

**GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT: A STUDY OF THE IMPACT OF SELECTED
COOPERATIVES IN THE EASTERN CAPE PROVINCE**

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**GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT: A STUDY OF THE IMPACT OF SELECTED
COOPERATIVES IN THE EASTERN CAPE PROVINCE**

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DECLARATION

I, Noluthando Victoria Sithole hereby declare that unless specifically indicated to the contrary, this thesis is the result of my own work. Furthermore, I declare that the material contained in this thesis has not been submitted to this or any other university in fulfillment or partial fulfillment of the requirements for another degree.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION.....	iii
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	xi
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS.....	xii
ABSTRACT.....	xiii

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 Introduction.....	2
1.2 Problem identification and statement.....	4
1.3 Objectives of the research.....	8
1.4 Research design and methodology.....	8
1.4.1 Location of the study and research sample.....	9
1.4.2 Data collection.....	10
1.4.3 Data analysis.....	11
1.5 Delimitations of the study.....	11
1.6 Challenges in conducting the study.....	12
1.7 Ethical consideration.....	12
1.8 Value of the study.....	12
1.9 Organisation of the study.....	12

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK.....	14
2.1 Introduction.....	15
2.2 Understanding of key terms.....	15
2.2.1 Poverty	15
2.2.2 Social development.....	17
2.2.3 Community development	19

2.3 Women and gender.....	25
2.4 Women and culture	28
2.5 Women cooperatives.....	30
2.6 Theoretical framework guiding the study.....	35

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY	43
3.1 Introduction.....	44
3.2 Research design and methodology.....	44
3.2.1 Objectives of the study.....	46
3.2.2 Location of the study and research sample.....	47
3.2.3 Data collection process.....	48
3.2.4 Data analysis.....	52
3.3 Challenges and delimitations in conducting the study.....	53
3.4 Ethical consideration.....	54
3.5 Value of study.....	55
3.6 Conclusion.....	55

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS.....	57
4.1 Introduction.....	58
4.1.1 Context/ environment profile	58
4.1.1.1 The origins of the women cooperatives.....	58
4.1.1.2 Expectations of women cooperative members from the.....	59
programme.....	
4.1.1.3 Factors contributing to women becoming involved in the	60
the programme.....	
4.1.1.4 The various roles of programme members in the community and in the.....	60
programme.....	
4.1.1.5 The structure of women cooperative programmes.....	61
4.1.1.6 The funding criteria of the programmes.....	61

4.1.1.7 Benefits and women contributions to community development.....	63
4.1.1.8 Stakeholder involvement in funded programmes.....	64
4.1.1.9 Conceptual understanding of development concepts.....	65
4.1.2 Activity profile.....	69
4.1.2.1 Women's roles in community development within their communities.....	69
4.1.2.2 Risks and challenges in the community.....	69
4.1.2.3 Women's access to capital in the community.....	69
4.1.2.4 Programme activities.....	70
4.1.2.5 Women's freedom to participate.....	70
4.1.3 Resource profile (nature of the resources).....	71
4.1.3.1 The community resources and the access of women to.....	71
community resources.....	
4.1.3.2 Responsibility for the community resources.....	71
4.1.3.3 Cultural norms, traditional activities and women's.....	72
participation in community development.....	
4.1.3.4 Training provided to programme members.....	72
4.1.4 Programme action profile.....	73
4.1.4.1 Impact of women involvement in community development.....	73
4.1.4.2 Empowerment strategies for women to impact on community.....	74
development.....	
4.1.4.3 Involvement and active participation of women in the programme.....	74
4.1.4.4 Goal achievement by the Department of Social Development.....	75
4.1.5 General observations of the study.....	77
4.2 Analysis of findings.....	77
4.2.1 Conceptual understanding of development concepts.....	78
4.2.2 Roles of women in community development.....	84

4.2.3 Women impact and their contributions in community development.....	85
4.2.4 The structure and membership of the women cooperative programme.....	88
4.2.5 Intervention strategies for women empowerment.....	89
4.2.6 Stakeholder participation in the women cooperative programme.....	92
4.2.7 Empowerment strategies for women to impact on community development.....	92
4.2.8 Goal achievement by the Provincial Department of Social Development.....	93

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	95
5.1 Conclusion.....	96
5.2. Recommendations.....	98
5.2.1 Conceptual understanding of development terms.....	98
5.2.2 The establishment and progress of the women cooperative programme.....	99
5.2.3 The various roles of programme members in the community and the..... programme.....	101
5.2.4 The structure of the women cooperative programme.....	101
5.2.5 The funding criteria of the women cooperatives.....	102
5.2.6 Stakeholder participation in the programme.....	103
5.2.7 Women access to capital in the community.....	104
5.2.8 Women's freedom to participate	104
5.2.9 The community resources and the access of women to	104
community resources	
5.2.10 Training provided to programme members	105
5.2.11 Impact of women involvement in community development.....	105
5.2.12 The success rate of women cooperative in communities.....	107
5.2.13 Goal achievement by the Department of Social development.....	107
5.3 Concluding remarks.....	108
6. Reference list.....	111

APPENDICES

Appendix: A Interview schedule for focus groups.....	121
Appendix: B Interview schedule for Department of Social Development - Community Development Officers.....	125
Appendix: C Interview schedule for Provincial Department Social - Development Management.....	127

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE 1: Sample of gender.....	48
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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ANC	African National Congress
ABET	Adult basic education and training
CDP	Community Development Practitioner
CONTRALESA	Congress of traditional leaders of South Africa
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation
DOSD	Department of Social Development
DSRAC	Department of Sport, Arts and Culture
ISRDP	Integrated Sustainable Rural Development Plan
IDT	Independent Development Trust
IGR	Inter governmental relations
MLL	Minimum Living Levels
NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
NSDP	National Spatial Development Plan
PDOSD	Provincial Department of Social Development
PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
PRP	Poverty Relief Programme
RDP	Reconstruction and Development Programme
SLA	Service Level Agreement
SMME	Small Medium Enterprises
UNDP	United Nation Development Programme
UNFAO	United Nation Food and Agriculture Organisation

ABSTRACT

In 1994 South Africa took a new direction towards democratic governance. This led to a change of government principles and approaches in leading the country. The people became the centre of the country's development, resulting in the adoption of people-centred development and people-driven strategies. A special focus highlighted women as in the category which had endured poverty the most in South Africa. The South African government, through its various departments, has a responsibility to improve the lives of South Africans, and the Eastern Cape Provincial Department of Social Development is one of the departments which has committed itself towards changing the lives of women in the community. As a strategy to implement community development, the Provincial Department of Social Development is funding women cooperative programmes.

Women cooperatives are a relatively new endeavour to address poverty within the democratic South Africa. The study supports the notion and attempts to show the impact that women have on community development. The researcher began studying the trends and realized that the funds allocated and the funding process of community development programmes by Provincial Department of Social Development is not working towards empowering communities. A purposive sampling method was used to select two women cooperative programmes in the Chris Hani District Municipality to explore the role of women in community development in the current context of democracy and social welfare transformation in South Africa; to explore the impact of gender through women cooperatives on community development and to explore strategies for the empowerment of women through community development intervention. The design of the study is qualitative, exploratory and descriptive in nature. The study also adapted evaluation and gender analysis methods to verify the effectiveness of women programmes. The study recommends that women be empowered with skills, knowledge, resources and opportunities to enable them to be more effective in community development.

