types to be undertaken and the confidence needed in the data, as well as the level of certainty, which characterises the full representation of the entire population by the collected data.

As noted previously, the study has employed the qualitative research methodology to reach an in-depth understanding and exploration of reality from the perspective of an insider in a non-statistical method (De Vos et al., 2010:74). An analytically chosen small sample from the total population will give a researcher more significant results of validity (Brynard, Hanekom and Brynard, 2014). Hence, the study employed a non-probability sampling technique.

According to De Vos et al. (2010), non-probability sampling methods do not include a random selection of participants. There are two types of sampling, which can be named as probability and non-probability sampling. Wellman (2010); De Vos et al., (2010) concur and distinguish between the qualitative and quantitative studies, that qualitative studies utilise as non-probability sampling methods particularly, theoretical or purposive techniques, rather than random sampling as in quantitative research. Wellman (2010) further states that in non-probability sampling, the probability for the inclusion of any element in the sample cannot be specified. The selection of the participants is through the judgemental choice of the researcher who decides who to include in the research survey.

A purposive sampling has been used to select groups to study based on their relevance to study (Etikan, Abubakar and Musa, 2016). According to Wellman (2010), purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling method, which intentionally selects interviewees based on their qualities. It excludes the population of participants who do not add value to the research, in that they do not possess the essential knowledge, proficiency and familiarity on the subject matter. Thus, the rationale for choosing this method depends on the fact that the participants were drawn from the uMhlontlo Local Municipality (Local Economic Development unit), women participating in the CRDP, general members of the public, and the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform (DRDLR). These are key informants who have the necessary knowledge, which added value to the issue investigated. Thus, data can only be selectively obtained from that specific group of people, which excludes ordinary members of a community.

To save time and costs, this method is perceived as advantageous, as it enables the collection of valuable information from the most relevant people.

Johnson (2007) states that purposive sampling is used where the aim is not to establish a representative sample, but rather to identify key informants, whose context-specific knowledge and expertise regarding the issues relevant to the research, are significant. The sample size of a qualitative study is between 16-18 participants. This study comprised of sixteen participants. This comprised of two participants from the Municipality Local Economic Development Unit, two participants from the DRDAR, seven women participants involved in the CRDP, and five general members of the community, specifically the women.

1.7.3 Collection of Data

The one-on-one, semi-structured interviews and focus groups were used to collect data for this research. Perreira and Berta (2016) describe the focus group as an exploratory data collection method, which is proved to be effective and efficient in gathering information from a small number of people. Wellman (2010); Masadeh (2012) concur and further maintain that the focus group provides useful and quality information, which leads to valuable insights and perceptions through group interaction. They are often used as an instrument to determine the reliability and validity of the content of items in an instrument utilised in data collection (Masadeh, 2012).

The semi-structured interviews were used in the study. Bhattacharjee (2013:13) maintains that semi-structured interviews encompass the features of both controlled and uncontrolled interviews. This, in turn, means that the open-ended questions entail the provisions of participants to explain their responses freely in a more detailed manner. An interview guide was utilised to direct questions in the semi-structured interview. The interview guide contained a list of topics and aspects to form questions, which were obtained from the subjects of the research objectives of the intended investigation.

The semi-structured interviews enabled the researcher to collect more detailed data from the participants to enable the researcher to gain a broader understanding of the participants' feelings, ideas and attitudes on the subject questions. The semi-structured interview and open-ended interview questions were used with the participants to explore their perspectives, regarding the impacts of the CRDP in empowering women in the local area of the municipality.

Four interviews, two from the municipality and the DRDLR were conducted to collect data from both the municipality and the DRDLR. The two focus groups that were also employed in the study were within the sample of women participating in the CRDP and general community members.

1.7.4 Data analysis

All gathered information was organised into themes. Information from various reports, documents and from the field work was analysed and aligned with management literature reviewed. An inductive, thematic analysis was conducted across the entire data set. The information from the focus groups and interviews was analysed according to themes. Wellman (2010) describes themes as constructs, which are usually identified by the investigator before, during the process of collecting data, as well as after the data collection process. Comparisons were also being made on the perceptions of the officials of the programme with those of the women participating in the development programme of the DRDLR, as well as the public as an observatory.

Different categories of data collected in the study, for example, poverty reduction, literacy, skills, business ownership were coded. The different codes were in scripted to ensure their description and interpretation of the meanings. Common subjects from the participants were recognised and analysed accordingly.

1.8 Limitations of the study

The following are factors which may influence the reliability in the study:

- Investigation is confined to experts and relevant groups in the CRDP of uMhlontlo as special units, as well as the role players. Time and budget constraints were a critical element.
- The research acknowledged a number of complexities in the CRDP, regarding stakeholders and role players, needs and challenges locally. This research, however, aims to address such issues through evaluating the impact of the programme in empowering women.

1.9 Ethical Consideration

Ethics is a set of moral standards suggested by a person, which is generally accepted, and offers procedures and social expectations about the most perceived correct behaviour towards subjects and participants, sponsors, researchers and assistants (De Vos et al., 2010). Ethical considerations come into play at various stages, which include (Wellman, 2010):

- When participants are recruited.
- During the intervention phase.
- In the release of the results obtained.

Trochim (2013) and De Vos et al. (2010) identified ethical issues as harmful to participants, informed consent, deception of participants, privacy violation, actions and capability of researchers, collaboration with contributors and the release of the findings, as well as the debriefing of participants upon which the study was based.

1.10 Structure of dissertation

This document consists of five (5) chapters as illustrated in the figure below:

Chapter one presents the proposal of the research. The proposal is comprised of the rationale to conduct the study, the problem statement, objectives of the research, questions to be answered by the research, as well as the conceptual framework from which the area of investigation is aligned.

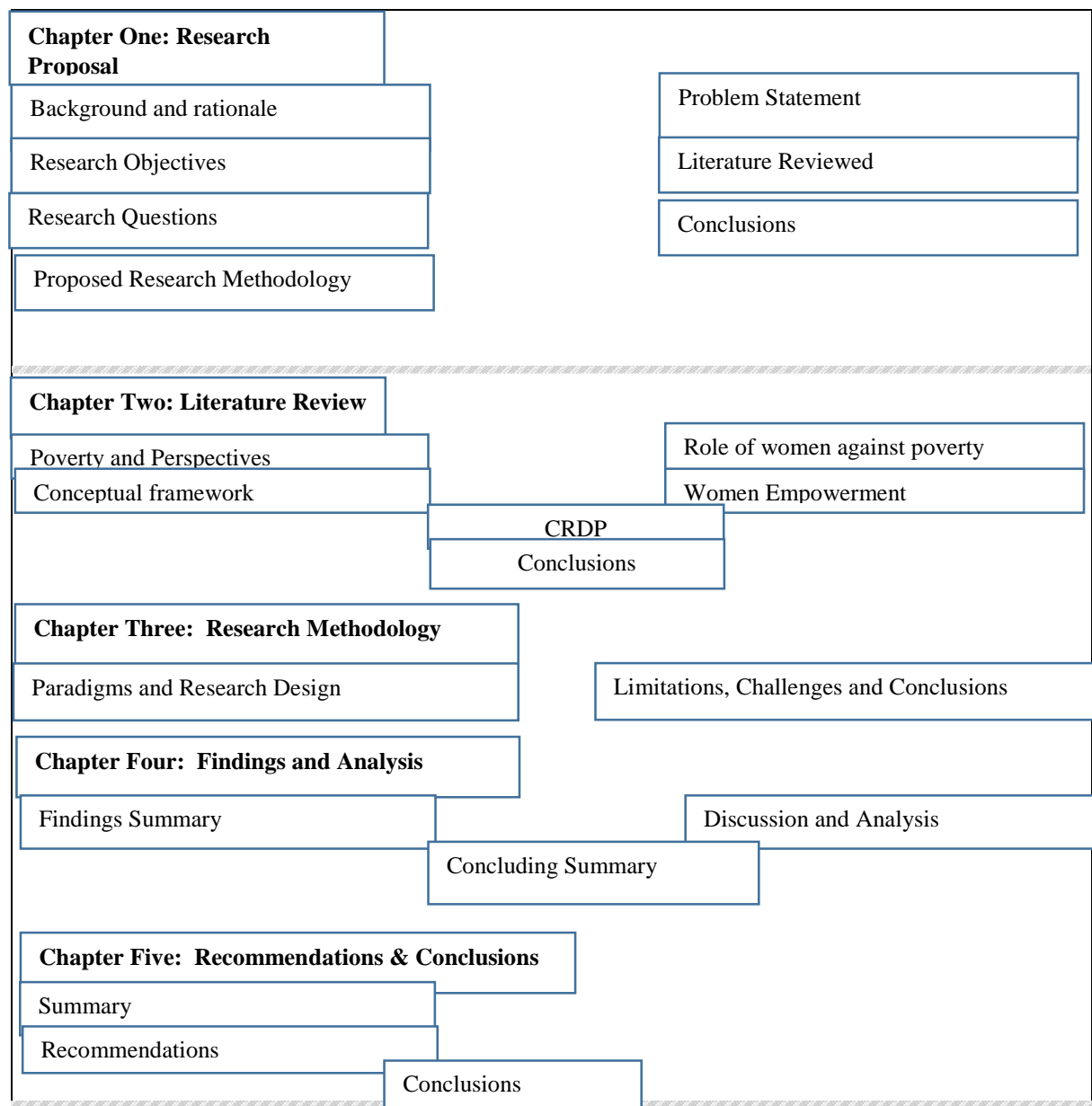
Chapter two of this research provides literature reviewed from the body of knowledge in the subject area. The body of knowledge is reviewed in relation to the existing comprehensive rural development programme sites, as well as literature, which includes literature on socio-economic and political aspects of rural development generally, and within the gender perspective.

Chapter three presents the research methodology, which includes research design and research strategies, which lead to the data collection method and the analysis of the data.

Chapter four analyses and interprets the research results, in order to answer the main question of the investigation.

Chapter five presents a research summary, recommendations and suggestions for future research on the subject under study. Apart from the conclusive nature of this chapter, it also emphasises the importance of the need for the pursuing of excellence in research and establishing an orientation towards ongoing future research.

1.10.1 Diagrammatic Dissertation structure



Source: Author's contribution, 2016

1.11 Summary of the chapter

This chapter provide the conceptual understanding of poverty, the background, the causes and the settings where poverty most strives. The chapter further provided the conceptual framework, which forms the fundamental reference base. The various research methods of data collection were discussed and a synopsis of the findings has been discussed further in Chapter Four, Data Presentation and Analysis. In the next chapter, the literature on the empowerment of women, with specific focus on rural women, is discussed in detail. Legislative and policy

provisions were reviewed from the international world, continental, national as well as provincial, to also include the local areas as rural areas. The discussion includes the measure of the country against women processes, against the international countries, and the steps taken by the democratic government of the South African government in addressing the marginalisation and subordination issues of rural women.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Women around the globe are the pillars of rural development and participate in national economies. Hart and Jacobs (2012) maintain that women comprise the world's largest population. Women constitute the largest group in the labour markets and have a great role to play in building economies (Khan and Alam, 2008). Hill (2011); Osita-Njoku and Princewill (2015) posit that resourceful and resilient women contribute in several ways by various survival strategies for their dependants and communities. Regarding rural areas, women are the critical role players in rural livelihood activities. Khan and Alam (2008) reveal that the status of women in the rural areas is different from those of women in the urban areas. It is further reported that rural women are associated with low socio-economic status for several reasons and are deprived of human development programmes (Emami 2012).

The women in rural settings work long hours performing multiple activities, either at home, while performing non-economic activities or involved in the formal or informal sector for income generation. Rural women's participation in developmental programmes varies according to socio-economic and local cultural traditions [Hill, 2011; Handaragama, Rathnayake & Uluwaduge (2013) and Lanjar et al. (2015)]. According to Hill (2011), women in rural areas are largely faced with hunger and limited access to economic opportunities. The researcher further maintains that women are mostly neglected and have consistently lost out in the process. It is further reported that the disparity between gender and poverty is substantial in the developing world. The noted countries of the developing world include Pakistan, India and Africa [Yaqoob et al. (2014) and Zawada & Jiyane (2014)].

A number of research literature advocates on the importance of agriculture in developing rural areas. However, Hart and Jacobs (2012) maintain that for an effective transformation of rural economies, causal factors to the situation must be addressed. These include the skills shortage, lack of facilities, poor facilities and infrastructure. As most people residing in the villages are poor, women constitute a bigger population and that, to some researchers may constitute the insufficiency of rural development programmes and resources (Emami, 2012). The following sections of this chapter are informed by reviewed literature on the empowerment of rural

women, the role they play towards the economy locally and otherwise, as well as the impacts achieved on the success of such a developmental programme.

2.2 Perspectives on poverty

Generally, poverty has attracted a lot of concern to most of the countries of the world. Hart and Jacobs (2012) assert that the world's poor remain overwhelmingly concentrated in various parts of the world. Approximately, 60 per cent in 2011 of the global population reported to be severely poor with a big share from the developing countries (StatsSA, 2014). Women and children, low income earners, the aged and disabled people are the most disadvantaged groups prone to vulnerability. Swanepoel and De Beer (2006) postulate that poverty derives from a range of various factors, such as political, social and economic factors. It is further supported that extreme poverty surfaces in the least developing countries, particularly in the rural areas.

The contributing factors to poverty vary from country to country, depending on various issues as in the view of Wittman (2012). Moyo (2007) concurs and reveals that causes of poverty are many and differ according to the environment and circumstances. Inadequate and limited reach to resources generally contributes to the emergence of deprivation and the poverty trap (Adato, Carter and May, 2006). Understanding poverty is complex from individual to communities, as well as relative to absolute poverty. The term itself is difficult to define; however, many researchers tend to dwell on factors associated with poverty.

According to Swanepoel and De Beer (2006), to define poverty, two terms associated with poverty should be unpacked. These include absolute poverty and relative poverty. Relative poverty is noted as an expression of one entity in relation to the other. Rad et al. (2010) postulates the difference in circumstances and the poverty measure of a specific group differs in relation to urban and rural settings. Where absolute poverty encompasses the point of survival between life and death, unbearable life with challenges compounding each other, hunger, homelessness, poor education, subordination, low self-esteem and premature deaths (Wittman, 2012).

In the majority of the world population, the rural communities are often found in recurrent poverty and backwardness. According to Phuhlisani (2009), movements against world poverty were initialised at the World Summit of 1995. The Summit had called countries to prioritise fundamental causes of poverty. The progress to this effect did not materialise well. In the 24th

session, world leaders set the target for all countries to commit at about 50 per cent of the world population living in extreme poverty, hence the SDG's post 2015 period. The 50 per cent target was endorsed by the Millennium Summit as the Millennium Development Goal One. This conceivably explains why poverty eradication is the major priority in the Sustainable Development Goals. Furthermore, Clarke and Carney (2008) concur and suggests the effective approaches to sustainable rural development to entail the analysis of:

- The context in which rural people live, including the effects upon them of external trends (economic, technological, population growth etc.).
- Their access to physical, human, financial, natural, and social assets and the ability to put these to productive use.
- The institutions, policies, and organisations which shape their livelihoods.
- The different strategies they adopt in pursuit of their goals.

Moon (2015) in the MDG report suggests that sound strategies, adequate resources and politics, can transform the poverty face, even in the poorest countries of the world. This would best progress if all the country's efforts were to be aligned to the Sustainable Development Goals' (SDGs) key priorities. The SDGs vision aims at leaving no one behind in poverty, including the special groups, such as women, girls and children (United Nations, 2015). Muhammed and Pillay (2015) accentuate that the presence of poverty does not determine the ineffectiveness of any government policy, but rather, the understanding, active involvement of all sectors and factors, as well as the implementation thereof.

In the main, the Millennium Development Goals of 2000 and Sustainable Development Goals lay the basis for the concerted global efforts on the developmental agenda against extreme poverty. The said global policies asset the fundamental base for all countries of the world to work, formulate and implement, such as anti-poverty policies. As South Africa received its democracy in 1994, the country has received international recognition and acclaim, and serves as an example to other countries with political struggles. However, the view of Hooeven and Ozler in the work of Bhorat and Kanbur (2006) notes that the greatest struggle, after the emancipation of democracy, has been the attempt to redress the imbalances of the past. Gwanya (2010); Moyo (2014) share similar sentiments and posit that the poverty facing South Africa today can be tracked back to the repressive apartheid system, which limited access to economic

prospects and government services. The apartheid legacy has left so many undesired aspects, such as inequality, economical vestiges and racial discrimination.

2.3 South African programmes against poverty

The South African democratic government of 1994 has introduced transformation on economic programmes and various reforms to address issues of poverty and inequality (Adato et.al, 2006). The reforms were strongly supported by the South African Constitution, international agreements and the global policies on development (Moyo, 2007). The researcher further reveal that, the Constitution of South Africa of 1996 compelled the state to formulate laws and measures, which ensured that all citizens were enabled to meet basic human needs. Having much of the population in the rural areas, agriculture was mainly believed to be the major significant source of employment and food security, with many of the programmes having to shape and align as such [Choudhary & Parthasarathy (2007) and Yaqoob (2014)].

The National Development Plan (NDP) vision of 2030 states that the main challenge of democratic South Africa is the marginalisation of the poor, with many rural areas and its people being trapped in the poverty cycle (National Planning Commission, 2011). Adato, et al., (2006) concurs with the NDP and expatiates, that the socio-economic division of the apartheid era has created inequalities, which deter conventional paths for growth and development, while segmentation and ineffective patterns of social economic growth supersedes.

As South Africa was in its infancy stages to redress the imbalances of the past, the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) was established in 1994 for economic redress (Britton, 2010). The Growth, Employment and Redistribution programme of 1996 and the Accelerated Growth Initiative for South Africa were introduced to ensure economic growth and redistribution of assets for all (Seroto, 2012). However, high levels of poverty and inequality continued to persist and more initiatives were required (Meyer, 2014). Initiatives to align with the NDP's goals encompass the following:

- The building of a united country; resolving the historical injustices; improving social and economic transformation;
- Complete eradication of poverty and joblessness, as well as the reduction of inequality; and
- The economic expansion and equal distribution of benefits for the upliftment of the quality of life for all South Africans.

Further to the NDP, attempts to address rural poverty, mainly in the rural areas, the government continued to receive attention for development. This is witnessed amongst the set of priorities in the State of the Nation's Address (SONA) by the honourable J.G. Zuma on the 11th February 2016. In the SONA the state president introduced the nine-point plan, where two are of utmost relevance to our discussion, as follows:

- Revitalisation of agriculture and agro-processing, value-chain, nine-point plan of the state, and
- Unraveling the potential of SMMEs, co-operatives, township and rural enterprises.

Amongst the initiatives taken by the South African government to support the development of rural areas was the introduction of the Agri-Parks programme, which aimed at increasing the involvement of smallholding farmers in agricultural activities. The programme started with the construction of the five sites nationwide to transform economies in the rural areas. These included sites in the provinces of Gauteng, North West, Western Cape, Eastern Cape, and Mpumalanga (Mayende, 2016).

According to Meyer (2014), job creation has been a global challenge. However, South Africa leads in the unemployment rate with 25.2 per cent, as against the world average of 9.2 per cent. Approximately 60 per cent of the South African population obtain income through various kinds of work, while almost 40 per cent of the population depends on government social security payments (Schussler, 2013). The report on the South African statistics in (StatsSA, 2014) reveals that South Africa's Gini-coefficient is 0.67 per cent. The State of the Provincial Address (SOPA) (2015) of the Eastern is the point of departure in our discussion and reference.

According to Masualle (2015), in the SOPA, the implementation of rural development strategies such as the Agri-Parks is critical. The attention must be given to the transformation of the economies to create jobs and sustainable livelihoods, with 30.8 per cent of unemployment with 50 per cent, as unemployed youth. The government has shown its commitment to fighting poverty with the creation of 24 737 jobs, through the economic agencies of the province. The Community Works Programme (CWP) also reported as having created 35 222 work opportunities, as well as the 155 235 jobs through the Expanded Public

Works Programme (EPWP), with approximately 64 per cent to benefit rural women and 39 per cent to benefit youth, since its inception in 2010 (Masualle, 2015).

In the view of the World Bank (2012), the creation of jobs is critical and can lead to the following: better quality living standards, reduced poverty, increased accumulation effects, global integration, social cohesion through the creation of social identity, income nets, and a sense of belonging and fairness. Educational levels and skills are directly related to employment opportunities and various income earnings, however, the assumption is that rural development programmes, as in the South African context, accommodate for such challenges.

Furthermore, the DRDLR in the Eastern Cape Province, has trained 4 184 youths, through the Advanced Professional Trade and Competency Programme (APTCOP) and the National Rural Youth Service Co-operatives (NARYSEC) programmes. According to the Rural Development Framework of 2013, the major goal of NARYSEC is to develop youth between 18-35 years to become para-professionals, who will work in their own localities. It is envisioned on the strategic outcome to decrease youth dependency on family remittances, improved rural, youth health and decline in the levels of rural youth unemployment. It is presumed that the National Development Plan (NDP) vision of 2030 has set the tone for both the SONA and the SOPA for all nine provinces. However, the discourse will be more of the Eastern Cape SOPA. Meyer (2014) views the South African government as having two major priorities, being job creation and the development of rural areas. Above all, the NDP has outlined a target of the creation of one million additional jobs in the agricultural sector. The vision NDP of 2030 (2011) is further supported by the National Growth Path with the target of 145 000 jobs created by 2020.

In concurring with the above Mayende (2016) cited the Medium Term Strategic Framework (MTSF) as the policy, imperative for the administration period 2014-2019, where the CRDP has the vision to upscale rural development through its co-ordinated and integrated resource planning and implementation by all stakeholders. The CRDP has envisioned reducing rural unemployment and poverty in the rural areas.

Hooeven and Ozler (2006) noted that, since coming into democracy, the new government has formulated a broad pro-poor policy framework. Van der Berg, Krige and Lekezwa (2010) argue that South Africa's pro-poor policy is an extensive formal social security system with the trappings of a modern welfare state and dependency. The introduced pro-poor policies include

the services of free schools, social grants, health, houses and basic services to the indigent group as water, electricity, and sanitation in addition to social grants (Twala and Selesho, 2013).

StatsSA (2014) argues that, as much as social grants are a short-term measure to poverty alleviation, they have become an instrumental source of livelihood in South Africa and have progressed well in reducing poverty levels. The rural poverty level has improved and been constantly reported along 68.8 per cent by the population census report (StatsSA, 2014). According to the view of Van der Berg, Krige and Lekezwa, (2010), the introduction of the CRDP launched by the DRLR was basically meant to address structural weaknesses in earlier state policy positions with respect to land and rural development. However, to ensure the effectiveness thereof, several development programmes have to be introduced, implemented, monitored and evaluated.

2.4 Poverty towards people's livelihood

Bhorat and Kanbur (2006) viewed poverty in the rural areas as significantly affecting both men and women and with dire consequences to children. According to Ayode and Adeola (2012) abject poverty can cause terrible suffering and lead to death. It is further reported that the most modest levels of poverty deter people from realising their desires. Severe poverty may lead to daily struggles for primary human needs, such as food and shelter, which in turn leads to severe malnutrition, ill health, famine and social unrest.

According to Hart and Jacobs (2012) the huge proportion of about 70% of the South African population still reside in the rural areas. Further reveals that, about 71 per cent of rural dwellers live in poverty. Furthermore Fabricius et al. (2013) maintains that much of the South African population are comprised of women, who in turn find their livelihood in rural areas. Kehler (2013) postulates that access to resources, prospects, education, as well as their access to growth and wealth, are severely limited to women in the rural areas. Rural women are faced with even greater illiteracy; as they live under enormous poverty and preserve a visible poverty face.

In South Africa, about 40 per cent of households obtain their income through government social security services. StatsSA (2014) strongly supports the view that social security services have

played an important role in the alleviation of poverty and have contributed toward the decline of poverty levels in the country. Armstrong et al. (2008) concurs that a broader coverage of social grants has brought a significant relief to the majority of people trapped in poverty. According to Meyer (2014), the global unemployment rate is 200 million, where South Africa has a huge world unemployment contribution at the rate of 2.3 per cent, while is only 0.8 per cent of the total global population. South Africa has about 24.9 per cent of the unemployment rate.

Meyer (2014) argues that, even though South Africa has a relatively high unemployment rate, its rate is not the highest in the world. Most Southern African countries have higher unemployment rates. In Europe, the average unemployment rate is 11.9 per cent. South Africa is being compared to Romania regarding some of the key economic indicators (Country Economy, 2014). Where South Africa is the member of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) as well and the BRICKS group; on the other hand, Romania is part of the European Economic Area (EEA). The two countries share similarities, except for the rate of unemployment, where Romania has a relatively low unemployment rate of 7.2 per cent. The two countries have similar GDP per capita data. While Romania has better Human Development Index data of 0.79 per cent against South Africa's 0.63 per cent, South Africa has a better competitiveness ranking of 53 than 76 of Romania as in table 2.4(a). Both countries have negative trade balances.

Table 2.1 Indicators: South Africa vs Romania

Key Indicator	South Africa	Romania
GDP per capita	\$7,508	\$7,939
Unemployment rate	24.90%	7.20%
Trade balance	-\$36,988	-\$12,359
HDI	0.63	0.79
Competitiveness Ranking	53	76

Source: Country Economy (2014)

The performance of the countries in the year 2016 has dropped with South Africa at 5 727 and Romania improved at 9 471 on GDP per capita. The unemployment rate continues to grow at 26.7 per cent, while Romania is 5.4 per cent (Country Economy, 2014).

On the other hand, StatsSA (2014) revealed that South Africa has an official unemployment rate, reported at 24.7 per cent and 15.6 per cent employed in the informal sector. StatsSA (2014) in the Statistical report for South Africa reveal that from 2001 to 2013 the employment rate of people has increased by 3.9 per cent, while the unemployment rate increased by 4.0 per cent. South Africa's labour absorption rate performed poorly when compared to the European countries. According to Meyer (2014), the informal sector has a very low contribution to employment in South Africa, when compared to other developing countries in the BRICS group. Huang, Zhang and Scott (2008) assert that China has made remarkable strides in fighting rural poverty. The writers further elaborate that, the situation has changed ever since the introduction of economic reforms, which accommodate the growth of the rural poor.

2.5 Theoretical/conceptual framework

Women are the pillars of development, change agents and the backbone of their communities globally (Nwanze, 2011). Neves and Du Toit (2013) assert that South Africa's rural livelihoods are marked by continuing racial, gender based and spatial legacies of poverty. Collins (2013) argues that even though efforts to reinforce gender equality and mainstreaming were introduced, gender inequality continues to exist in the world and more especially in the countries of the developing world. Inequality between men and women, as well as women in urban against rural areas, differ with the rural areas at the end of development. In the South African context, the democratic government inherited the state in 1994 with a lot of constellations, which are related to the apartheid system, where women were strongly affected by the system (Wittman, 2012). Osita-Njoku and Princewill (2015) concur and further postulates that subordination of women is entrenched in a set of customary and legal constraints, which prohibit them from development.

Moser (2012) reveals that development initiatives have been noted and criticised for disregarding gender roles and the impact that women have on development, both at a national and a global scale. However, a progressive shift to integrate women into development programmes in the hope of fighting poverty and lowering economic status has appeared. The conceptual framework under discussion in this research includes the approaches as Women In Development (WID), Women And Development (WAD) and Gender And Development (GAD). These three approaches directly relate to the situation in practice in the uMhlontlo local municipality women's empowerment and developmental programmes by the government.

These three approaches set out to explain how development affects both men and women, and why the developmental experiences of women differ from those of men.

The WID approach dates back to the 1970's, with the belief that women had been left out of development, and as a result they are disadvantaged (Moser, 2012). Moser (2012) support the approach and view women as key role players in the economic development system and play a central role in the lives of their communities. According to the Gender Equity Report (2005), the WID aimed at a more effective and efficient development, thereby incorporating women's projects into the existing developmental projects. The WID also includes the strategies to add women's projects, thereby increasing women's income and productivity, as well as improving their ability to look after their households. According to the work of Moser (2012), the rationale was that women are an unexploited resource who can provide an economic contribution to development.

Wittman (2012) reveals that the WID approach argues that women have been relegated from development. Furthermore, women are critical role players in the economic system, and neglecting them in development plans have brought about an unexploited, large contribution. Supporters of the WID approach in Moser (2012) maintained that development would proceed much better, if women were fully integrated into it. Basically, the WID approach was mainly focused on the isolation of women and promoted measures, such as financial access and employment opportunities, as a means by which women can be better integrated into the development process.

The WID approach became popular in its era of development; however, the focus on women in isolation has passed challenges and limitations, which called for a balanced approach to look at gender and development. Despite the visibility of women in development issues, the WID did not address the root causes preventing women's full participation in their societies. The WID was criticised for its concern and the perception of women's problems in terms of sex. The WID's approach focused on women almost exclusively, with the assumption that women were outside the mainstream of development, which has contributed to the limitations in the approach.

From that effect, issues regarding the involvement of women in development kept occurring in the national and international developmental agencies. In the late 1970's the WAD arose as a critic to the WID. The WAD standpoint states that women have always been active contributors in economic development, regardless of various circumstances surrounding them (Collins,

2013). The WAD argued that class structures were more oppressive than gender. The approach further argued that the poor marginalised women have more in common with men in their class, when compared to women and men in the other class. In support of the class created amongst the groups, Correa-Fernandez, et al. (2015) argues and postulates that the contributing factor to disparities between men and women include early marriage, which in turn prevents educational development, growth and the power of decision. The researcher further affirms that religious and cultural beliefs are also factors, which legitimise inequalities.

However, criticisms around the WAD approach appeared, citing the assumption that the position of women would improve, if international structures became more equitable. The approach was further criticised for underplaying the role of and defining men's power as opposed to women, which failed to address relational issues between men and women, as well as their impact on development.

In the late 1980's the gender and development (GAD) movement appeared. The GAD acknowledged the women's project, as in the WID approach, as common today. According to Jamal, Ismail and Rasdi, (2014) the GAD acknowledged the social construction of different societies and takes a holistic, socio-cultural approach in its development programmes. The GAD approach became popular in the developing countries with a concern in the way gender and concomitant relationships were socially constructed. Existing research suggests that, generally, women are grossly relegated and excluded from the shared benefits of development, and often disproportionately impacted negatively.

The impact is far worse with the rural women in the rural areas where men and women play different roles in society (Keenan, Kemp and Ramsay, 2016). Ideological, historical, religious, economic and cultural practices continue to shape gender differences. These roles differentiate and show similarities between other different social categories. The social category differentiates the inequality experience and discrimination within societies.

The GAD maintains that, isolating the focus on women is to ignore the problem of women's discrimination when compared to men. According to the view of Keenan, Kemp and Ramsay (2016) the emphasis on gender influences is how both men and women access, discuss and experience the positive and negative changes generated by the development in their respective spaces. Furthermore, the GAD approach is based on the principle that the major issue is the

subordination and inequality women experience when compared with men. Central to the GAD is the issue of women empowerment, which at the same time recognises the inequalities, which exist within gender and communities (Wittman, 2012). This study adopted the GAD approach for its emphasis on women capacitation and the recognition of inequality within gender. The greater view is to analyse the impact of the CRDP in empowering women in the rural areas of uMhlontlo.

As in the view of Moser (2012), the purpose of the GAD approach is that empowered women are believed to have achieved equality with their gender counterparts in society. It is further argued that the empowerment of women does not only focus on existing power relations and structures; it also pays attention to relational structures rooted in social categories (Wittman, 2012). In the main, it is undisputed in wide literature coverage, that investing in women and sensitivity to gender, delivers long-term possibilities for developmental outcomes. It is to that effect where Moser (2012) outlines the benefits in the GAD to include:

- Changes in gender relations to encompass a sense of more respect towards women,
- Enhanced decision-making and active involvement of women in community development,
- Increased knowledge of women's legal rights,
- Reduce family violence against women, and
- Encompass increased men's knowledge on women's health care issues.

It is concluded that all approaches can contribute to women's advancement and increase gender equity. The WID approach emphasises the importance of integrating and improving women's projects in the existing processes, which seems to be promising in addressing the practical situation on the ground. Through the examination of the WID, WAD and GAD approaches, especially relating to the uMhlontlo local municipality's women's empowerment, the arguments and strengths are considered in the practical situation of the area. The GAD discourse particularly focuses on addressing the issues of underdevelopment in rural areas, which emanated due to various reasons and considered relational matters in the rural areas, which includes uMhlontlo as the study site.

2.6 The role of women in economic growth

Realising the importance of women in poverty alleviation within societies is an important aspect of long-term development. The role of women empowerment and the developmental process has the critical potential for success (Bertaux, 2007). According to Hill (2011), while it is important to address women's economic empowerment to attain the MDG one, it is equally important to pursue such goals in line with the international agreements in place, as well as the attainment of the post 2015 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). The SDG necessitates that all member states adhere to the developmental agenda, encompassing the empowerment of women to enable them to play leadership roles in their lives, as well as to ensure that no one is left behind in poverty (Yudhoyono, Sirleaf and Cameron, 2013). Yaqoob, et al. (2014) postulates that, the developing countries need to benchmark their investments against poverty, regarding women's development and empowerment as a catalyst of change.

Wittman, (2012) argues that women extensively contribute to the economic growth of their communities and family well-being, despite the lack of recognition while carrying household chores. According to the Integrated Development Plan (IDP) of uMhlontlo (2015), an economic growth has been noticed in the area from 2005-2011. The remarkable growth from 9 per cent to 14 per cent has been noticed, as the contribution of the local municipality towards the district municipality's growth in the GDP per capita (Giyose, 2015). The area has also got value-added products, which contributed towards the district's share of development and that of the province at a wider spectrum. It is postulated that contributions of the CRDP towards economic growth may account to community services and agriculture at 998 and 146, as well as the support of local trade and markets at 215.

Khan and Alan (2008) reveal that rural women are largely involved in the farming sector. Handaragama, Rathnayake and Uluwaduge (2013) concur, by indicating that rural women constitute much of the agricultural workforce, in that they constitute a substantial, economic resource. Rural African women have long been participating in savings, production and mutual organisations (Wittman, 2012). It is further reported that many rural, African women rely on cooperatives and market groups to pool resources and optimise limited income.

2.6.1 The role of women in economic generation in the informal sector

Yaqoob (2014) reveal that, each other, that rural women are critical factors towards rural economies of both developed, as well as developing countries. These women contribute to

economic generations, both formal and informally. However, Parthasarathy (2007) asserts that for a better thoughtfulness and knowledge in women's economic roles, there must be consideration of visible and invisible work done by women. The majority of women are involved in formal, low-paying jobs. Furthermore, women in rural areas are actively participating in agricultural activities to generate economy and secure food. They participate in crop production and caring for livestock, food security, and fetch water and wood for their families. It is also reported that rural women practice agricultural activities and participate in non-agricultural activities to diversify their families' livelihoods [Khan & Alan (2008) and Osita-Njoku & Princewill (2014)].

Traders at markets are further viewed by researchers as an informal source of income to some women. Sathiabama (2010) posits that the dispensation of micro-finance to the poor can be effective, if rural women could be organised into Self-Help Groups (SHG's). According to Hussein (2015) self-help groups are informal, local suggestions, which consist of people from a minimum of 10 to the maximum of 20 members being formulated, to afford its members the security of economic benefit through mutual group assistance, cohesion and shared responsibility. The researcher further reveals that the availability and utilisation of the group's financial resources for economic activities largely generates income and assets, which in turn reduces household vulnerability.

In the view of Swain and Wallentin (2009), micro-finance programmes have recently gained prestige, as they yield positive economic gains, as well as believed to play a role towards women's empowerment, especially to the Self-Help Groups. Hill (2011) strongly asserts that women with income are more likely to spend money on food and children's needs, and use their local knowledge to provide for their families. The micro-finance, financial empowerment programme has proven to be a signal of hope for funds to many countries to percolate at the grass roots level and has become a complete kit of economic development (Shinde and Joshi, 2016). Faveri et al. (2015) maintains that effective and sustainable development and empowerment programmes must be grounded in a strong understanding of the specific and localised environments' operation.

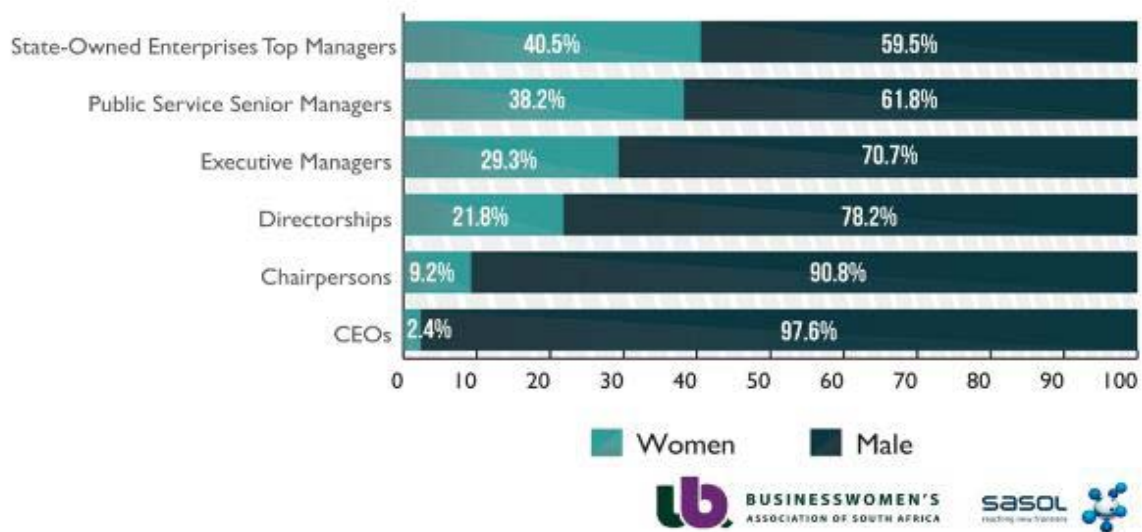
2.6.2 The role of women in economic generation in the formal sector

Walsh (2006) views South Africa as exemplary if women are afforded economic freedom and opportunities during democratic emancipation. The researcher further points out that the remarkable difference is evident, comparable to other countries of Europe, where women's roles in politics and work were reduced. Women continue to enter the workplace and contribute to economic generation in increasing numbers. On the other hand, the researcher also noted the slowness in the advancement of female managers and professions (Davidson and Burke, 2011). However, Meyer (2014) has noted the country's entrepreneurialship rate to be low by 14 per cent, when compared to the global average of 27 per cent, as well as the rate of established businesses at 2.3 per cent, compared to a global average of 8 per cent.

It is further noted that educational levels and entrepreneurship have a relationship, which determines a certain level of economic success. Holst and Friedrich (2016) concur and argue that women remain grossly under-represented in management positions in many countries. However, the gender leadership gap varies considerably across different industries, as in the view of the researcher. Grobler et al. (2006) concurs that many female workers are still not fully utilised by many in top management positions. Stander (2016) concurs with the researchers on under representation of women in top positions as demonstrated in the presentation on the status of women in Figure 4.1 below:

Figure 2.2 Statistical profile of women in a workplace

Statistical profile - Women workforce representation across organisations



Source: Stander (2016)

Politically, women participate in parliamentary processes. In the South African context, a 50/50 is the quota for equal representation. Quotas are viewed as part of the new policy on equity (Dahlerup, 2013). Women's political participation was initiated, even before the emancipation of democracy, and contributed to debates, which reshaped the country, when the government of national unity came into power. During the emancipation of the first democratic government of 1994, the celebrated first non-racial election positioned 117 women in parliament, which has boosted a significant number in the cabinet. The African National Congress led government has introduced a gender quota, which in turn inspired other parties to promote women in their ranks (Walsh, 2006).

In support of the discussions above on the involvement and role played by women in economic generation, the United Nations (2017) report revealed an increased access to paid employment can positively enhance better household relations and the opinion of women's roles in society. Researchers such as Bertaux & Crable (2007) and Licumba, et al. (2015) maintained that initiatives which enhance women's access to and control of income, enhance and directly contribute towards the welfare of their children, especially in the areas of educational development and health, more than the control of income and resources by men, as in the view of Bertaux and Crable, (2007). Licumba, et al. (2015) maintains that, women's economic capacitation increases earning power, which in turn raises household financial stability.

2.7 Women empowerment

The empowerment of women has received prominence due to several researchers and literature. This is because of several developments and initiatives around the globe, which pays attention to women's empowerment, particularly those in the rural areas (Handaragama, Rathnayake and Uluwaduge, 2013). Women around the globe are reported to be central factors in rural livelihoods. The capacitation of women is an essential way to provide for livelihood strategies (Sathiabama, 2010). Women's hands build stable foundations, while developmental efforts have not entrusted enough resources to them. Empowering women is the source for multiplying the developmental efforts, and women are believed to invest higher proportions of their income to their families (OECD, 2012).

However, it is noted that women from urban areas differ from women in rural areas in their experiences (Rad et al., 2010). Wittman (2014) reveal that rural women are deprived of access to development programmes for several reasons and live in rural poverty. Despite the limited access to facilities and education, rural women continue to be pillars of development (Rad et al., 2010). Women empowerment is the fundamental basis for sustainable development and pro-poor growth (OECD, 2012). Shangura, et al. (2015) posits that the empowerment of women should be the top priority aimed at reducing the vulnerability of poor women, and increase the ability to stand in society.

The empowerment of women has been widely acknowledged, as critical towards attaining development at all levels. However, the meanings associated with the concept itself vary. A diverse body of knowledge has emerged regarding the conceptualisation of women's empowerment. Emami (2012) defines empowerment as the equality, which women can obtain by controlling their emotional decisions. The researcher further defines empowerment as the process through which people perform activities to conquer developmental challenges. On the other hand, the World Bank (2012) defines empowerment as the extension of the independence of choice and action. This study adopts the definition by Narayan-Parker (2005) for its relevance to this study. Narayan-Parker (2005) proposed a definition of empowerment, as the development in the abilities of people to better afford them an opportunity to make informed, planned and valued choices, where such choices were previously denied to them for various reasons.

The concept receives considerable attention with regards to women. Narayan-Parker (2005) posits that women's empowerment can be distinguished by certain features. These features include the process of emancipating change toward development, greater equality, freedom of choice and action to transform the current state to a better one. Rural women may cause improvement in economic, social and cultural issues. This positive outcome can be achieved through increased rural women's knowledge in all social, cultural and political areas. Phil (2011) postulate that rural women's mind-sets should be changed to become conscious of their abilities to change themselves, their families and their communities. The empowerment of rural women lies in becoming self-dependent individuals.

Kabeer (2005) argues that, while education, employment and resources are important in women's empowerment, they are just enabling factors for women to be catalysts of change. There can be no societal transformation without the leadership and involvement of women. Therefore, the empowerment of rural women is of primary importance in ensuring sustainable development.

2.7.1 Programmes and plans on women empowerment

Around the world, women are the central factors in development (Rad, et al. 2010). Khan and Alan (2008) concur that women are the most important segment of society with a great role to play towards achieving socio-economic growth. The abilities and status of women differ according to their rural and urban status. They perform home and wage-related activities without any recognition. Osita-Njoku and Princewill (2015) site gender relations, which impact negatively on women. Rad et al. (2010) concurs and further postulates that the differences are not only based on cultural norms and practices, but on the environmental types the livelihood relies on. For that reason, rural women are the most affected by the negative imperatives of the environment and associated with high rates of illiteracy, subordination and poor skills, as in the view of [Hart & Jacobs (2012) and Emami (2012)].

The participation of women in developmental issues has been the focus of concentrated debates by a number of international forums (Czarniawska, 2006). According to the view of Davidson and Burke (2011), the discourse of international platforms against gender discrimination and inequality has led to numerous declarations. The aims of the instruments were for the implementation of measures fighting against discrimination and inequality at all levels of all countries. The international platforms include the Declaration of the Convention on the

Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) of 1979 (Ismail, et al., 2011).

Ismail, et al. (2011) outlines the aim of the CEDAW as being to overcome the ongoing extensive discrimination of women, committing the state parties to equalise the role and status of women in social and economic life. Furthermore, Walsh (2006) outlines article 14 of CEDAW which recognises difficulties experienced by rural women economically and commits the states to incorporate women in the decision-making processes about rural development and economic planning; and access to basic services and benefits. CEDAW resonates with the South African context where rural women were noted to be burdened by poverty, as most researchers note in their literature. Since South Africa signed and ratified CEDAW in 1995, efforts have been made to position women in law (Walsh, 2006).

Quagliariello (2009) notes that the process of awareness, rising against the discrimination of women, became effective after the Beijing International Conference in 1995. The Beijing Conference involved new processes and mechanisms for consideration, as the relational approach to both genders as both beneficiaries of a developmentally concerned policy with different needs, skills and involvement (Quagliariello, 2009). The declarations acknowledged that women's rights have been marginalised. To provide for this, the strategic objective of the Beijing platform dictates that governments should take measures to promote and strengthen policies and programmes for women to enable opportunities and possibilities in the developmental process to eradicate poverty (Moyo, 2014). In the African context, the Southern African Development Communities Declaration and the African Union's protocol on the rights of women emerged.

This sustainably strengthened the African Union's renewed commitment on Agenda 2063. The African Union under the leadership of Dr. Nkosazana Zuma, as the chairperson of the African Union, renewed its commitment to build the African continent and its people (African Union Commission, 2014). With its Number One aspiration being the renewed commitment and dedication for a successful Africa, premised on the comprehensive growth and sustainable development towards sustainable poverty eradication through socio-economic transformation of the continent (DeGhetto, Gray and Kiggundu, 2016). Aspiration number six has an emphasis on African women, envisioned to be fully empowered and achieve equality on social, political

and economic rights. Obtaining access to productive assets, which include land, inputs and financial services, is the aspiration of the majority of rural women (Turner, et al., 2014).

Davidson and Burke (2011); Quagliariello (2009) note that the South African actions against the discrimination of women included the acceptance of the National Gender Machinery, which has been a long struggle to allow gender to be included on the national development agenda. However, the birth of the South African Constitutional Act 106 of 1996, as the key legislative prescript of the country has legally unlocked all injustices. The Bill of rights as chapter two of the constitution gives effect to the establishment of a legislative framework for the empowerment of women, as well as aspects relating to women, including the representation and appointment in decision-making positions. The establishment of Chapter Nine institutions, the Human Rights Commission, as well as the Commission on Gender Equality, gives effect to uphold Chapter 2 of the Bill of Rights (Czarniawska, 2006).

The NDP also recommends measures to advance women's equality to include the active participation and empowerment of women, as a necessity of involvement in the transformation of the economy. Goal Three of the MDG further made the advancement thereof by setting a timeframe on this theme, as 2015. It thus focused on the adoption of strategies, which comprehensively reduced the differences between men and women, and were expected to achieve equivalent standards of living by 2015. However, Goal Two of the Sustainable Development Goals clearly advocated for the eradication of any form of subordination against women in all spheres of life.

The Ford (2015) further states that safe, healthy, educated and fully empowered women realise their potential and transform their economies, families and communities. Parallel to the SDG, the launched Agenda 2063 of the African Union serves as a call for action to all segments of African society, to work towards building a united Africa, free of discrimination. The Agenda 2063 envisions empowering African and rural women, and completely eradicating poverty, with the aim of no poverty left. The vision is backed by the commitment of the African Union on effective governance (Turner et al., 2014).

2.7.2 Strategies towards women empowerment

The Third Millennium Goal is instrumental in achieving gender equality and empowerment (Kabeer, 2005). According to Emami (2012), rural women are mainly not actively involved in economic generating activities and are deprived of many human development programmes. Various literature reviewed noted the illiteracy as a huge barrier to their development (Hart and Jacobs, 2012). Dimensions in women's empowerment which can overlap, include human and financial resources, legal, political, educational and agricultural dimensions (Shangura, et al., 2015). Kabeer (2005) further states that education, employment opportunities and political participation are essential enablers towards gender equality and development.

In turn, this would resonate to the Goal 1-3 of the Millennium Development Goals on poverty and equal educational opportunities for women (Jiyane and Zawada, 2013). In the view of Morrell, Jewkes and Lindegger 2012 (2014), education has the potential to promote gender equality and women's empowerment. Ismail, et al. (2011) stipulates that the role of education is the basis of empowering women in all spheres of society. Yaqoob, et al. (2014) believes that financial assistance is very significant in empowering women. Bertaux and Crable (2007) postulate the importance of considering the micro-enterprise approach for women's empowerment, which can be much easier to participate in and own, as compared to the top-down empowerment programmes.

2.7.3 Impact of women's empowerment

Wittman (2012) maintains that women's socially constructed behaviour means that economic resources allocated to them are more likely to be spent and benefit the family. Handaragama, Rathnayake and Uluwaduge (2013) concur that most women who are economically active, supply the needs of their children and the extended dependents. Most economically active women, through the provision of needs to their families and their children, were reported to be highly confident and motivated towards growth. Hill (2011) maintains that empowered women are likely to gain better health, skills, higher income and better security, freedom as well as self-confidence.

Narayan-Parker (2005) argues that, while positive impacts can be obtained, so can negative impacts be obtained. The negative impacts may include triggering resistance from other groups, heightened conflict and decreased economic opportunities. Elites, the historically important groups in society may dispute the increased empowerment of the poor and

disadvantaged groups like women. Mohammed and Pillay (2013) emphasise the importance of policy formulation, implementation as well as governance in the process of development. Handaragama, Rathnayake and Uluwaduge (2013) concur that economically active women may suffer in family relationships with other family members, as they do not have enough time. Caring for the elderly may tend to be a challenge, as time is a challenge. However, empowering a rural woman has proven to bear fruitful benefits for the family and the community. For the effective transformation of rural areas, empowerment of rural areas can assist towards changing the country for the better, as well as effective poverty eradication.

2.8 The Comprehensive Rural Development Program (CRDP)

According to the view of Ruhiiga (2013), since the birth of democracy, South Africa has consistently pursued a set of socio-economic policies, which cumulatively target the closing of the social gap between the different racial groups. Since 1994, poverty and unemployment in South Africa have increased. About 40 per cent of the entire population depend on government welfare programmes for a living and the majority of the population are the rural poor (Meyer, 2014). Poverty continues to surface in rural areas, particularly in the former homeland areas, with approximately 65 per cent of the rural population poor and 78 per cent being chronically poor.

According to Davies (2009), rural population requires revitalisation and development. The researcher further attempts to define revitalisation, as the process which seeks to undo rural decline and enhance a more sustainable and diversified rural economy for a better life. The rural areas are characterised by a lack of adequate facilities, underutilisation of natural resources, limited access to economic facilities, low skill and education, as well as unsettled land issues (Meyer, 2014). Neves and Du Toit (2013) concur and further outline the challenges facing the rural areas as follows:

- Constrained agrarian activities and truncated possibilities for accumulation;
- Limited access to socio-economic infrastructure;
- Poor access to basic services;
- Limited socio-economic opportunities;
- Low literacy skill levels; and
- Underutilisation of resources.

In South Africa, developing rural areas is the strategic priority of 2009-2014 administration (Hart and Jacobs, 2012). The Millennium Development Goals (UNDP, 2010), emphasise that all eight goals could relate to development. Specifically, Goal 1: Eradication of extreme poverty (Meyer, 2014). South Africa has embraced the goals identified by the United Nations in 2000, as part of a commitment by world leaders in their millennium declaration to answer the challenges that bedevilled human development (Ford, 2015). The goals presented an opportunity to change the course of history and presented the most powerful international commitment to end poverty and secure peace, democracy and human rights (Meyer, 2014).

The transformative shift of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) holistically focused on poverty eradication with the aim of leaving no one behind in poverty. Apart from the Millennium Development Goals and the Sustainable Development Goals, the African Union has its renewed vision 2063 for the continent. Aspiration Number One talks of the determination of the African Union towards poverty eradication in one generation, and building shared affluence through the social and economic transformation of the continent.

2.8.1 The CRDP background

Chapter 6 of the NDP recognises that abject poverty and inequality typify rural areas, with the majority of the population and households being confined in a vicious poverty cycle. In addressing this problem, the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform has introduced strategies and interventions, which seek to enhance the empowerment and capacitation of rural communities (Obadire, et al., 2014). In 2009 the democratic government established the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform, mainly to carry out the developmental agenda of the government, by formulating and implementing policies to bridge rural underdevelopment (Hart and Jacobs, 2012; Rural Development Framework, 2013). Mare (2016) asserts that the concept of rural development has been part of the country's policy agenda since the inception of South African democracy in 1994. Rural development has enjoyed new prominence, since the policy conference of the African National Congress and resolutions held in Polokwane in 2007 (ANC, 2008).

DRDLR has introduced the Strategic Development Programme; the Comprehensive Rural Development Programme (CRDP), which identified 24 rural municipalities for attention. The CRDP is said to be the strategic priority number three within the government's current Medium

Term Strategic Framework (MTSF), 2009-2014 (Obadire, et al., 2014). The CRDP was launched in August 2009 by President Jacob Zuma, where the government pledged over R2.6 billion in conditional financial support to provinces towards the implementation of the programme over the medium term (Obadire, et al., 2014).

According to Meyer (2014:73), the DRDLR advocates for the Comprehensive Rural Development Programme (CRDP) that aim at developing rural areas through an integrated and a comprehensive approach. In the Evaluation Report of the Department (2013) the CRDP is reported to seek to redress the disparities of the past and is premised on three basic strategies as follows:

- Agrarian transformation aims at increasing the production and sustainable use of natural resources. It also aims towards the formation of rural business initiatives, cooperatives and cultural initiatives, the establishment of energetic local markets, as well as the capacitation of rural people. The strategy also aims at the revitalisation of facilities in villages and small rural towns. Ruhiiga (2013) further states that agrarian transformation is the rapid fundamental transformation in relation to issues of land, livestock, agricultural practices, as well as the community at large. It is focused on the establishment of rural business initiatives and empowerment of the local rural communities for sustained measure towards poverty eradication. Empowerment of women and youth are critical aspects towards rural transformation and growth.
- Land reform, where the CRDP aims at improving the pace towards redistributing 30 per cent of agricultural land to blacks. It also aims at improving the pace of the settlement of outstanding land claims.
- Rural development focuses on this strategy to enable rural people an opportunity to be in control of their destiny. To assist those rural communities to effectively deal with rural poverty through effective natural resource management (DRDLR, 2013).

Renewal of rural towns is said to be crucial for local economic growth, thereby making provision for social and economic infrastructural development. Where Meyer (2014) views revitalisation as the process, which focuses at undoing aspects of rural decline and to develop more robust, sustainable and diversified local economies for a better quality of life. According to the view in the Plaas report, rural development was classified as a general crosscutting policy

issue for all departments, and not the scope of a single South African government department, which in turn requires horizontal coordination across land reform sectors, as well as vertical coordination, where all spheres of government are concerned. Local government is also considered to be vital in the facilitation of local communities towards an integrated planning process, as well as the identification of community needs (Mare, 2016). In the main the CRDP aim at training local rural communities to be entrepreneurs and to create Small Medium Micro Enterprises (SMMEs).

Adisa (2012) views the CRDP concept as favouring the integration of developmental initiatives and activities in various economic sectors for the rural community. The researcher further maintains that, to ensure the effectiveness of the programme, the integration and inclusion of the historically disadvantaged group, as women, is critical.

According to Hart and Jacobs (2012), rural development is the priority of the new democratic government; and as a result, the establishment of such department to concern itself with developmental issues of rural areas and to develop strategies to that effect, is critical. As such, Ruhiiga (2013) asserts that the established CRDP aims at becoming an effective response against poverty and enhance food security by largely exploiting the utilisation and management of natural resources to create vibrant, equitable and sustainable rural communities. The DRDLR (2009) claim that the CRDP is different from the past government strategies towards rural development. Ruhiiga (2013) concurs and further elaborates, that the CRDP is premised on a positive, proactive, integrated community-driven, planning method, rather than a responsive, reactional approach to the betterment of rural areas.

2.8.2 Rationale and vision for CRDP

In South Africa, the literature on poverty level attributes to the apartheid legacy. To that effect, the South African government has responded in a credible fashion. Development programmes and policies have been formulated by the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform to alleviate poverty (Gwanya, 2010). Adisa (2012) strongly maintains that an effective approach to fight poverty and enable development in rural areas requires an incorporation of sustainability into the programme. The sustainable approach to rural development includes the process of change and transforming the rural areas to include a wider scope of development. To that effect, the CRDP was launched by the President in 2009, as the leading programme to

show the country's renewed focus on rural development. Its goal is to deal with the needs of person, community, household and land.

The CRDP is projected on the creation of vibrant, equitable and sustainable communities. This vision will be successful through the development of enterprise to stimulate the rural economy and create jobs. The revitalisation and revamping of new social and economic infrastructure to facilitate vibrant local economies and credit facilities is also the aim of the CRDP (Rural Development Strategy, 2013). Furthermore, the management of human development through increased rural skills base was also the aim of the development programme. The CRDP envisions infrastructural development in order to provide support and improve access to quality services and economic opportunities.

2.8.3 The CRDP implementation

The evaluation report of the CRDP (2013) reveals that the CRDP was established to address issues of poverty, joblessness, limited resources, limited access to basic services and poor infrastructural development in rural areas. The 2011-2014 strategic plan of the department reports that 1 619 jobs have been created through the CRDP, since its inception in 2009. This occurred through the existence of industries in rural areas such as mining, forestry, crafting, tourism and hospitality, as well as textile and retail. Other than outcome seven of the MDGs, the programme is directly linked to outcome number four, which entails the creation of decent employment through economic growth.

Gwanya (2010) maintains that the development and incorporation of productive sectors, such as agriculture and non-agriculture, institutions and their capacity's development of rural infrastructure and water services, is the key towards the fulfilment of the government's objectives and vision on developing rural areas. Ruhiiga (2013) views the strategic objective of the CRDP, as being the facilitation of integrated development and social cohesion through which an active, collaborative, participatory approach, with all societal sectors, is part thereof.

The CRDP operates in the poorest rural municipalities of South Africa (Hart and Jacobs, 2012). The UMhlontlo municipality is one of the local municipalities, which operates within the rural areas for which the CRDP was piloted. Ruhiiga (2013) asserts that the roll-out of the CRDP continues with its enhancement to all selected pilot sites of the identified municipalities nationwide. The programme plan was to scale up the CRDP from the pilot sites to all of the

selected pilot sites in the country, and ensure an integrated, broad linkage to the respective, provincial, planning frameworks.

2.8.4 Key strategic objectives of the CRDP

The 2011-2014 strategic plan of the DRLR reveals the mechanisms towards achieving the intended outcomes to include:

- The mobilisation of communities to participate in development programmes. Participation sets the stage for policy makers, stakeholders, and the public as beneficiaries to deliberate on issues concerning them for a sustainable solution, as well as ownership (Ruhiiga, 2013 and Moyo, 2014;). From this strategic objective, the CRDP has been reported to have minimally performed, where poor consultation and poor mobilisation was evident, with poor educational skills as an obstacle.
- The stimulation of rural job creation and promoting livelihoods. This objective being to see to the provision and facilitation of the enterprise and economic livelihood support such as skills development, establishment of cooperatives and food gardens. Gwanya (2010) views the job creation model as being able to create ward based development specialists, who are equipped to coach and mentor selected keen local members to enable them to become productively employed. However, the CRDP in the previous evaluation did not do well in this regard. Sprinkhuizen and Masangu (2016) in the evaluation report of the CRDP sites, outline that the majority of the jobs were created by the government's public works programmes, which are short-term jobs with low wages. These included the Community Works Programme (CWP), National Rural Youth Service Cooperatives from R535 from CWP to R1 320.00 per month with the NARYSEC. The CRDP has limited success in supporting sustainable cooperatives and the establishment of smallholding farmers. It also has limited progress in uplifting opportunities and the shortfall might be attributed to low educational levels and skills within the communities and poor leadership buy-in at local level.
- Improvement of access to basic needs for beneficiaries in CRDP sites. In relation to this objective the CRDP has performed very well in improving people's lives.

- The ability of the CRDP to add value to land reform processes. The potential for land reform in the evaluated 18 CRDP sites was limited. This is attributed to the fact that, land tenure had poor performance records, which is directly linked to the CRDP's success or failure. Lahiff, et al. (2011) concurs and asserts that land redistribution has a special place within the discourse on redistribution, both nationally and internationally. The researcher further highlights the prominence of land redistribution, while highlighting the shortfall likelihoods that, land redistribution, restitution and tenure has been an important component of policy, since 1994 and yet, an explicit link between land reform and poverty is difficult to find in official policy pronouncements.
- The achievement of value for money in relation to the resources being expended per capita expenditure rates. This objective further refers to the effectiveness and utilisation of the support service according to the intended purpose.

Osita-Njoku and Princewill (2015) maintain that rural women participate in socio-economic initiatives and the well-being of their families. Moyo (2014) asserts that, as women form the majority of society in rural areas, they are subjected to provide for their families, as men migrate to towns in search of greener pastures. The researcher further points out the lack of participation, which subjects rural women to abject poverty and burdens. For the attention of this study is the empowerment of women, the CRDP and other developmental programmes should be aligned with the legislative prescripts, which support full inclusion and participation of women in rural areas. It is believed that the programme could yield substantial success with the inclusion of rural women. Rural women have been powerful catalysts in ensuring sustainable development and act as agents against poverty (Osita-Njoku and Princewill, 2015).

Gleaning from the above strategic objectives and the research evaluations rendered by DRDLR on the report dated 5 September 2013, the study seeks to explore the impacts the CRDP has on empowering the rural women of the uMhlontlo local municipality. To further investigate the new developments on the status of areas related and relevant to rural women of uMhlontlo, the policy reveals limited support to local cooperatives and markets.

2.7 Summary of the chapter

As women constitute an overwhelming population in the world, development programmes should be aligned accordingly to ensure effectiveness in poverty alleviation. Development is a

process. Development programmes focusing on rural women should start and progress with them. Such programmes should be able to respond to factors, which potentially hinder women's development. Moreover, the empowerment of rural women should manifest meaningful changes and developments in their lives, families and their communities. Empowering women in rural areas is very crucial in reducing vulnerability to poverty and hunger, as well as food insecurity.

In the main when women are empowered and can exercise their rights for actions and choices, economies grow and prospects are enhanced for current and future generations. Fighting hunger and malnutrition are the basic measures to ensure higher incomes and better living conditions for the most vulnerable group, as women, in rural areas.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter of the study provides the description and the type of methodology that has been adopted and utilised towards information gathering in the study, in order to answer basic research questions. The chapter further outlines the strategy of the investigation, sampling and data gathering techniques, as well as data analysis. The confines which limited the scope of the study, as well as challenges experienced are also discussed, including the suggested measures to address them. Finally, the ethical consideration issues are also discussed.

3.2 Research paradigms/worldviews

According to Joffe, (2012), a paradigm can be defined as a sum of an individual's belief and is, to a large extent, not apparent in research. Similarly, Bryman (2012) clearly defined a paradigm as a cluster of philosophies, which helps give direction to what needs to be studied and how the research should be done and understood. In the discipline of Social Sciences, a paradigm is referred to as research traditions or worldviews. The worldview underlying the study helps the researcher generate a better understanding of the research problem for the researcher and the reader. It links the realities which direct the research to a way of designing research, and collecting and analysing data (Creswell, 2013).

There are many types of paradigms and these include: (i) positivism - there is absolute truth that is knowable); (ii) post-positivism - there is a knowable truth but it is not fixed and could change); (iii) social constructivist/phenomenologist - there are multiple truths and people construct their own views about the phenomenon which may change); (iv) advocacy and participatory or transformative - research designed to include others, especially marginalised and alienated groups and find a way to transform unsettled realities (Gray and Guppy, 2009; Creswell, 2013) .

3.2.1 Phenomenological research paradigm

According to Welman, Kruger & Mitchel (2011), the phenomenological research paradigm is centred on the belief, that there are multiple realities to a given situation. Phenomenologists believe that there is no single universal truth concerning a given subject, which positivists wanted people to believe. Phenomenology is premised on the conviction that people form a

belief, conviction, perception or an attitude, based on the experiences they had had, which gives rise to various interpretations. The phenomenologists are convinced that there are a set of realities which are historical, local, specific, and non-generalisable (Johnson and Christensen, 2010).

3.2.2 Positivist research paradigm

The positivist research paradigm is normally associated with a quantitative research methodology. It is premised on the belief that there is only one universal truth about a research topic or subject. Positivists believe that a single, but universal objective truth can only be arrived at through conducting experiments from which falsehoods can be eliminated and the truth proved.

3.2.3 Post-positivism research paradigm

This inherited the views of positivism, but disputes the view that an established truth will remain the same forever. Thus, post-positivists strongly believe that what is true today may not be true soon.

According to Blanche (2006) Ontology, Epistemology and Methodology are three dimensions or traditions of research paradigms (Blanche et al., 2006). Each research paradigm has its own ontology, epistemology and methodology. Ontology specifies the nature of reality, which is to be studied and what can be known about it. On the other hand, epistemology specifies the nature of the relationship between the researcher and the subject area to be studied (Gray and Guppy, 2009). Lastly, Blanche et al. (2006) explained that methodology forms part of a research paradigm and outlines the procedure on how the researcher may practically carry out the investigation of a particular subject to be studied.

3.2.4 Rationale for choosing phenomenological interpretive research paradigm

This study is underpinned by a phenomenological, interpretive, research paradigm, because the researcher believes that the reality studied consists of participants' subjective experiences of the external environment. The phenomenological approach concerns itself with understanding social and psychological phenomena from the experiential viewpoint of the people involved. For this reason, a researcher employs a subjective stance towards that reality to fulfil the research objectives.

The interpretive research paradigm exemplifies the view that social reality is a constant state of change, and is dependent on the way in which individuals' experience reality internally (Johnson and Christensen, 2010). It has been proven by other scholars that the aim of

interpretivists is to gain an in-depth understanding of multiple realities, and depends entirely on qualitative research to produce reliable results. According to Johnson and Christensen (2010), qualitative research can be described as an approach, which is descriptive by nature and utilises words to explain reality other than numbers. The interpretivists' paradigm has proved to be more suitable, as its main objective is to study truth and utilise methods, which are sensitive to the context, which will help to gain an in-depth understanding (Gray and Guppy, 2009). This paradigm is suitable in that participants teach the researcher about their livelihood experiences. Modes of data collection include in-depth interviews and focus group discussions. Thus, the underlying principles of the phenomenological research paradigm are employed to get an understanding on how well the CRDP has progressed, towards developing rural women in the uMhlontlo local municipality.

3.3 Research design

This study has adopted a qualitative research methodology. Creswell (2013) reveals that the qualitative research method is not concerned with the mathematical aspects in research, but rather concentrates on the description of human experiences. Kothari (2012:4) concurs and further elaborate that qualitative research methodology is mainly descriptive in nature, and normally applies reasoning, emanating from human explanation, not numbers. Mutinta, et al. (2013) asserts that the main purpose of qualitative research methods, are to investigate why things happen the way they do and how they happen. This is done by sourcing meanings, perceptions, feelings and experiences, which helps towards a clear description of things.

The investigation has employed a qualitative, descriptive research design. In the view of Creswell (2013:36), a descriptive research design provides a deeper examination and description of variables in an investigation. It also examines causal effect and the connection between both independent and dependent variables. The chosen research method assists in the formulation of an in-depth knowledge on the encounters being experienced in empowering rural women, and the role of the CRDP in empowering rural women and the resultant benefits.

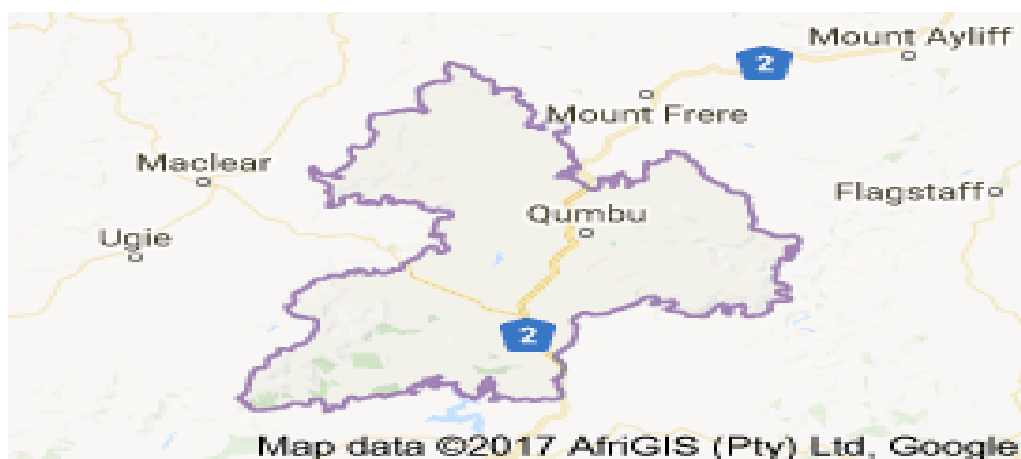
A qualitative research methodology was adopted based on a number of reasons. Firstly, an allowance to use small samples, because of financial costs and time considerations compelled for utilisation, as it is much more bearable, when compared to a quantitative study, which requires large samples of participants. Secondly, a qualitative study allows for a detailed and an exhaustive interrogation of the participants, and also incorporates the focus group discussions to help get detailed information to ascertain the role of the CRDP towards

empowering rural women, and the resultant benefits, which is impossible with a quantitative research approach. Denzin and Lincoln (2011:13) note that the flexibility qualities in a qualitative research methodology is highly commendable, as it allows the researcher to progressively interact with data for a detailed and deeper understanding, as opposed to the stiff quantitative research approach. Lastly, the role of the CRDP in empowering rural women and the subsequent benefits thereof can be expounded better with a qualitative, rather than a quantitative research methodology, as it enhances a deeper understanding of the benefits and impact of the CRDP in empowering rural women.

3.4 Study site

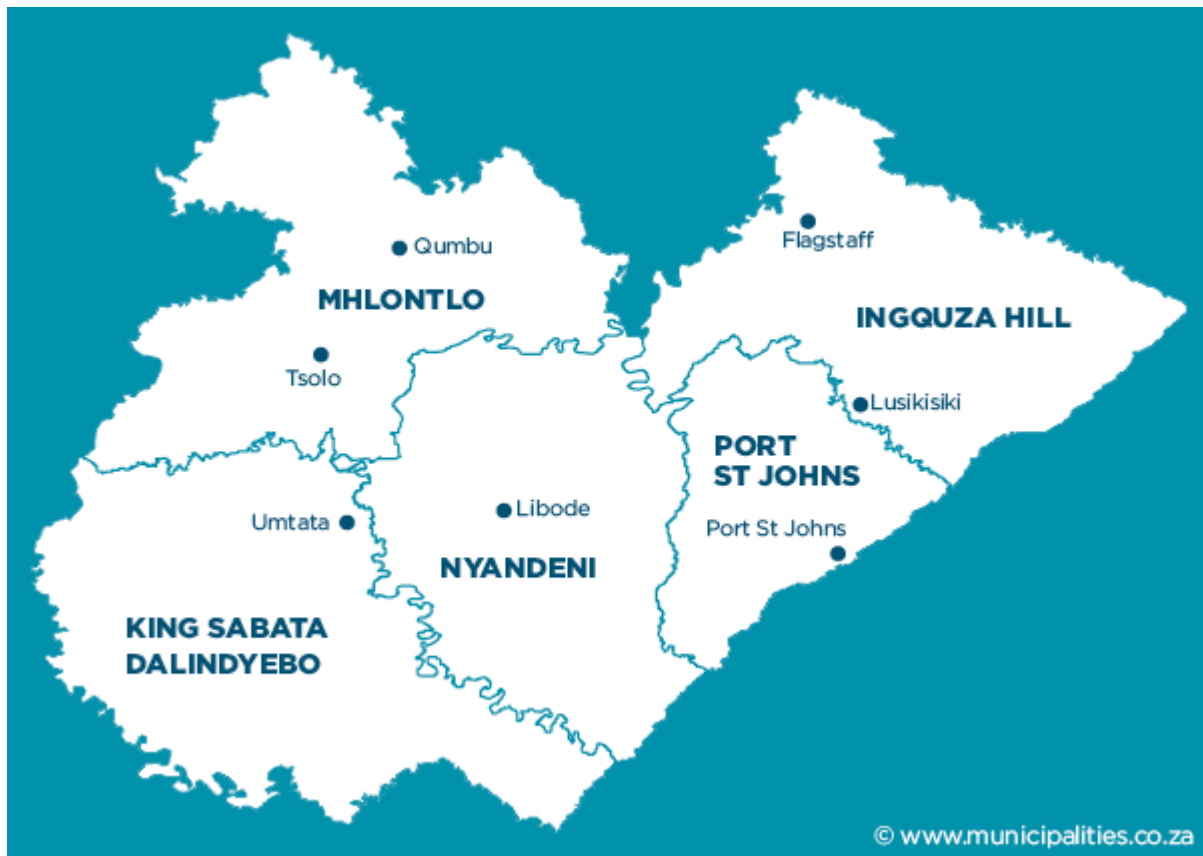
Luswazi (2012); Giyose (2015) concur with the cooperative governance municipal classification, that the UMhlontlo Local Municipality is a category B4 municipality. The B4 municipality is described by Brettenny and Sharp (2016) as a local municipality, which is mainly rural in nature and comprises of one to two small towns. Luswazi (2012) further elaborates that the local municipality incorporates the small rural towns of Qumbu and Tsolo, together with the villages. It is surrounded by King Sabata Dalindyebo Local Municipality, Nyandeni Local Municipality; both under OR Tambo District Municipality, Umzimvubu Local Municipality and Ntabankulu under the Alfred Nzo District Municipality under the Joe Gqabi District Municipality. It is found along the N2 route between Mthatha and Mt. Frere and R396 between Tsolo and Maclear. The municipality head offices are in Qumbu with satellite offices in Tsolo (Luswazi, 2012; Giyose, 2015).

Figure 3.1 Map locating headquarters of the municipality



Source: AfriGIS (2017)

Figure3.2 Map locating the municipal demarcations within OR Tambo District Municipality



Source: SALGA (2015)

The Mhlontlo Local Municipality was established in line with the provisions of section 12 of the Local Government: Municipal Structures Act (Act 117 of 1998). Van Der Waladt (2011) maintains that the act in general deals with the establishment of the municipalities, as well as the categories, functions and powers of the respective municipalities. As a consequence, two transitional local councils were established to form one municipality, which is the uMhlontlo Local Municipality. The Umhlontlo Local Municipality is one of the five municipalities, which comprise the OR Tambo District Municipality. The municipal area has coverage of 282, 614 km² with a population density of 73.3 people per km² (Giyose, 2015).

3.4.1 Demography and population flows

According to the StatsSA (2014) the total population of uMhlontlo local municipality was 188 226. Furthermore, StatsSA (2014) also notices a population decline of about 7,25 per cent, which can be translated to 14 707 people since 2001 at an annual rate of approximately 0,73 per cent. The population decline at uMhlontlo is the highest when compared to other municipalities in the Eastern Cape Provincial Population, due to migrant labour in search of a better life. The

black population constitutes the majority at about 96 per cent of the total population, while the coloured and Indians/Asians are less than 2 per cent (StatsSA, 2014).

Mayende (2011); Luswazi (2012) have noted the unemployment rate to be at 87.4 per cent, against a provincial aggregate of 44.7 per cent and a national figure of 38.6 per cent. Mayende (2011) further reported that 60 per cent have no access to clean drinking water and 68.7 per cent do not have electricity. In the main, the comparative population decline suggests that the municipality has experienced negative net migration.

3.4.2 Population age and gender structure

While Hart and Jacobs (2012) generally maintain that women constitute the majority of the population in South Africa, StatsSA (2011) concurs that in uMhlontlo, women comprise about 87 per cent of the municipal population. 38,31 per cent of the population is below the age of 14; about 32,72 per cent are between 15 and 34 years of age, while those aged between 35 and 64 years constitutes 21,77 per cent of the population. These figures also indicate that children and youth constitute the majority (71, 03 per cent) of the population (StatsSA, 2011).

3.4.3 Number of adults by highest level of education

Education is believed to increase the range of choices from which an individual may choose and open opportunities for a fulfilling better life (Seroto, 2012). As contained in the municipal Integrated Development Plan (IDP), about 27, 669 or 14.7 per cent of the population has limited or no education (Giyose, 2015). Another 4 894 or 2.6 per cent has higher education and has gone beyond grade 12 or matriculation. Also 23 152, which can be translated to 12.3 per cent have grade 12 or matriculation and 179 191 have primary education (StatsSA data, 2011). While figures on gross enrolment, drop out and pass rates are not immediately available, it can be reasonably concluded, that the low level of formal education is due to the high dropout rate, which is a result of mainly a combination of the following reasons:

- Unavailability and poor access to school within the reachable localities,
- Poor infrastructure,
- High number of social ills, such as the high teenage pregnancy rate, poverty and HIV/Aids prevalence. It is further reported that a significant number of 43 per cent of the population is below the age of 15 and is of school-going age.

3.4.4 Literacy rates

An indirect impact of low education levels has been characterised by the poor rates of functional literacy in the uMhlontlo local municipality. According to StatsSA (2014), the uMhlontlo Local Municipality has only about 67,9 per cent of people who have completed Grade 7 or higher in 2011. The area has been characterised by functional illiteracy. Seroto (2012) expatiates that functional illiteracy can be described as inadequate writing and reading skills, which make a person unable to cope with everyday life – including the demands posed in conducting daily activities in the workplace. Functional illiterate people are unlikely to take advantage of the opportunities, which are provided by the permeation of the information and communication technologies (ICTs), (Giyose, 2015). The study aims at ascertaining the impacts of the CRDP on women's empowerment, given the above demographic analysis, where dependency is postulated to be high as per the demographic information.

3.5 Population and sampling

a) Targeted population

Wellman (2009:63) defines a target population, as the cluster of people with specific qualities, chosen to participate in the investigation. Further to that, Wellman (2010) concurs and elaborates, that the target population is the populace in which the researcher would like to conduct an investigation. According to Denzin and Lincoln (2011:57), the research population refers to the total number of potential individuals or participants, who are intentionally marked for the investigation. This section describes the population from which a sample was selected. It also describes the characteristics of the populace.

The study targeted the community of uMhlontlo local municipality. Community members participating in the study include the role players participating as women in the CRDP site, the Department of Rural Development and Agrarian Reform and the coordinators of the programme at a local government level, as the uMhlontlo local municipality. The study targeted:

- Women participating in the CRDP programme - mainly for soliciting first hand views, experiences and the perception about the impact the programme has made in empowering them. How well the programme has contributed to the development of

their lives as individuals and in their families. Furthermore, these women are believed to be practically involved in the programme to enable a platform of sharing the challenges experienced, as well as suggesting possible solutions to the identified challenges.

- The public around the development sites formed part of the target population to witness the impacts made by the CRDP on women's empowerment as an observatory form.
- Officials from the DRDLR form part of the key population in the study towards the assessment of the impact done by the CRDP. According to DRDLR (2011) the department's new approach aim at promoting sustainable livelihoods, and recognise and harness the human and natural resources potential of rural communities, in support of sustainable growth and development. The above goal translates the involvement of the DRDLR's officials, as the key custodians and core drivers of the development programme with relevant knowledge for the study.
- The uMhlontlo local municipality officials act as coordinators of the programme at a local government level and formed part of the target population for the study. These officials serve towards bridging the information gap between the department and the communities within the jurisdiction of their demarcation. The Inter-governmental Relations Framework Act 13 of 2005 compels the local municipality officials to serve as facilitators and implementers of inter-governmental relations policies to co-opt all relevant role players in the development programme (Van der Walddt, 2011). Furthermore, local economic development is critical in local government, therefore, the CRDP's assessment impact can be evaluated successfully in this office.

b) Sampling

There are two key categories of sampling methods, namely probability sampling and non-probability sampling methods. Probability sampling entails the selection of participants through a random selection approach, where each item in the sample has an equal opportunity of being selected in the sample. Mutinta (2013:6) outlines the stronghold of the random selection approach, as being more representative of the broader population, than with non-probability sampling. The utilisation and reliance of the mathematical theory is a key instrument towards all probability sampling methods. These probability sampling methods include the systematic sampling, stratified random sampling and quota sampling.

According to Wilson, (2010:34) generalisation over a larger population can be done from probability sampling methods. Non-probability sampling methods do not include the accidental selection of participants (Mutinta, 2013:6). Non-probability sampling methods capitalise on the accidental and limited opportunity of elements in the selection of participants. Participants are selected through the judgemental choice of the investigator who decides on the elements for inclusion in the research survey (Mutinta, 2013:6). As a result, an element of the researcher's judgement and limited equal opportunity in the selection has made non-probability sampling methods to be unrepresentative (Wilson, 2010:34).

The purposive sampling approach was employed in the study. The approach ensured the selection of participants based on their relevant information and in-depth familiarity, interest, and experience to the subject matter under study (Wellman, 2010). The purposive sampling approach was used to select relevant government officials to interview and to be participants of focus groups. Government officials chosen were those who were directly involved in the CRDP at a district level, as the department's office in the OR Tambo district office in Umtata, and local municipality staff to share their views and perspectives on the impact of the programme on empowering women in the area.

The purposive sampling approach was utilised to select research participants who had the requisite knowledge about the role of the CRDP in empowering rural women. Johnson (2007) states that purposive sampling is utilised, where the purpose is to classify key and critical participants, who are context-specific in terms of knowledge coverage and are experts regarding the issues relevant to the study. The sample size of a qualitative study is between 16-18 participants. The study comprises of sixteen participants. The participants include: two participants from the Municipality Local Economic Development Unit; two participants from DRDAR; seven women participants involved in the small businesses; and five general members of the community, specifically the women.

The two focus groups were held during the last visits of the investigation. Barbie and Mouton (2007) argue that doing only one focus group can severely hamper the research results. This will further limit the researcher to compare group dynamics in the research data. The focus groups comprised of six members of women participating in the development programme and six people from the residents. Amongst the group of women participating in the programme

were two young women (youth). The investigation was done in ward seventeen and two. From each group, there were representatives from each ward.

The number of participants in each focus group ranged from four to six. Wellman, (2010) posits that a reasonable number of people in a group brought together as a resource is more valuable and yields better results, than any other characteristic group. According to De Vos, et al. (2010), smaller groups of four to six are preferable, when participants have many experiences to share about the topic. The author further argues that, deciding on the number of participants in the focus group entails the ability towards striking a balance between having enough people to generate discussions and a minimal number to avoid the feelings of overcrowding and silence in the group. Barbour (2007) maintains that when deciding on the number of participants in the group requires no specific formula, but the maximum should be eight, while Wellman, (2010) suggests the maximum number of twelve. According to the views of De Vos, et al. (2010); Dawson (2009), a researcher may find it difficult and intimidating to moderate a large focus group; hence, the maximum of six participants in this study was adopted and decided upon.

3.6 Data collection and methods

Various data sources from the existing body of knowledge and information on the topic were consulted. These include the CRDP founding documents, policy documents, government progress reports and presentations from the DRDLR. Various information sources were consulted and have been aligned with the government's policies, as well as regional and international bodies. The primary sources utilised in the study included in-depth semi-structured interviews with officials from the DRDLR local municipality. There are two data collection methods, which were utilised when collecting the data; and this includes interviews and focus groups. The following subsections explain such methods.

3.6.1 Interviews

The semi-structured interviews were used to solicit the participants' experiences, views and the insights of the participants on the impact made by the CRDP in empowering women. Semi-structured interviews are interviews around the areas of specific interest, while at the same time, flexible in scope and depth (De Vos, et al., 2010). Wellman (2010) further elaborates that semi-structured interviews are utilised to obtain rich information on the participants' beliefs, perceptions and experiences on a particular topic. In the study on the evaluation of the impact

of the CRDP in empowering women, a semi-structured interview was utilised, as it offers a versatile way of collecting data, which encompasses all age groups, the literate and illiterate, as well as those who cannot see, because of poor eyesight. It was used for its flexibility, as it allows the researcher to search for information in the areas of controversial and personal issues.

One-on-one interviews with officials from the DRDLR and the local municipality were conducted. The researcher has a list of questions according to themes, which were covered during through the semi-structured interviews. The open-ended questions, using the interview guide (Annexure A), were utilised to obtain the participants' view on the subject matter in the area. An interview guide was used as a tool to collect valuable information. The tool encompasses a list of topics and their aspects, which have a demeanor on a given main study area. It further provides a set of pre-determined questions used as a suitable instrument in engaging with the participant (Barbie and Mouton, 2007). Wellman (2010) and De Vos, et al. (2010) advise that to obtain meaningful data, the researcher should hand the interview guide to the participant and read it together. This practice affords the participant a choice of what is to be answered and when during the interview process.

The open-ended questions were chosen, because they give the researcher an opportunity to probe critical areas, which might not have been covered in structured interviews and if necessary (De Vos, et al., 2010). Follow-ups were made to enhance the quality of the data. Interviews were conducted in English and switched to isiXhosa, depending on the level of understanding of the various participants, for clarity. Note taking and a tape recorder (with the participant's permission) were used for recording purposes of the interviews, where both groups were skeptical of the tape recorder utilisation in the proceedings.

3.6.2 Focus Groups

The focus group study method was adopted to fully understand the experience, views and perceptions about the impact of the Comprehensive Rural Development Programme in capacitating women in the development sites of the uMhlontlo Local Municipality in the Eastern Cape. Participants included the group of women participating in the programme as cooperatives, as well the residents. Redmond and Curtis (2009) assert that the core of the focus group is that it is an integral part of the group interview used to solicit information and understanding on social dynamics, opinions and experiences, as well as to verbally engage the

participants. De Vos, et al. (2010) defines the focus group as the research technique, which enables information collection by group interfaces on specific subject topic areas being determined by the investigator.

Wellman (2010) concurs and further elaborates that the focus groups also serve to elicit responses between group members. The researcher further maintains that the group interviews are essentially a qualitative technique for collecting information on a subject matter. The main advantage of the focus group is that it affords a large amount of data gathering through group interaction on a topic within a limited time period (Barbie and Mouton, 2007). De Vos, et al. (2010) further elaborates that focus groups promote self-disclosure amongst the participants. The focus group further allows the researcher to direct engagements and inquiry in a structured or unstructured manner, depending on the aim of the investigation (Dawson, 2009).

However, Barbie and Mouton (2010) pointed out some disadvantages in the focus group method in that, it needs more than one focus group to compare group dynamics and generalise findings, and is said to be time-consuming. Wellman (2010) reveals the other disadvantage being that the focus group often inhibits responses, as some people feel intimidated and unable to express themselves in the presence of other people. The author further noted that the focus group method can be very expensive to the researcher, as it requires a lot of travelling. The aim of this research is mainly not to generalise, but rather to provide a deeper understanding of the impacts of the CRDP at the uMhlontlo local municipality area.

Even though this study limits its conversation to research results of uMhlontlo, however, the study could serve as a realistic study on the empowerment of rural women by the CRDP in all the pilot sites of the country, which share similarities. The approach chosen for the study is the qualitative research approach. The qualitative research method, as in the view of Trochim (2012), provide a focus on unpacking, informative as well as examining the participant's understanding, thoughts and attitudes in an etymological form.

The focus group was appropriate to gain information and to promote self-disclosure, and create a process of information sharing and comparing among the participants (De Vos et al., 2010). However, it differs from one-on-one interviews in that; it needs the researcher to facilitate the conversation and the overall process for the whole group, rather than for one individual (Barbie and Mouton, 2007). It is important for the focus group members to have some element of

commonality with each other to enable the flow of discussions, while they also need to have varying experiences and views to allow for discussion and debates (Barbour, 2007).

Focus groups discussions were held with local women participating in the development programme, as well as the residents. The aim for choosing focus groups was to get a deeper understanding from the women directly involved in the programme about their perceptions, experiences and views, with regards to the status of their development, because of the programme. Residents of the uMhlontlo local municipality were chosen to gather information on impact, done by the CRDP in developing local women in the surrounding area from an observatory point of view. The groups comprised of local people, most of them had limited education and the researcher translated the questions to the isiXhosa language, so that it was understood by group members.

3.7 Data Quality Control

The following aspects of data quality were ensured: trustworthiness, credibility, dependability and transferability.

i) Credibility: The research ensured that the research results are trustworthy and believable. This was done through facilitating and probing for rich, accurate and clear information from the responses being received from the participants. The participants were afforded the time to express themselves from relevant experiences and perceptions to the investigation. As a result, a large amount of time was spent in order to obtain deeper insight into the phenomena being studied.

ii) Transferability: Transferability was ensured in that, sufficient data was collected and analysed to determine the comparison of the findings and the transferability of research to a similar environment or population, and provide similar findings. Generalisations or research transfer was suggested in areas of similar CRDP environments.

iii) Dependability: The research ensured the consistency of the research findings to avoid irregularities in the process of data collection, analysis as well as alignment with the theoretical framework, which is being utilised in the study. The process aimed at enabling another researcher to repeat the investigation and obtain similar results.

iv) Conformability: Sources of information were consulted and aligned to ensure support on the analysis and interpretation of the research findings. Intentionally, the process ensured no

contradictions with the findings and interpretation of the research to another party attempting to follow up or progress further with the research.

3.8 Data analysis

Anonymity and confidentiality-De Vos, et al. (2010) argues that the confidentiality of individuals matter and that, individuals have the right for their affairs to be private. Wellman (2010) and Trochim (2013) concurs and suggests that assuring someone of confidentiality means that what has been discussed will not be repeated, or at least, not without permission. The notion of confidentiality (and anonymity) is invariably raised and discussed with the research participants, prior to their participation in the research.

Thematic analysis was utilised in the analysis of data. Braun and Clark (2012) view thematic analysis as emphasising pinpointing, examining and recording patterns within data. They further elaborate that themes are patterns across data sets, which are important to the description of a phenomenon and are associated to the research question. The capturing of data was done using the notes from sessions with the participants, as well as recorded interviews. The identification of themes emerged from the interview guide. A six-step thematic analysis is identified and adopted by Braun and Clarke (2012) in Ouyang, Jin and Tien, 2016, in the process of data analysis. According to Braun and Clarke (2012) the six step analysis entails: (i) familiarisation of oneself with collected data, (ii) generating initial codes, (iii) themes searching, (iv) reviewing themes, (v) theme description and naming, and (vi) reporting. Criteria proposed by Morrow (2005) were followed to ensure trustworthiness of the study in a qualitative research: social validity, subjectivity and reflexivity, the adequacy of the data, as well as the adequacy of the interpretation. In the study, construction of meanings, coding, development of key subject as themes, classification and interpretation were completed. The continuous interactions and engagements increased the consistency and enhanced the accuracy of the results.

3.8.1 Data Collection Results

Four general key themes were established to illustrate the participants' insights and interpretations, which include:

- a) CRDP's benefit on uplifting rural women.
- b) CRDP in minimising illiterate rate amongst women.

- c) CRDP and women's empowerment.
- d) CRDP and growth and development of the local economy.
- e) Challenges on CRDP.

3.9 Limitations

The study was conducted only in the uMhlontlo local municipality in Ward Two and Seventeen. The limited number of participants in the subject area may impose limitations in terms of generalisation with the other CRDP sites in the country. However, it was not the purpose of the study to generalise, but rather for the deeper understanding and the impact analysis of the development programme on empowering women in the area. On the other hand, as the uMhlontlo local municipality is rural and forms part of the former homeland area, similar characteristics are believed to be shared amongst the areas with the same characteristic features. This, therefore, means that the findings can apply to areas of similar environmental characteristics.

Due to time limitations and the nature of the investigation, the selection of the participants was only restricted to a few relevant people. The process of data gathering was negatively affected by the local government elections, which were on the 3rd of August 2016. The pre-local government elections posed undue pressure and a busy schedule for the officials selected for the study, and more especially within the local municipality.

3.10 Challenges

The researcher experienced the following challenges, while in the process of conducting the research period:

The research coincided with the local government election period and that; due to the busy schedule of the municipality and its workers, the local municipality coordinator of the programme continuously postponed the schedules. Most unfortunately, during the time to confirm the appointments after the elections, it was reported that the municipality programme coordinator was deceased. Apparently, the researcher found it difficult to do the interview, other than the preliminary sessions with the coordinator, due to the death of the official and her family. However, data from the preliminary sessions with the deceased official was recorded through note taking and has been used. To ensure an in-depth data collection, the researcher conducted interviews with the

manager of the coordinator, as the unit was reported to be under- staffed, comprising of only two officials to directly deal with the rural development in the local municipality.

3.11 Ethics

According to De Vos, et al. (2010) ethics is a set of moral standards suggested by a person, which is generally accepted and offers procedures and social expectations about the most perceived correct behaviour towards the subjects and participants, sponsors, researchers and assistants. Ethical behaviour is viewed as a critical element in a research or study. Ethical considerations come into play at various stages which include (Wellman, 2010):

- When participants are recruited.
- During intervention phase.
- In the release of the results obtained.

Trochim (2013); De Vos, et al. (2010) identified ethical issues as harmful to the participants, informed consent, the deception of the participants, privacy violation, actions and the capability of the researchers, collaboration with contributors and the release of the findings, as well as the debriefing of participants, upon which the study was based.

a) Recruitment of participants

The researcher has requested and arranged meetings with the authorities of the uMhlontlo local municipality and the provincial directorate for the DRDLR. Meetings were held to obtain access to the research site and research objects, through the written permission from the appropriate authorities for data collection, (see Annexure B and C).

b) Data collection

De Vos, et al. (2010) emphasised that the participants must be fully competent, both legally and psychologically, to give consent and must be aware of their choices to withdraw from the investigation at any time. The study collected data from 16 participants in the following categories: two from the local municipality, two from the DRDLR, and the two focus groups with seven members of women participating in the development programme, as well as five from the community. An interview schedule was used to guide the research questions, as the study utilised a qualitative method.

Wellman (2010) emphasised the issue of no harm befalling the participants in the process of the investigation, and that the participants should participate freely, based on informed consent. In the study key areas such as access to private and confidential information was obtained and the consent of the participants was assured and that, no participant was exposed to questions, which were perceived as stressful or irritating, procedures which were uncomfortable or harmful, in the process of the investigation. None of the participating participants were subjected to an act, which compromised their dignity or led them to endure embarrassment and remorse during the investigation process. De Vos, et al. (2010) maintains that a researcher should identify participants, who could prove vulnerable during the investigation, to eliminate them beforehand.

The independence of the participants was protected, using an informed consent form, which was specified and clarified in a language that the participants understood. Participation was dependant on the participant's willingness and responses from the participants were handled and preserved with the utmost privacy, as well as secrecy and un-naming was ensured, where appropriate. The anonymity of the participants was maintained in that; the process of data collection did not require the identification of the participants. In this study, it was assured that private information was not recorded, other than the key information towards the achievement of the study objectives. A meeting was arranged with all the participants, including the focus groups, for the feedback of the study findings.

Precautions as the lack of reimbursements in the process of participation in the investigation were made clear, to be none other than appreciation. The monetary issue was clarified that; the researcher responsible for the design of the investigation to be solely of academic interests not of any personal interests and financial gains (or any other potential conflict of interests) that could be regarded of relevance to this research study.

3.12 Summary of the chapter

This chapter provided an overview of the methods of investigation used in this study. It also covered and unpacked the procedures used in the collection of data, analysis and ethical conduct. The investigation utilised the qualitative methodology using interviews, focus groups, and findings were compared and aligned to the written literature reviewed.

Validity and Reliability- Validity and reliability are two factors with which any qualitative study should be concerned, from the study design and results analysis, as well as judging the quality of the study.

Validity is described by a wide range of terms in qualitative studies. This concept is not a single, fixed or universal concept, but “rather a contingent construct, inescapably grounded in the processes and intentions of a particular research methodology”. It refers to the extent to which an empirical measure accurately reflects the concept it is intended to measure.

Reliability- The researcher ensured consistency in the research findings and avoided irregularities in the process of data collection, analysis as well as alignment with the theoretical framework and reviewed literature to ensure the credibility of the research findings. The process aimed at enabling another researcher to repeat the investigation and obtain similar results.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

The current section of the study discussed, examined and interpreted the findings of the data collected through the utilisation of the methodology, which was outlined in the previous chapter, in an attempt to answer the key question of the investigation. Chapter Two of this investigation outlined the methodology used. This included the strategy of the research, the research approach and the viewpoint, which led to the data gathering method and analysis, from

which the findings were derived. It also drew lessons and concluded remarks from the findings. The main thrust of the study was to investigate the impact which the CRDP has on empowering rural women. The uMhlontlo local municipality was chosen and utilised, as a case study for the study. To get an in-depth understanding of what was happening in the area regarding the development and empowerment of rural women, an investigative study was based on the interviews with government and the municipality officials, the focus groups with women participating in the development programme, as well as community members.

This chapter presents the research results collected by the researcher from the research site. The research findings were construed and deliberated, in collaboration with the body of knowledge in the subject, in the second chapter of this document.

The findings outlined in this section accomplished the key objectives of this research, namely:

- Discover the benefits of the CRDP in developing rural women in the uMhlontlo local municipality.
- Determine the role of the CRDP in reducing the illiteracy rate amongst the rural women in the uMhlontlo local municipality.
- Understand the role of the CRDP in empowering rural women in the uMhlontlo local municipality.
- Determine the impacts of the CRDP in inspiring the local economy in the uMhlontlo local municipality.
- To understand the challenges which inhibit the success of the CRDP and suggest measures to counteract them.

In the related research work of Siyo-Pepetheka (2014) on the CRDP evaluation, the researcher reveals that, in most poverty alleviation programmes rendered a greater concern entail among: empowerment, challenges of literacy level, political and administrative commitments, compromised staff commitment, restructuring and coordination of departments, and insufficient financial resources to fund deserving communities.

The findings offered in this chapter were extracted from the discussions obtained from the focus groups and the semi-structured interviews with government officials. The results of the research have been interpreted, discussed and analysed by dovetailing with the literature

presented. Furthermore, the findings have been interpreted, discussed and analysed, as per each objective. The following section presents the findings summary and analysis of the study.

4.2 Summary of the findings

The summarised data findings were collected through the focus group discussions by the women who had participated in the development programme, as key participants used to ascertain the extent and impact the CRDP in empowering themselves. The residents were also utilised as observers on the impact assessment of the development programme on the local women. Thirdly, the interviews with the municipality officials had formed part of their coordinating role at local government level. Lastly, the officials from the DRDLR were part of the key participants, from which data gathering was obtained by the utilisation of interviews. The summary of the findings included the following:

- The CRDP in general brought about remarkable developments in the area. High unemployment and the poverty rate decreased through the involvement and incorporating of more community members in the area, especially young women.
- Improved income was given to members, who in turn contributed to benefit family members and increased education levels for their dependents.
- The improvement in the product quality to a more advanced standard, not to focus on the locals, but to include the nation and the people from outside, resulted in tremendous business gains, where participants in the programme managed to generate stable monthly incomes.
- Several developments surfaced ever since the surfacing of the programme. These included the infrastructure development in the rural areas. Roads were built and electricity was connected. Small businesses were developed, and as a result markets improved.
- Farming activities were part of the development programme and others depended on the need and the natural resource availability for sustainable development. Markets were made available to all the participants of the CRDP for economic returns. Economies of the uMhlontlo local area were believed to have improved more than ever, before the CRDP.
- The CRDP has demonstrated a critical role in alleviating poverty in the district area of OR Tambo of which uMhlontlo is part. Through the CRDP's wide programmes involving farming, land cultivation and product processing, poultry, sewing and

crafting, the communities have improved. The programme was reported to have assisted in the revitalisation of the abandoned ploughing fields.

- The introduced programmes have successfully tried to enhance the living standards of the participating women, as well as their lives and their dependents. The participating women were groomed, which enabled them to make reasonable and justifiable decisions, both at their homes and in the development programme, hence the initiative to open a community financial institution was their initiative. Some skills training was provided, as well as business networking skills.
- Various empowerment activities were provided to women participating in development programmes in the area. The project involved these women as members, who had been extensively trained in crafting, in an advanced manner to encompass external markets. As much financial support as possible was provided to the group, and they have shown growing capabilities in many instances, which was characterised by growth and development. Conferences and workshops attended by the group instilled a developmental mind-set from one phase to the other.
- Limited education was a challenge amongst the rural women of the uMhlontlo local municipality area. However, to mitigate the challenge, DRDLR has appointed a service provider to assist with the training requirements of the cooperative. The entrusted service provider provided financial management skills, business, and cooperative management skills.
- The women at uMhlontlo learnt technologies in support of their businesses and accessed markets outside of the area of uMhlontlo. The group was able to utilise available technology to advance their businesses, which is commendable for people of their age to learn new technology.
- The greater part reported was being able to shift from being a dependent to a family head that could provide, plan and make decisions.
- The popular finding was that people's lives had changed for the better, local economic development was the anticipated outcome of the programme, as rural livelihoods had developed. The project outcomes of uMhlontlo within the programme are believed to have supported the vision of the CRDP. The vision supported and included the creation of vivacious, unbiased and sustainable rural communities, maintainable agricultural reform for blooming farming sectors, rural job creation, and enhanced reach to

reasonable sustenance and enhanced services for sustainable rural livelihoods, for sustainable and comprehensive development.

- Unclear time frames given to the entrusted service provider in its incubator programmes hindered the growth of the projects. The department's unclear pre-planned means, of leaving a difficult situation to the development of the projects, posed a negative effect on the projects within the CRDP. The findings revealed that the service provider incubation period was a lifetime process of the project, as well as that of the department.
- The prolonged developmental phase of the projects within the programme had the potential of negating the development and success of the programme and the establishment of new projects.
- Insufficient budget to cover several projects within the area.
- Poor departmental cooperation was reported as the major challenge, with the potential to hinder the success of the programme. The DRDLR should have collaborated with other development stakeholders for more effective success.

The following part of the research will cover the discussion and analysis of the findings being aligned with the literature reviewed.

4.3 Discussion and analysis of the findings

From the highlighted above, it is certain that the Comprehensive Rural Development Programme made a significant impact towards the empowerment of the rural women, as well as changing their lives for the better, within the uMhlontlo local area, as one of the pilot sites in the Eastern Cape Province. Kabeer (2005) proclaims that empowerment was based on how people's lives had been transformed for the better, which in turn was critically certain by those around them, as their families and by society. The findings also revealed that the programme had significantly contributed to the alleviation of poverty and had brought about a promise for a better life through capacitation, exposure to various developmental platforms and education of the rural women, as well as their families.

a) CRDP's benefit on uplifting rural women

Promoting gender equity and empowerment is widely believed to be an effective way to fight poverty and hunger, as well as the stimulation of a truly sustainable development [Morrell, Jewkes and Lindegger (2012) and Hill (2011)]. Keenan, et al. (2016) maintains that it is widely undisputed in human developmental literature and is also evidenced in research findings that,

investing in women delivers long term results. Osita-Njoku & Princewill (2015); Keenan, et al. (2016) and OECD (2012) concur and further pointed out that the rural development programme benefits include the endurance of the quality of life, increased income, improved health and education, local development outcomes and education.

Findings from the research on the impacts of the Comprehensive Rural Development Programme (CRDP) in empowering women brought about several benefits to the rural women of the uMhlontlo local municipality. These included poverty alleviation, mainly because women, who were previously poor, were now getting an income. The income was reported to be generated from the project, which was supported by the DRDLR. One of the women in the development programme said:

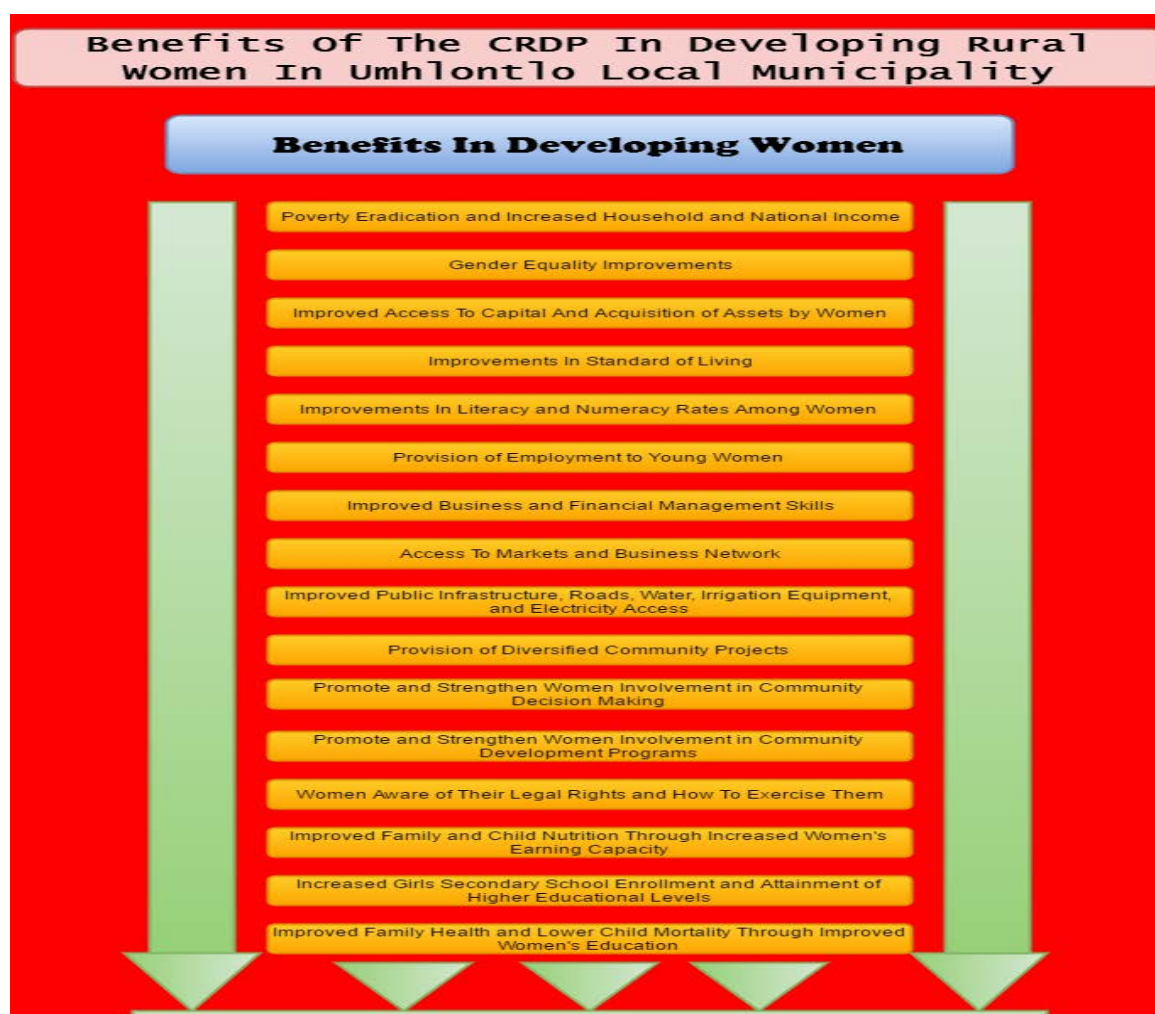
“My involvement to the CRDP has enabled me to support my family and to take my kid to the university because of the income that I obtain from the cooperative.”

Young and unemployed youth, as well community members were part of the programme. The programme resulted in the reduction of the high unemployment rate and poverty. Because of infrastructural development, schools, clinics and roads were built. One participant of the municipality said:

“The rate of literacy amongst the women in generally has been improved, and the level of product quality amongst the project members has also improved. Furthermore, access to market has increased which led to the income generation as demonstrated.”

Figure 4.1 highlights the benefits of the CRDP in developing rural women in the uMhlontlo local municipality.

Figure 4.1 Benefits of the CRDP in developing rural women in the uMhlontlo local municipality



Source: Author's contribution, 2016

Several researchers concurred with each other in that; women played a crucial role in reducing poverty and hunger, child malnutrition and reducing violence (Hill, 2011; World Bank, 2012; Yaqoob, et al., 2014). Hill (2011) also noted that women with income were mostly spending it on basic family requirements and the children's needs, and used their local knowledge to provide for their families. Furthermore, World Bank (2012) stipulated that women empowerment programmes in developing countries were critical for both the families and the community at large. These included job creation, improved living standards and better income, poverty alleviation, increased productivity, global integration and social interrelation.

Findings of this study conformed with the assertions by Masualle (2015), whose findings on the impact of the Community Works Programme (CWP), revealed that self-help income generating projects in South African municipalities had created employment opportunities for rural women to the tune of 64 per cent of available jobs, since its inception in 2010. The women

participants in the development programme had expressed gratitude for acquiring training and experience in business and finance management programmes through numerous training workshops, which had been conducted by the DRDLR entrusted service provider.

b) CRDP in minimising illiteracy rate amongst women

Jiyane and Zawada (2013) view literacy as the basis for the eradication of illiteracy amongst women, as one of the prerequisites of human development. Osita-Njoku and Princewill (2015) further reveal that building capacity to rural women improved their physical and intellectual energy, while at the same time, reduced poverty and promoted sustainable development. Many women participating in this study indicated that the DRDLR had entrusted a service provider to train the participating women in the development programme. Generally, Giyose (2015) revealed that educational levels and literacy continue to be significantly low at uMhlontlo. This is supported by the findings from both the municipality official and DRDLR, where the illiteracy level was high amongst the women who had participated in the development programme, and that the CRDP initiatives had been instrumental in facilitating the provision of the schools' infrastructure.

Both participants from the community and the women in the development programme have indicated their ability to participate in decision-making issues in the project and at home. This is supported in Jiyane and Zawada (2013) who state that literacy derives, not only from the process of liberation in literacy itself, but also encompasses the end products. The product includes the knowledge and skills to make informed decisions, greater self-esteem, and improved participation in the community's choices (Quagliariello, 2009). Morrell, Jewkes and Lindegger (2012) expressed similar views by asserting that the education of women has the potential to promote gender equality and their empowerment.

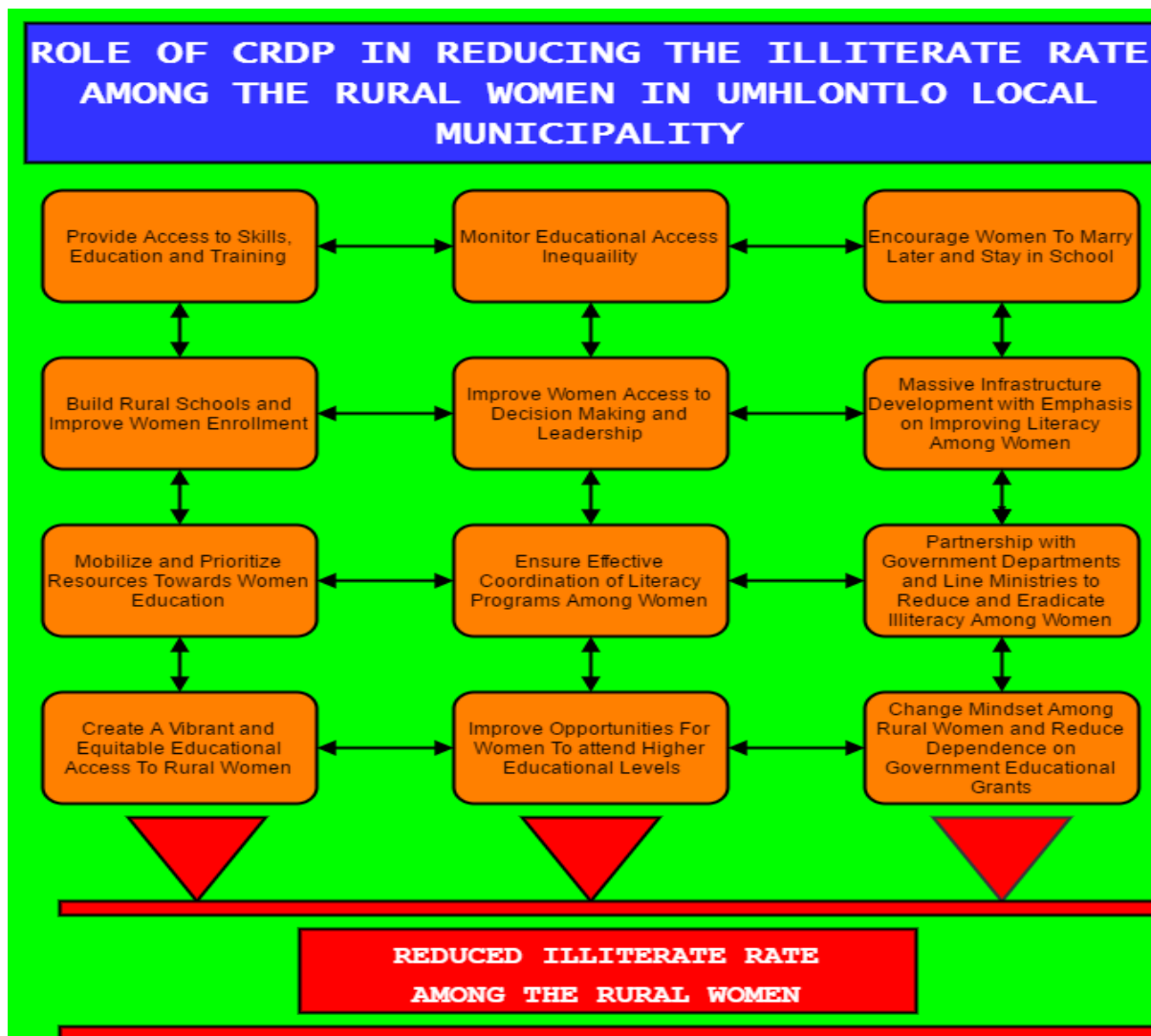
From the findings, it is ascertained that the CRDP provided access to learning to rural women through mobilising resources, such as facilitators, learning materials and equipment which assisted in the programme of imparting knowledge and skills to the women. Kabeer (2005) also praised the efforts to empower women through education by mentioning, that education was essential to gender equality and development. Furthermore, the findings on the education and training of the women in the uMhlontlo local municipality affirmed, that the CRDP was on the

way to achieve goal one to three - 3 of the Millennium Development goals on poverty and equal educational opportunities for women.

Many of the participants, both in the community and the women in the development project, stipulated that the CRDP had been instrumental in infrastructural development for learning purposes. The programme was reported to have also carried out campaigns to encourage women to enrol in the literacy programmes in various parts of the uMhlontlo local municipality. It was further established from the focus group discussions that, the programme had managed to reduce illiteracy by changing the mind-set of women, of being dependent on men for knowledge and skills, to being knowledgeable and skilled in the training they had received.

Women who had participated in the development programme were of the view, that the ability to utilise technology to access markets, had been successful, because of the initiatives of the CRDP in reducing illiteracy. In the view of Jiyane and Zawada (2013), poverty can be addressed by educational programmes, to enhance the growth and development of a country's economy. This might have transformed them from being illiterate to being literate. The training programmes provided by the DRDLR had included the financial management, cooperative governance and general business management, which are believed to be of greater impact towards self-identity, social and emotional adjustment as well as happiness through coping with business successfully. Figure 4.2 summarises the role of the CRDP towards reducing the illiteracy amongst the women of the uMhlontlo local municipality.

Figure 4.2 The Role of CRDP in reducing the illiteracy rate among the rural women in uMhlontlo local municipality



Source: Source: Author's contribution, 2016

As showed above, from the Figure 4.1, the women of the uMhlontlo local municipality have been emancipated and elevated to a higher level. Women in the project have reported their families to be advancing in the education of their dependants thereby enrolling at the university because of the income generated as a result of the CRDP projects. The personal development of the entrepreneur through receiving skills from educational institutions is crucial for an organisation. Host and Friedrich (2016) suggest an unprecedented relationship between the educational level and the level of success of entrepreneurship. From the research findings, the researcher is of the view that the CRDP made a significant contribution in reducing illiteracy in the area of uMhlontlo. The contribution stemmed from the parents, as project members within the CRDP, to the community, as well as the dependants, as children. The researcher is of the belief that the programme itself had brought about encouragement to elevated school levels, as well as the ability to support educational and business needs.

c) CRDP and women empowerment

Quagliariello (2009) postulates that developing countries can apprehend poverty and hunger through the investment in women, development as well as capacitation thereof, to ensure the sustainability of women's development and their empowerment. The participation of the women in the activities, which had generated income, could be an operative and successful tool towards reduced poverty and hunger, enhanced nourishment in children, and ensuring access to basic health services and education (Yaqoob, et al., 2014). The United Nations (2017) posit that the economic makeshift of rural areas can be more successful, if rural women are closely linked to international markets. From the findings, it is certain that the Comprehensive Rural Development Programme had made a significant impact towards the empowerment of rural women, as well as changing their lives for the better, within the uMhlontlo local area, as one of the pilot sites in the Eastern Cape Province.

Quagliariello (2009) argues that the executing capacitation processes, which enable women to take an active role in food security, resource management and hunger alleviation, are a pre-requisite for sustainable development. Sharaunga, et al. (2015) asserts that capacitating rural women is critical to enhance food security and reduce hunger. Further to that, Emami (2012); OECD (2012) views empowerment, as the process through which people can perform various accomplishments to progress, against the obstacles of growth, to enable them to reach their purpose. The participants pointed out that the training and skills development, which had been provided to rural women, had empowered them to become skilled, in terms of running their own projects. One of the participants said:

“The skills training was pervasive in that it covered several aspects such as financial management (budgeting), operations management, project management, cooperative governance and marketing management.”

Furthermore, the participants revealed that the CRDP had provided support programmes to access bigger markets, through technology and other required physical support. This is supported by Sharaunga, et al. (2015) by pointing out that different extent of women capacitation programmes, which can overlap, include financial, human capital, physical, material provision, legal awareness, and political and agricultural support, or provision. Figure 4.3 below clearly shows that the CRDP was instrumental in capacitating women in the rural areas of the uMhlontlo local municipality in several ways.

Figure 4.3 The role of CRDP in empowering rural women in uMhlontlo local municipality



Source: Author's contribution, 2016

The skills and literacy training programmes were instrumental in empowering the rural women for employability in various sectors of the economy. However, Gwanya (2010) lamented that although skills training had been undertaken to make rural women productive and employable, they were still employed in low paying jobs. Emami (2012) viewed the job creation model as a model, which can establish development specialists at local community level, who are prepared to coach, incubate and guide selected community members to enable them to become productively employed. The researcher further points out that the CRDP in the previous evaluation had not done well in this regard, (Sprinkhuizen and Masangu, 2016), in the evaluation report of the CRDP. The findings revealed that the CRDP programme has empowered the rural women of uMhlontlo local municipality, both financially, as well as skills upliftment.

From the information depicted in Figure 4.3, it can be concluded that through the CRDP, the women of the uMhlontlo local municipality were empowered to ensure project success in the development programme. Furthermore, the participants alluded to the fact that through the

CRDP the rural women of the uMhlontlo local municipality had been empowered economically and the alleviation of poverty had been evident.

Empowerment programmes have provided a state of change from one point to the other for the better. Thus, through financial and other forms of empowerment, the CRDP had managed to wean the women beneficiaries from poverty and high unemployment. The research findings from different authors demonstrated, that the CRDP initiatives on women empowerment, is a fulfilment of legal imperatives at various levels from the international world, national, provincial and at local level (Wiley, 2010; Jamal, 2014; Wittmann, 2012)

d) CRDP on growth and development of local economy

According to Ruhiiga (2013), development has become an important project of the government and that people are the recipients and active role players for their development. There is a general belief that projects for rural development are perceived as significant enablers for rural growth and development, as they contribute to economic and industrial development, better incomes, as well the contribution to food security (Bila, 2013). The findings at the uMhlontlo local municipality depicted growth elements in the municipal IDP. The municipal IDP reported the growth in GDP per capita from 9 per cent to 14 per cent in 2015, as evidenced by the value of added products, which contributed towards the district's share of development and that of the province in a wider spectrum (Giyose, 2015). It is postulated that the contributions of the CRDP towards economic growth may account to community services and agriculture at 998 and 146, as well as support to local trade and markets at 215 (Giyose, 2015).

While the contributions of the CRDP projects may not be quantified in the GDP of the local municipal area, the researcher is of the view that the CRDP had contributed to the economic growth of the area. From the findings depicted in figure 4.4, it can be interpreted that the CRDP had played a crucial role in stimulating the local economy of the uMhlontlo local municipality in several ways. One of the participants at municipal level said:

“There have been significant infrastructural developments that the government in this municipality has undertaken. The CRDP resulted in several roads being tarred, gravel roads rehabilitated and schools and clinics being built. Furthermore, the development

of road infrastructure greatly enhances commercial activities in a region because of the crucial role it lays in opening of access to markets and raw materials.”

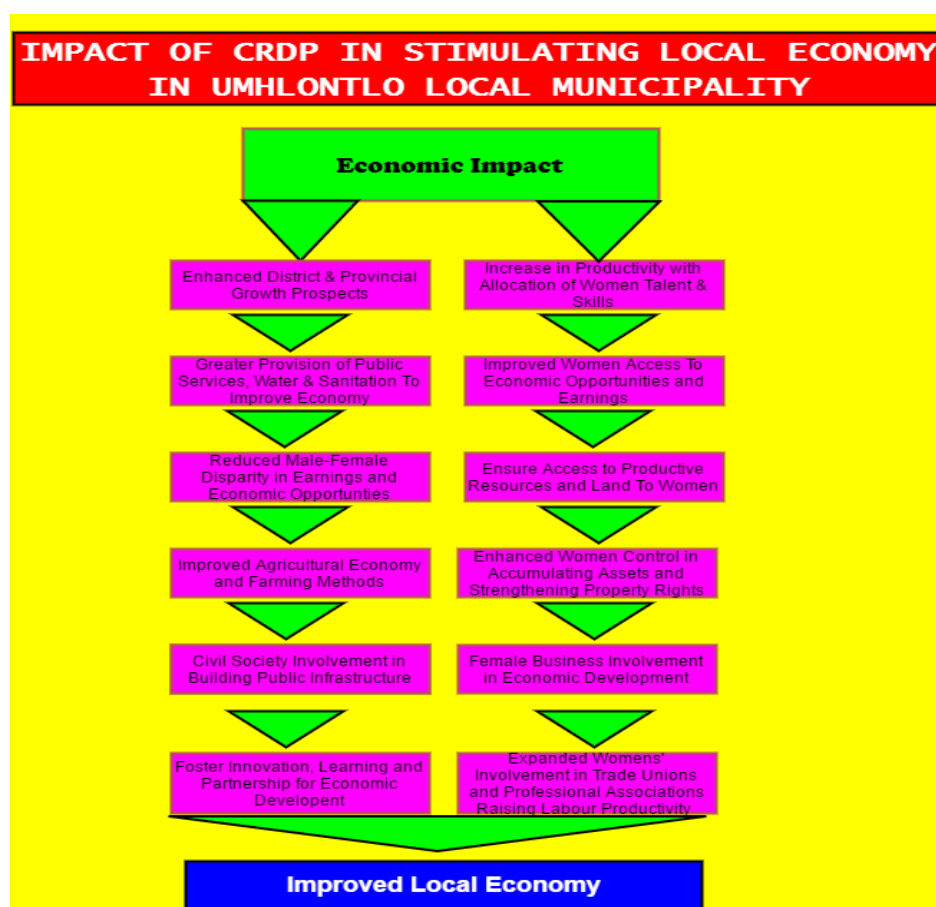
As community cooperatives constituted part of the projects within the CRDP, a popular view is that they must be encouraged to enable more community involvement, for the expansion of the rural economic base, towards fighting extreme poverty and food insecurity. Since the findings pointed to the financial empowerment of previously disadvantaged women in the rural areas of the uMhlontlo local municipality, the income gap and/or poverty gap between men and women have narrowed significantly, because of the CRDP. The increase in the number of income earners in this municipality has boosted local markets. The research participants pointed out that the CRDP had resulted in improved farming methods and a well-developed agriculture system. Shinde and Joshi (2016) pointed out that women had extensively contributed to the economic growth of their communities and family well-being, despite the lack of recognition in carrying out household chores.

Some participants, amongst the women in the development programme, pointed to the fact that the CRDP had helped to stimulate innovation among the women, through the education and skills training, that they had received. One of the participants from the women’s crafting project said:

“The women in uMhlontlo local municipality became innovative that, they started to run smaller businesses that in some cases employed other people. When co-opted to be part of the cooperative, I was encouraged to work hard and I was paid for the products that I sold.”

Participants from the community focus group had attested to the revitalisation of cultivation fields, which had long been ignored and not utilised by owners.

Figure 4.4 Impact of CRDP in stimulating local economy in uMhlontlo local municipality



Source: Author's contribution, 2016

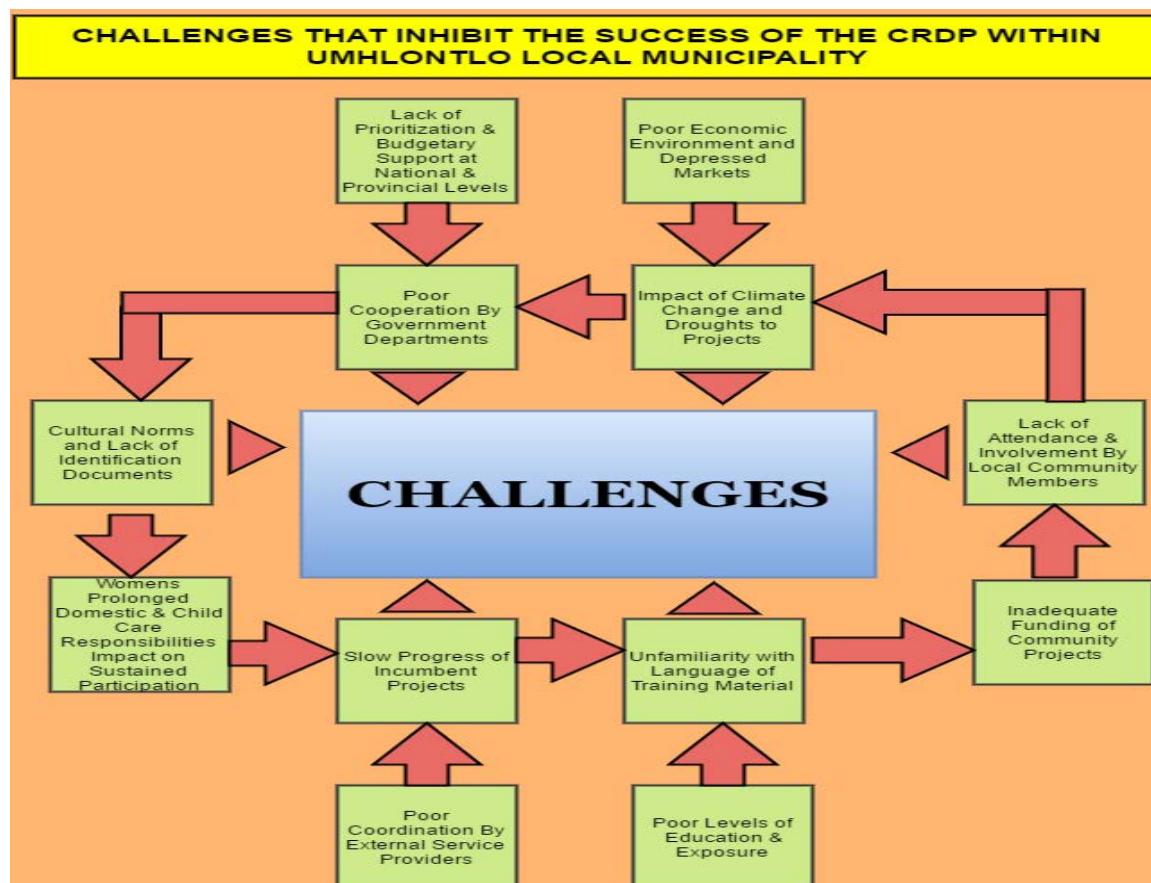
e) Challenges on the CRDP

Due to the limited resources from the local spheres of government on financial, human and material resources, any implemented programmes or projects faced numerous challenges. Figure 4.5 highlights some challenges which were experienced by the municipality regarding the CRDP. One of the participants from the municipality level said:

“There is an inconsistent budgetary support from national to the local sphere of government. This is attributed to lack of prioritisation of the programme by the government which manifests itself through lower budgetary allocations and support.”

This means that the success of the CRDP was limited by inadequate financial support from the government and other donors, which led to the slow implementation of some projects. The empowerment of women was an essential way to provide for livelihood strategies. Shathiabama

(2010) made similar assertions, that efforts to empower women are being hampered by the fact, that enough resources are not being entrusted to them.



The research findings revealed the major challenge, as being that of the service providers allocated to incumbent the project, to have implicated the project itself. Findings revealed that development tended to be more about the service provider's benefit, than the government programme itself. On the other hand, the government had not picked up any deficiencies in the project, but rather strengthened the service provider's existence in the project, without the alignment of the goal and vision, as well as checking and balancing on the progress obtained and challenges in the process. One of the participants from the women in the development project said:

“Once you are allocated a service provider for the women empowerment programmes, one must know that you are stuck with that service provider forever, because the government does not listen to women's complaints about shortcomings of that particular service provider.”

This might be attributed to some form of corruption or negligence of the government officials. Possibilities are that the service providers had covered up their inefficiencies in any form to sustain their existence in the government projects. This translated to poor mechanisms towards the project development and exit strategies. Conradie (2012) in the work of Siyo-Pepetheka (2014) reported that the incubator process takes three years (36 months), after which the government is expected to start withdrawing from the project. This was attributed to poor monitoring and evaluation techniques of the department.

Poor turn-over of women in large numbers can be attributed to the lack of information and motivation of the rural women on developmental issues. This is influenced by their lack of knowledge and business management (Jiyane and Zawada, 2013). Some natural catastrophes, such as droughts, were also cited as a challenge with adverse contributions on the success of the women's agro-business enterprise. Population density in the semi-arid zone had been reported to be high, covering the majority of the continent, which caused exposure to drought (Moyo, 2007). Droughts can sometimes last for several years and this can disorient the success of agricultural oriented enterprises.

Officials' views and the women participating in the development programme noted that the issue of low literacy levels amongst the participants posed a challenge to the success of the CRDP. Various researchers, Emami (2012); Rad (2012); Jiyane & Zawada (2013) and OECD (2012) support that illiteracy, low skill level coupled with a lack of entrepreneurship, restricted

mobility amongst the rural women, because of gender issues, were contributing factors to the compromised success of the rural women.

Poor cooperation of government departments and sectors hindered the success of the CRDP were views from focus groups, municipality officials, as well as the DRDLR. According to the view of Meyer (2014), rural revitalisation and development is a process, which requires integration and a comprehensive approach to the development to yield success. The success of the CRDP is further supported by Ruhiiga (2013), with the emphasis on the strategic objective of the CRDP, as the facilitation of an integrated and a comprehensive development and social cohesion, through a collaborative approach and partnership with all sectors of the society and government. The researcher further maintains the view that the CRDP required a coordinated and an integrated strategy to meet the diverse rural community needs, and that the full participation of all departments from all spheres of government, non-governmental organisations and research institutions were critical.

4.4 Summary of the chapter

This chapter has highlighted the positive aspects of poverty reduction and women empowerment through the implementation of the CRDP in the uMhlontlo local municipality. The discussions and findings above showed that the CRDP had assisted and greatly contributed towards the growth of the women in the municipality of uMhlontlo. The participants revealed that the area had benefited largely, because of the introduction of the programme in the area. These findings agree with the reviewed body of knowledge, which debates that implementing empowerment processes to allow women to play effective roles in poverty alleviation programmes is a pre-requisite for sustainable development (Quagliariello, 2009; Hill, 2011; World Bank, 2012; Yaqoob, et al., 2014).

Illiteracy has been cited as a challenge as per the findings in the research, however determination prevails, despite such challenges as per the finding from the key participant group. The group managed to learn and work hard to the extent of creating savings for the new initiative. Areas which need attention for the programme to be a success have been highlighted. Some of the features related to both, staff and project members' empowerment, as well as internal mechanisms for project development. However, the issue of the project incubator programme should be carefully looked at by the DRDLR. It is also noted that some of the other

aspects involved motivating other people in the community to be engaged in the development programme.

The CRDP was reported and commended for its success in the development of rural people's lives in the area. However, the issue of poor cooperation by government departments had adverse effects towards the full success of the development programme. The current experience with the implementation of the CRDP in uMhlontlo revealed that a collaboration approach of the government with all sectors and factors in development is critical. These include the private and the public sector, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and local communities, as crucial factors in the implementation of the projects for developing rural areas. The literature being reviewed concurred with the recommendations of the research participants, that, a collaborative approach on the management of the CRDP should have been reinforced.

CHAPTER FIVE

RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Introduction

The final episode of the investigation provides a summary, recommendations and proposals for future investigation on the area under study. In addition to the decisive nature of the chapter, it also emphasised the critical need for pursuing excellence in research and establishing an orientation towards an on-going future research. The aim of the investigation was to determine and evaluate the impact of the Comprehensive Rural Development Programme in empowering women in the uMhlontlo local municipality in the Eastern Cape.

5.2 Summary of findings

The summarised data findings were collected from women participating in the development programme, as key participants used to ascertain the extent and impact the CRDP had had in empowering themselves. Data was collected through focus groups for women participating in the programme, as well as the residents who were also utilised as observing participants on the effect of the development programme on the local women. Thirdly, interviews with the municipality officials formed part of their coordinating role at local government level. Also, the officials from the DRDLR were part of the key participants from which interviews were utilised to collect data.

The summary findings include the following:

- The CRDP in general had brought about remarkable developments in the area, high unemployment and the poverty rate decreased through the involvement and incorporating more community members in the area, especially young women.
- Improved net income to the members, which in turn contributed to benefit the family members and increased educational levels for their dependents.
- The improvement in the product quality to a more advanced standard, not only focused on the locals, but also included the nation and the people from outside, which resulted in tremendous business gains, where participants in the programme managed to generate stable monthly incomes.
- Many developments surfaced ever since the surfacing of the programme. These included the infrastructure development in the rural areas. Roads were built and

electricity was connected. Small businesses were developed and as a result, markets have improved.

- Farming activities were part of the development programme, and others depended on the need and the natural resource availability, for sustainable development. Markets had been made available to all the participants of the CRDP for economic returns. The economies of the uMhlontlo local area was believed to have improved more than ever before the CRDP.
- The CRDP played a critical role in alleviating poverty in the entire OR Tambo district area of which uMhlontlo is part. Through the CRDP's wide programmes of farming, land cultivation and product processing, poultry, sewing and crafting, the communities have improved. The programme was reported to have assisted in the revitalisation of abandoned ploughing fields.
- The introduced programmes successfully tried to advance the living standards of the participating women, as well as their dependents. The participating women were developed in various areas, including the ability to make decisions, both at their homes as breadwinners and in the development programme; hence the initiative to open a community financial institution, as their initiative. Some skills training was provided, as well as business networking skills.
- Various empowerment activities were provided to the women participating in the development programme in the area. The project, of which these women were members, had provided extensive training in crafting in an advanced manner, to fit in with external markets. As much financial support as possible was provided to the group, which had grown capabilities in many instances; which characterised growth and development. Conferences and workshops attended by the group instilled a mind-set development from one phase to the other.
- Limited education was a challenge amongst the rural women of the uMhlontlo local municipality area. However, to mitigate the challenge, the DRDLR had appointed a service provider to assist with the training requirements of the cooperative. The entrusted service provider had provided financial management skills, business and cooperative management skills.
- Women at uMhlontlo learnt technologies to support their businesses and access markets outside the area of uMhlontlo. The group used available technology to advance their businesses, which was commendable for people their age to learn new technology.

- The greater benefit was reported to have been that the women had been able to move from being a dependent to a family head, which could provide, plan and make decisions.
- The popular finding was that people's lives had changed for the better and local economic development had been the anticipated outcome of the programme, as rural livelihoods had been developed. The project outcomes of uMhlontlo within the programme were believed to have supported the vision of the CRDP, as vivacious, equitable and maintainable rural communities had been created. Moreover, the vision included the creation of sustainable agricultural makeshift with prosperous farming sector, enhanced access to reasonable and various food, developed facilities to support sustainable rural livelihoods, and the creation of job opportunities in the rural areas job, promotion of economic livings through an enabling recognised environment for sustainable and comprehensive growth.
- Unclear timeframes for the entrusted service provider in its incubator programmes had hindered the growth of the projects. The department's unclear plan to leave the development of the projects had posed a negative effect on the projects within the CRDP. Findings revealed that the service provider incubation period was for a lifetime process of the project, as well as that of the department.
- The prolonged development phase of the projects within the programme had had the potential of negating the development and success of the programme, and the establishment of new projects.
- Insufficient budget to cover several projects within the area.
- Poor departmental cooperation was reported as the major challenge, with the potential to have hindered the success of the programme. The DRDLR should have collaborated with other development stakeholders for more effective success.

5.3 Recommendations

a) Integration and coordination with other key stakeholders

The CRDP was reported to have had a collaborative approach to rural development by all role players and stakeholders. However, the situation with the uMhlontlo site showed to have lacked in that regard. The research revealed that integration had not materialised, despite being in the concept paper of the programme.

The researcher is of the view that the integration and collaborating of the DRDLR with other government departments and sectors, needs to be formalised and revitalised in the form of a memorandum of understanding, to an enhanced commitment and accountability. It is also recommended that mechanisms be put in place to facilitate the active involvement and participation of all concerned, as well as a strengthened, centralised coordinating structure. The involvement of the local community, local government and relevant stakeholders serve as a key role component in ensuring, that the project is aligned to local residents and local municipal plans for ownership and success.

Even though working with the local municipality in the development programme, the DRDLR showed a bit of an absence of a coordinating strategy. The researcher believes that sectors and departments might be duplicative and not mutually reinforcing. There is a need for the strengthening of coordination to rope in all relevant sectors and role players in the program collaborative. Clarification will have to be ensured on the responsibility of coordination. The researcher is of the view that local government should be entrusted with such duties at a local level. All three spheres of government will have to play their roles for the effectiveness and efficiency of the programme.

b) Rural Women Empowerment and Capacity Building

The Eastern Cape is one of the provinces with high illiteracy rates in the country. It is critical for both the project members and the staff to foster basic training, which will ensure that mutual expectations and objectives are met. The researcher believes the funding and leading department should partner with the Department of Education for Adult Education and Training sessions, which will ease the burdens encountered during the period of the actual project training and materials.

d) Development and implementation of an exit strategy of projects

Projects that are being funded should have various stages within the department. The incubator period of projects within the DRDLR was reported to be 36 months. The formulated strategies of the department should be revisited and implemented. However, the department has revealed that some projects had exceeded the stipulated time frames, as they had shown no signs of readiness to stand on their own. This, in turn, had derailed the department towards moving and evenly spreading the minimal budget accordingly. The researcher is of the view that the department should align the programme evaluation results with the implementation of the exit

strategies. Furthermore, the department should work directly with their funded projects and allow for openness with any issues, which might be cause for concern, for effective and possible resolutions.

5.4 Suggestions for future research

While this study provided an evaluation on the impact of the CRDP in empowering women in the uMhlontlo local municipality area, it also had some limitations.

Time and budget

The research used a qualitative methodology to evaluate the CRDP impact towards capacitating rural women of the uMhlontlo local municipality, and the research data was collected in uMhlontlo using focus groups and in-depth interviews. It is recommended that the same research studies should also be rendered, out in other areas of the country or areas with common geographical settings and background.

Sampling technique

The purposive sampling approach was employed in the study. The approach ensured the selection of participants being influenced by their appropriate understanding, interest and experience to the subject matter under study. The aim of this study was mainly not to generalise, but provided a deeper knowledge of the impacts of the CRDP at the uMhlontlo local municipality area. Moreover, the research findings paved the way for the upcoming research on the same theme.

Future research suggestions

The study of a similar nature should also be rendered on all women's empowerment studies generally, in order to examine the extent of government initiatives, in reaching the target group in the rural areas through the CRDP pilot sites, so as to improve their lives. Subsequent to that, a proportional examination should be done to ascertain the existence of a substantial difference, in terms of the number of men and women participating in the rural development programmes of the government and impacts thereof. This study focused mainly on the impact of empowerment programmes provided by the CRDP to the rural women of the uMhlontlo local municipality, and future research could possibly investigate the magnitude of the women's involvement and determine the mobilisation plan, if the numbers are small. In addition to this,

different locations could be investigated separately, within a specific common geographic setting e.g. all former Transkei CRDP plot sites for generalisations on the findings

Lastly, different countries with rural areas within Africa and across the world should be considered for future research. The research is anticipated as an addition of a different element or approach to the study area. Ultimately, this would aim at adding value to the existing body of knowledge, dealing with women's empowerment with special emphasis from the disadvantaged background and rural areas, especially in the African context.

5.5 Summary of the chapter

It is clear from the findings that through the CRDP, the residents of the uMhlontlo local municipality have obtained many benefits. Women, as the previously disadvantaged group, were afforded the opportunity to change their lives and that of their community. The focus should be on forging partnerships with other government departments and sectors for a comprehensive approach on developing rural areas. The promotion of inter-governmental relations may assist in ensuring commitment from all sectors and role players in a pledge against poverty and the development of rural areas. The DRDLR should ensure sound management of its service provider, continuous transparent engagements and feedback on the projects about their development status.

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