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DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENT STUDIES

**WOMEN EMPOWERMENT THROUGH COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS
IN LESOTHO: THE CASE OF NGOPE-KHUBELU POULTRY DEVELOPMENT
PROJECT AT HA TS'OEUNYANE**



BY

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Dedication	iv
Acknowledgements	v
Abstract	vi
Chapter One: The problem and its setting	1
Introduction	1
Background to the study	1
Statement of the problem	2
Statement of purpose	3
Objectives of the study	3
Research questions	3
Significance of the study	3
Assumptions of the study	4
Delimitations of the study	4
Definitions of key terms	4
Summary	4
Chapter Two: Literature review	6
Introduction	6
Leadership affect the process of women empowerment	6
Resources affect administration of community development projects	9
Location and environment affect women empowerment	11
Theoretical framework	13
Empirical evidence addressing the research problem	14

Summary	16
Chapter Three: Research Methodology	17
Introduction	17
Research paradigm (post-positivism)	17
Research design	17
Population and sampling	18
Sampling technique	19
Research instruments	19
Data collection procedure	19
Data presentation procedure	20
Trustworthiness and credibility	20
Ethical considerations	21
Summary	21
Chapter Four: Data presentation and analysis	22
Introduction	22
Thematic topic one drawn from research objectives	24
Thematic topic two drawn from research objectives	33
Thematic topic three drawn from research objectives	36
Summary	40
Chapter Five: Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations	41
Introduction	41
Summary	41
Conclusions	42
Recommendations	43
Recommendation for further studies	44

REFERENCES	45
APPENDICES	54
Appendixes A	54
Appendix B	55

Dedication

I dedicate this work to my late parents, Mr Tumahole Elias Kolisang and Mrs ‘Mamotlatsi Theresia Kolisang. I am forever thankful for their sacrifices in my journey of education. It is because of their passion for education that I still hold on today. May you continue to rest in peace.

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ABSTRACT

The majority of community development initiatives struggle tremendously along the way to achieve their objectives despite their best efforts to empower communities. Poultry community development initiatives which promote women's empowerment are also not an exception to this problem. This failure is caused by a lack of advance planning for the project's operations. The study had three objectives and investigated how community developments projects failed to empower women. The study employed a qualitative methodology since it was more concerned in the depth of the phenomenon under investigation rather than statistics. It was found that women in the Ngope-Khubelu poultry community development project were not empowered as expected. According to the findings, the project manager was ineffective. This was due to the lack of a defined plan and feasibility analysis before a project could be completed to assure the project's viability. The study concludes that poultry community development initiatives can empower women when all the resources are available. The study therefore, recommends that poultry community development programmes should be led by women who have the appropriate abilities, in case they lack, training should be provided and rural women should also renounce traditional practices as they are no longer binding nor supported by law.

CHAPTER ONE

THE PROBLEM AND ITS SETTING

1.0. Introduction

This chapter gives a general overview of the study. It encompasses the background to the study, statement of the problem, statement of purpose, objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, assumptions of the study, delimitation of the study, definition of key terms and summary.

1.1. Background to the study

Community development projects are described as an activity carried out, by a group of individuals, typically more than ten community members, with the goal of improving their standard of living (Madhowe, 2018). Community development projects have been in existence at international level in countries like United States since the beginning of civilization, as part of a policy to encourage community participation in municipal planning (Phifer, 1990). In Africa, they arose during Britain's governance of its African colonies, which lasted from the 1920s to early 1960s, (Aerni-Flessner, 2017).

In Lesotho, the number of community development projects rose quickly after it gained independence in 1966, and their main focus was on the communities of rural areas (Aerni-Flessner, 2017). Numerous community development initiatives around the world attempt to increase the status of women, while also reducing poverty, increasing income from agriculture and improving health outcomes, among other things (Ukpongson et al, 2014; Farooqi et al, 2023). This is because, women provide labour force for agriculture and play a crucial role in household nutrition and food security, which boosts income and wellbeing (Lahmadi et al, 2016; Montalbo et al, 2021). As a result, many organizations have incorporated empowerment goals and integrated strategies for empowering women into their programmes (World Bank, 2015; Farooqi et al, 2023).

Women are expected to play a key role in the implementation of those projects (Montalbo et al, 2021). This is due to the fact that, participation in development projects across the globe, has gained popularity as the certain way of ensuring sustainability in development projects success (Gyan & Mfoafo-M'Carthy, 2022). It is also presumed that, community development projects

enable people to manage their projects and ensure their maintenance, which in turn brings development (Muenkner, 2004).

However, in daily life, women, especially those who are less advantaged are still required to devote their whole lives to caring for the needs of their families and children, making them the most ignored group in the society (Kisimbii, 2020). This is due to the fact that in Africa, a woman's role is widely known as child bearing (Kisimbii, 2020). In Ha Ts'oeunyane, different initiatives have been taken to encourage women empowerment, by engaging them in community development projects, such as Tsoha and Nyolla-Mose Mosali. However, in reality, those women are not empowered as their standard of living has not changed from poor to better. They are a marginalized group on the social and economic fronts. It is the aim of this study to investigate how community development projects fail to empower women. It is assumed that if this problem is not investigated, it will cause a continuous impediment on women empowerment in community development projects.

Women empowerment has been defined as the process of attaining the ability to make strategic life choices (Kabeer, 2005; Elias & Meizen-Dick, 2021; Omang, 2022). It is the course that gives women more control over their lives and the communities in which they reside. According to O'Hara (2018), social and economic empowerment is a necessity nowadays because it is a method of empowering women and thus women empowerment is a fundamental development objective that is currently adopted globally to eradicate inequities and ensure gender equality. Women, by virtue of being the majority in rural areas, should be empowered through development projects to ensure that they live a life that has value (Gyan & Mfoafo-M'Carthy, 2022). Women empowerment through development projects is possible when all resources are present, being human, financial and material resources (World Bank, 2017; Johnson, 2018; Montalbo et al, 2021).

1.2. Statement of the problem

Despite various initiatives that have been made to promote women empowerment by the creation of community development such as Tsoha, Nyolla-Mose Mosali, women at Ha Ts'oeunyane are still not empowered, as their standard of living has not changed from poor to better. This state of affairs calls for study of this nature to establish the source of the problem. This study thus, seeks to cover this gap.

1.3. Statement of purpose

The aim of this study is to investigate how poultry community development projects fail to empower women.

1.4 Objectives of the study

Specific objectives for this study are as follows:

- to investigate how leadership, affect the process of women empowerment in poultry community development projects;
- to investigate how resources, affect the administration of poultry community development project in their effort of empowering women; and
- to demonstrate that location and environment affect women empowerment in poultry community development project.

1.5. Research questions

Corresponding research questions for this study are as follows:

- How does leadership affect the process of women empowerment in poultry community development projects?
- How do resources affect the administration of poultry community development project in their effort of empowering women?
- How does location and environment affect women empowerment in poultry community development project?

1.6. Significance of the study

Since there are no studies in Lesotho that deal with women's empowerment through community development initiatives, the study is relevant since it will add to the body of literature and help the students learn more about the topic. The study will also contribute to better community project management, which will empower women by ensuring that the jobs generated by projects are sustainable.

1.7. Assumptions of the study

This study assumes that women are empowered by community development project as they collaborate in groups and learn new skills and perspectives from one another.

1.8. Delimitation of the study

Geographical scope

The study will be carried out only at Ha Ts'oeunyane as it is place where the project took place, not any nearby villages.

Content scope

The study focused on women empowerment through poultry community development project as women empowerment is the dependent variable on community development project.

1.9. Definition of terms

Women empowerment is the process of empowering women. Empowerment raises the status of women through education, awareness, literacy, and training. Women's empowerment equips and allows women to take life-determining decisions. It is the course that gives women more control over their own lives and the communities in which they reside.

Community development projects are projects that are constructed by group of individuals in a village, as a strategy to create jobs and alleviate poverty.

1.10. Summary

This chapter outlines the problem and its setting. It indicates when community development projects were established, both globally and locally. It demonstrates their goal, which is to provide rural residents with a source of income. The majority of these projects are agricultural in nature, as agriculture is the primary source of income for rural residents. It is thought that community development initiatives can empower women. That is why, communities in various villages have developed these projects. However, it appears that, numerous community programmes that were put in place to empower women have been ineffective because their

quality of life has not increased. Due to this issue, the study seeks to investigate how community development initiatives did not succeed in empowering women.

The chapter also highlighted three specific objectives that the study aims to accomplish as well as research questions that go along with them. It also demonstrates the importance of carrying out this study since it will contribute to the literature, as there have previously been no studies that deal with women empowerment through community development initiatives in Lesotho. Lastly, the study focused on Ha Ts'oeunyane as the location of the project and defines essential words such as women empowerment and community development project. Next chapter discusses related literature to contextualise the study.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1. Introduction

This chapter examines pertinent literature on the notion of women empowerment through community development projects. The reviewed literature is primarily in the form of textbooks, journals, and articles. Three distinct study objectives are examined in the literature. The chapter also examines the theoretical framework and provides a chapter summary.

2.2. Leadership and the process of women empowerment in community development projects

Leadership is described as the process through which an individual inspires a group of others to achieve a common goal (Northouse, 2004; Toma et al, 2020). Leadership in community development projects has been acknowledged as a crucial function in accomplishing project's goals and objectives (Bohl, 2019). This is due to the fact that the actions or abilities of a community's leader determine the outcome of community development project (Gonfa, 2019). This means that inefficient or weak leadership can be destructive, destroy trust and credibility among community members (Oreg & Berson, 2019). This manifests itself when the leader employs a top-down approach, which imposes on communities, projects that they neither suggested nor representing their needs (Maduagwu, 2000; Bimha, 2019; Kaiser, 2020). Women who partake in these projects do not profit because they are passive agents in them; they do not grasp what is expected of them and as a result, they become disempowered and without a sense of entitlement (Gyan & Mfoafo-M'Carthy, 2022). As a result, there is a need to participate, as participation in development projects improve women socioeconomic status, raises their self-esteem and ensure their well-being within their households (Farooqi et al, 2023).

When members of the community participate in decision-making, they generate a sense of ownership for the project at hand, as opposed to when is imposed on them (Roger et al, 2008; Bimha, 2019; Farooqi et al, 2023). Beneficiaries must be involved in selecting which projects should be prioritized in the community since they have the capacity to decide which models of integration should be employed from project inception, completion and evaluation (Murunga,

2017; Gyan & Mfoafo-M'Carthy, 2022). When a project is created and conducted in collaboration with the beneficiaries, there is a greater likelihood that it will progress and be cared for, by the same people, lending to its legitimacy (Farooqi et al, 2023). Since project sustainability is essentially depending on the process initiated to ensure effective ownership of the project, by the beneficiaries (Nzau-Muteta, 2005; Bimha, 2019). Community members should assume full responsibility for the project's success or failure (Bimha, 2019). Thus, involving communities in the planning process is an end in itself, as the bottom-up approach to poverty reduction projects has been promoted on the grounds that it makes development more inclusive and responsive to the true needs of the poor (Adair, 2007, Farooqi et al, 2023). It also has the potential to empower poor people, build social capital, strengthen community collective action and shift public spending to represent the needs of the excluded (Casey et al, 2012; Mansuri & Rao, 2013; Montalbo et al, 2021).

Existing literature has shown that, in order to effect a meaningful change at the local level, a leader must have a certain set of skills (Hwang and Ng, 2013; Maharjan, 2017; Bohl, 2019). This is because, the leader of community development project is assumed to be the project manager and play a major role in ensuring that a project is sustainable (Magano, 2008). As a result, a leader needs to be competent (Bohl, 2019). The reason for this, is that, leadership abilities are now universally recognized as an essential component of management (Adair, 2007; Johansson, 2018). This is due to the fact that ineffective leadership is linked to lack of skills, education, training and experience (Gonfa, 2019). Numerous studies and investigations also emphasized inadequate skills as a factor compromising the success of community development efforts (Martin, 2001; Hwang & Ng, 2013; Kuroshi & Lawal, 2014; Okuntade, 2015; Johansson, 2018).

In addition, the study undertaken on women empowerment in some rural wards of Makhado Municipality in Vhembe District, Limpopo, revealed that, women still encounter numerous obstacle in the pursuit for empowerment due to lack of knowledge and skills, decision making powers and low self-esteem (Mathaulula, 2008). This point to the fact that, when a leader lacks crucial leadership skills, there will be numerous issues that will have a long-lasting impact on the project (Gonfa, 2019; Bohl, 2019).

It was stated that, a lack of leadership qualities has the repercussions of lowering the leader's performance, lowering employees turnover and their happiness (Johansson, 2018; Eja &

Ramegodwa, 2019). This has a negative impact on the project's productivity, as the efficacy of the workforce is the leader's responsibility (Gonfa, 2019). This has been demonstrated by research which found that, bad administration of community development programmes prevents the accomplishment of the project's primary objectives (Bimha, 2019).

Furthermore, managers or leaders in community development projects spend most of their time on communication. According to Johansson (2018), leadership cannot exist without communication. Lack of cooperation towards the shared objectives of the project is caused by poor communication skills that deteriorate relationships between employees (Gonfa, 2019). According to Centre Line Solutions Incorporated (2004), poor communication, results in team members not receiving information when it is necessary and project reporting is slow.

Ineffective leaders have poor communication skills, if he or she fails to convey the project's vision to its participants, thereby risk losing a significant amount of personnel that might have otherwise helped the project forward (Pinto and Mantel,1990; Johansson, 2018). The absence of vision may also be referred to as uncommunicated vision (Bimha, 2019). This is because lack of vision in leaders lead to a lack of focus on the project (Bohl, 2019). The project will continue indefinitely with no substantial changes (Bohl, 2019). It will remain static with no signs of improvement. As a result of this ineffective leadership, women's lives are impacted by a lack of purpose and direction, which prevent them from feeling empowered (Tehreem et al, 2013; Gyan & Mfoafo-M'Carthy, 2022).

Furthermore, lack of education and low levels of literacy make access to information difficult and commonly undermine the confidence and skills needed to enter public life whether at village or community [projects] (Women's Leadership and Participation, 2008; Gyan & Mfoafo-M'Carthy, 2022, Farooqi et al, 2023). Confidence is essential for becoming a manager, claim Powney & Weiner in Ouston (1993). When a leader lacks proper intellectual preparation, he or she lacks confidence to lead, which is terrible since confidence in leadership is founded on performance, and where there is no confidence, there is no hope, faith, assertiveness, or the drive to achieve anything (Mathipa & Tsoka, 2001; Farooqi et al, 2023). This is consistent with Murphy's (1963:9) notion that "as a man thinks, feels, and believes, so is the condition of his mind, body, and circumstances." This demonstrates that, empowerment process is impossible to achieve, because it is only when a woman is empowered, that she can have the confidence to

lead (Farooqi et al, 2023). Thus, confidence stems from the competence and knowledge a person possesses as a result of his or her education.

According to Mathipa & Tsoka (2001), the only genuine way to comprehend how the concept of confidence works, is to watch how someone who is confident to have the requisite skills, believes in their talents and has self-assurance to perform a particular task when required to do so, rather than excluding women from leadership positions based solely on their gender. Performance can be utilized as a suitable yardstick to gauge their confidence and willingness to do so (Gonfa, 2019).

Lastly, ineffective leadership lacks management skills and frequently results in staff demotivation as a response to project upheaval (Pinto & Kharbanda, 1996; Johansson, 2018). As a result, women's emancipation will not be accomplished since they will be significantly less productive than they would otherwise be (Farooqi et al, 2023). This has an adverse effect on the team members' morale and causes the project to fail because there is no drive to keep working (Bohl, 2019). This is due to weak leadership that does not pay attention to its subordinate and do not value their suggestions (Johansson, 2018; Kaiser, 2020). The inability to provide meaningful work to subordinates makes it challenging to build genuine relationships, which gives them a reason to depart, of which it hinders the process of empowerment (Johansson, 2018). Failure to find solutions to these impediments' which are mostly felt in community projects, suggest that women empowerment will remain an elusive aspiration (Moyo & Francis, 2010; Bimha, 2019).

2.3. Resources and the administration of the community development projects in empowering women.

In order for a development project to be conducted successfully in any particular community, three types of resources, human, financial, and material resources must be available (Project Management Institute, 2013). A project's resources are critical to its success (Bryan et al, 2020).

The human resource is crucial to any project since it includes both skilled and unskilled labour, permanent and contract personnel, managers and lower-level team members, as well as experts and supporting staff, who help to realize the overall project objectives (Project Management Institute, 2013; Bimha, 2019). It is indisputable that people are the most precious resource in all initiatives, yet owing to limited resources and a lack of optimal utilization of human potential,

community development programmes aimed for women empowerment continue to fail (Mochal, 2005; Gyan & Mfoafo-M'Carthy, 2022). It was stated that, due to lack of skills in community programmes, there is no routine for programme maintenance, and hence most of them are unable to provide their intended benefit on beneficiaries over time since their outputs run out (Kongolo & Bamgose, 2002; Gyan & Mfoafo-M'Carthy, 2022). As the poor are said to lack the capacity to aspire due to limited access to resources that facilitate the process of empowerment (Moyo & Francis, 2010; Farooqi et al, 2023). It can be argued that human resources with improved competence (knowledge, skills, and attitudes) are necessary to improve the overall efficiency and effectiveness of the organization (Becker et al, 2001; Gilley et al, 2002; Elegbe, 2010; Bimha, 2019; Farooqi et al, 2023).

It is presumed that community development project commence with financial resources in order to run properly (Ravhura, 2010; Owusu et al, 2019). The financial resources are the funds used to run the initiatives (United Nations, 2017). According to Mansuri & Rao (2004), community development programmes, rely on communities to use their capital to organize themselves and engage in development processes. This means that those without funds will be unable to engage, because participation is typically confined to financial administration rather than promoting and maintaining the sustainability of project activities (Kioko, 2018). As a result, women cannot be empowered because their participation is contingent on financial resources. This was evident in Mali, where women's engagement was insufficient because they were not financially supported (Nzau-Muteta et al, 2005). That is why there is a need to fund projects in order to achieve their purpose, as there is general agreement that even if community development projects arise from bottom up, they would still need support from external development agencies (Narayan, 1995; Bimha, 2019). Hence Magano (2008) & Owusu et al (2019), emphasize that projects must be financed in order to be successful and project's financial requirements should be clear during both its planning and execution.

According to the World Bank (1999), financial management is a critical ingredient of project success and sound project financial management should provide relief needed by donor, that, funds will be used efficiently for the purpose intended and a deterrent measure to fraud will be implemented. Since financial management provides internal control and the ability to quickly identify unusual occurrences and deviations among other things (The Global Fund, 2017). It is

clear that, financial management training is required although efforts should be made to simplify bookkeeping, because transferring financial management responsibilities to local communities with limited resources and inadequate knowledge increases the likelihood that funds will be misappropriated (Haider, 2009; Tshitangoni, 2010; Bimha, 2019). To prevent this, procedures should be followed including using multiple local signatories to check receipt of funds and other official documents, maintaining financial records and allowing the public access to these records (Haider, 2009). By this way, donors will be secured that their monies will be safe, hence development projects will be sustainable and reach their goals (Moscalu et al, 2020).

According to United Nations (2020), rural women are poorer and more marginalized in their use of existing resources. The reason for this, is that, women suffer considerable limits in their ability to have unrestricted access to and control over productive resources and opportunities that are critical to growth (FAO, 2011; Kilic et al, 2015; United Nations, 2020). That is why Kabeer (2005) emphasizes that resources should be beyond availability in order for women to be empowered. Inadequate resources restrict them to exercise their choice to the ones that are best suitable for their development (Bimha, 2019).

Material resources, on the other hand, are supplies or commodities used to execute a project's tasks (Damoah, 2018). These resources are required to carry out a successful project, as without them, it will most likely fail or fall short of its goals (Omang et al, 2022). Women who participate in community initiatives with insufficient material resources are unable to attain the project's purpose of empowerment (Bimha, 2019). Therefore, for a project to be a success, all other resources must be available. It is possible to claim that a project cannot exist without resources because project activities do not take place in a vacuum (Hulland et al, 2007). Projects intended to empower women may fall short due to insufficient resources.

In essence, resources are fundamental for empowerment since they are used to exercise agency, which results in accomplishments (Bryan et al, 2020). The accomplishments help an organization produce goods and in turn, empower people. Regardless of the management team's abilities, if the resources needed for the project are not sufficient in either quantity or quality, the project will undoubtedly fail to reach its purpose (Ruuska & Teigland, 2009; Bimha, 2019).

2.4. Location and environment and community development projects in empowering women.

Every project needs to take place in a specific setting. In this context, the environment refers to the outside factors that influence a project's growth (Armenia et al, 2019). The most typical examples of physical factors include the project's geographic location, the state of the ground, and weather patterns (Pinto & Mantel, 1990). Since they are unpredictable, management efforts cannot prevent them from occurring (Akanni et al, 2015). It is stated that, during the course of the project cycle, it is believed that, these aspects will, in some way have an impact on a project (Fewings, 2019). This is the reason why Haplin & Senior (2010) contend that, if these issues are not minimized, a project cannot be successful. Any acts that a community performs collectively will always be influenced by its physical location and the environment in which it exists (Youker, 1992; Armenia et al, 2019). This implies that new development initiatives will always have an impact on the community, whether for the better or worse. Therefore, a location is an important aspect in everything.

Women have made considerable strides towards empowerment, by taking advantage of available opportunities (Sanyang, 2012). However, because of their geographical location, they continue to confront significant obstacles. This stems from the fact that, environmental and geographic elements specific to an area have frequently been important contributors to the level of development that occurs there (Ahsan & Gunawan, 2010; Armenia et al, 2019). For instance, the lack of vital infrastructure in rural areas, such as roads, appears to be an issue, as there are no routes for cars, making it difficult for individuals to support community development projects with equipment. As a result, those community development projects will be unable to attain the best benefits of empowerment since the necessary equipment for project improvement would be unavailable. It is assumed that, characteristics present in a community, whether controlled or not, will frequently have an impact on the growth of community development activities (Akanni et al, 2015).

Furthermore, geographical characteristics in the surroundings influence the amount of sustainability of community-based projects (Armenia et al, 2019). This is due to the fact that geographical elements encompass environmental issues such as climate change (Pinto & Mantel, 1990). For instance, the environment in which animals are raised interacts in ways that affect their performance, even among animals with similar genetic composition. This can be seen in poultry projects, where the environment has a significant impact on chicken production, by

having diverse effects on both reproduction and productivity (Gicheha, 2021). The thermal environment has a varying impact on chickens depending on their stage of growth or production (Gicheha, 2021). This has an impact on the projects, because they may collapse owing to the death of chickens due to hot environment and development of women cannot take place in such conditions, because there would be no progression of the project. This is the reason why Pinto & Kharbanda (1996) claim that a variety of uncontrollable circumstances can reduce the likelihood of a project's success.

Lastly, the geographical proximity may not be ideal for a specific project due to a rapidly changing environment that creates a lot of hazards for the project (Pinto & Kharbanda, 1996; Armenia et al, 2019). For example, if the project is located at the bottom of where the rain water runs, it will underperform because project success is based on environmental conditions that have a direct impact on the project. It is realistic to accept that the project's location is problematic and if not addressed before the project commence, it carries the risk of project failure (Han et al, 2012). These external conditions do matter, and the project manager should treat them as risk factors to ensure that they are adequately managed to assure success (Tang et al, 2005). As a result, many community development programs fail to fulfil their aims due to location; thus, the success of any project is assessed by the achievement of its established objectives (Armenia, 2019). It is for this reason that, in order for empowerment to occur, a favourable environment must first be created. When the current conditions encourage empowerment, it is critical for women to take responsibility of the social transformation process as it currently exists.

2.5. Theoretical framework

The study is guided by Kabeer's Framework of women empowerment. Empowerment is defined as the expansion of people 's ability to make strategic life choices in a context where the ability was previously denied from them (Kabeer, 2005; Elias & Meizen-Dick, 2021; Omang et al, 2022). This theory maintains the view that empowerment can be examined through three interrelated dimensions: resources, agency and achievements (Omang et al, 2022). These dimensions are significant because they can affect the process of women's empowerment, which makes this theory applicable to the study (Mahbub, 2021).

It proposed that resources should be beyond availability, which means that in order for women to be empowered, they must have access to and control over these resources (Kabeer, 2005; Omang et al, 2022). This means that in poultry development projects, women should have all the resources required to run the project smoothly. These resources are material, financial and human. They are of the great importance as their absence can hamper the success of the project (Elias & Meizen-Dick, 2021). According to Omang et al. (2022), empowerment of women on any platform, whether individually or in groups, enables them to overcome social barriers, achieve self-fulfilment, and further equips them with the capacity to realize their highest aspirations and goals, lending credence to this theory.

On the other hand, agency pertains to the exercise of choice by women, which means that, they should not only be able to exercise that choice but also feel entitled to do so (Kabeer, 2001; Omang et al, 2022; Farooqi et al, 2023). Women are empowered when they are able to run their projects on their own accord, without external mandate (Farooqi et al, 2023). In this way, they will be able to show their independence and power. Mahbub (2021) also emphasises that women develop a sense of personal authority, command, and self-sufficiency over material and intrinsic choices they make.

Achievements refers to the extent to which this potential is realized or fails to be realized; that is, the outcome of people's efforts (Kabeer, 2005; Elias & Meizen-Dick, 2021). In relation to empowerment, achievements have been considered in terms of the agency exercised and its consequences (Elias & Meizen-Dick, 2021). Both, the resources and agency make up people's capabilities, that is, their potential to live the lives they want, which result in achievements (Kabeer, 2005; Omang et al, 2022). Examples of achievements include but not limited to financial wellbeing, being able to send children to medium or international schools and improved status in the community.

2.6. Empirical evidence addressing the research problem

It is obvious that poultry initiatives occasionally succeed in producing more chickens to the point where a sizable market outside the village is required, but it is difficult for women to benefit from their success because there is no market for the chickens they produce (Gap Report Team, 2021). This has an impact on their way of life because they would anticipate to sell more chickens for greater money, but this does not occur, thus their situation does not grow better.

This has been shown by a study undertaken by Isaac (2012), who performed research in the majority of developing nations. His findings showed that women farmers' limited access to global markets is a barrier to their professional advancement. He continued by pointing out that because there is no market for them to expand their projects, they are forced to sell them for lower prices, which is not advantageous to them.

Other times, they struggle to raise capital and are forced to ask their husbands for help, which makes them just as dependent as before (Isaac, 2012; Gap Report Team, 2021). Moreover, even the small profits that can be accumulated there, they do not have control over it, as they feel obliged to give it to their husbands, as they are the one's who helped them with capital (Gap Report Team, 2021). As a result, the study draws the conclusion that in such a situation, women's empowerment is hampered.

Furthermore, a study conducted by Roger (2011) in the United States revealed that, despite the fact that poultry projects have the potential to contribute to women's empowerment, the sector faces a number of challenges, including a lack of water and food. Another major issue is that running poultry farming projects among women remains a major challenge, as women are more preoccupied with household chores (Campbell et al, 2023). The survey also indicated that women who own poultry enterprises confront issues such as high supply relative to demand, illness transmission among chickens, expensive pricing for animal feed, and high temperatures that cause significant losses, all of which have an impact on the empowering process (Roger, 2011; Campbell et al, 2023).

According to a research by Jiyane & Mostert (2008), efforts to empower women were hampered by a lack of understanding on where to find information and how to manage their projects. This is due to the fact that women needed information on how to sell and grow their enterprises, how to draw in new clients, where to find raw materials, how to price things, and networking opportunities (Sanyang, 2012). This issue demonstrates that no matter how hard women attempt to construct projects, illiteracy will be a huge obstacle that will prevent women from realizing their empowerment aspirations, resulting in a stagnation of their living condition (Farooqi et al, 2023). Thus, literacy will have a huge impact on their development initiatives.

Lastly, a study in Eastern Uganda conducted by Ambler et al. (2021), revealed that development projects targeting only women were ineffective due to lack of participation. The study shows that

the barriers to participation come from norms and beliefs. It appeared that women agreed to participate in the project, however along the way, their husbands refused to give them cane, as the result, there was insufficient cane on the land and the project was not a success as anticipated.

2.6. Summary

Through three distinct objectives, this chapter explains the literature review to demonstrate how ineffective leadership affects the process of women's empowerment in community development projects. It first demonstrates how such leadership is unable to manage the project if it lacks certain skills. It also looks into how a lack of resources affected the management of a project to empower women in the area. In other words, it shows that a project cannot be completed if all of the required elements are missing, and it cannot be sustained. It goes further to demonstrate how geographical location and environment affect women empowerment in community development projects. By this objective, the literature shows that geographical location and environment is a determining factor for everything, which means that the location will determine the project's success or failure. Finally, it provides Kabeer's paradigm of empowerment to contextualize the research and illustrate the feasibility of emancipating women in community development initiatives. Next chapter presents the research methodology for this study.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3. 1. Introduction

This chapter discusses research paradigm, research methodology, research design, population and sampling, research instruments, data collection procedure, data presentation procedure, trustworthiness and credibility and ethical considerations. It also provides summary of the chapter. The study employed a qualitative methodology since it was more concerned in the depth of the phenomenon under investigation rather than statistics. Rahman (2016) also emphasize this point of view as well, arguing that qualitative research is a method that combines multiple realities and yields conclusions that are not reached using statistical methods.

3.2. Research paradigm

The study adopted post-positivism paradigm and opted for constructivism, which support the notion that there are several realities rather than a single reality or truth. Constructivism is founded on the analogy or tenet that, most of what people learn comes from their own experiences (Cashman et al, 2008). This paradigm is relevant to the study because it used a qualitative approach. This is due to the fact that the researcher created meanings from the events under study, using both her own experiences and those of the study's participants. The researcher also assesses what is said to determine the actual facts. This appears to be compatible with constructivism, given that it uses qualitative research methods like interviews, which were also used in this study. Furthermore, constructivists also claim that, reality is subjective, since it is derived from various or different perspectives of the people who took part in the study (Adom et al, 2016).

3.3. Research design

The researcher used case study and explanatory research design. A case study design is defined as a research design that entails detailed and intensive analysis of a single case (Bryman, 2012). The case study approach lends itself well to capture information on more explanatory 'how', 'what' and 'why' questions (Sheikh et al, 2002). It is useful to employ when there is a need to obtain an in-depth appreciation of an issue, event or phenomenon of interest, in its natural real

life context (Crowe et al, 2011). The purpose of the case study is to know exactly the factors and causes which bare the complete behavioural patterns of unit and the place of the unit in its surrounding social miller (Akhtar, 2016). While, explanatory research design explains the phenomenon under the study and provide reasons for its occurrence (Rakotsoane & Rakotsoane, 2006). It is also explained as a cause and effect model, investigating patterns and trends in existing data that have not been previously investigated (De Pierris & Friedman, 2018). It is conducted to discover and report some relationships among different aspects of the phenomenon under study, hence its goal is to understand what has happened when it comes to a certain phenomenon (Boru, 2018). Given that this study is qualitative in nature, this research design is appropriate.

3.4. Population and Sampling

A population is a complete set of people with specified characteristics (Hulley et al, 2013). In research there are two kinds of populations, being, the accessible population and the target population. The former refers to the population in research to which the researchers can apply their conclusions, while the latter designates the entire group of individuals or objects to which researchers are interested in generalizing the conclusions (Thacker, 2019). However, for the purposes of this study, the targeted population was used. According to Casteel and Bridier (2021), the target population must be exclusive enough to avoid having participants who do not represent the study's needs, which will misrepresent the population of interest. It is for this reason, the population of this study consisted only of Ngope-Khubelu community development project members.

Sampling is the act, process or technique of selecting a suitable sample or representative part of population for the purpose of determining parameters or characteristics of the whole population (Rakotsoane & Rakotsoane, 2006). According to Majid (2018), sampling is an important tool for research because the population of interest usually consists of too many individuals for any research project to include as participants. As the result thereof; the population is divided into a number of parts called sampling units.

3.4.1. Sample

A sample is a smaller set of data that the researcher chooses to select from a larger population

using a pre-defined selection method (Shukia, 2020). The primary purpose of the sample is to allow the researchers to perform the study on individuals from the population so that their study's results can be used to derive conclusions that will apply to the whole population (Casteel & Bridier, 2021). This study was undertaken by seven women and three men from the age of seventeen to fifty-five, using purposive sampling. The reason for their inclusion in this study, was because they were involved in the community development project in the chosen area.

3.4.2. Sampling Technique

The study used a purposive sampling technique. Purposive sampling, as a non-probability sampling strategy, was appropriate for this study since it draws attention to the specified characteristics of research participants (Ames et al, 2019). This is due to the fact that they are the ones that possess a greater level of subject expertise than others and were able to offer reliable data that will support the accomplishment of the study's goals. Community leaders, project participants and project implementers were the study's major informants. In this type of sampling technique, it was assumed that, the opinions of these participants are more credible than when the sample comprises of both informative people and those who lack the necessary knowledge or competence on the subject at hand (Campbell et al, 2020). Purposive sampling was used to select only ten members of Ngope-Khubelu community development project.

3.5. Research instruments

The study carried out through face to face interviews. This face-to-face interviews had provided the opportunity for clarifying the questions asked and allowed the researcher to give explanations to the respondents if necessary. The questions were unstructured to capture the information on all variables under study. The advantage of using unstructured interviews allow the researcher to direct the respondents on a particular topic of interest and gives the opportunity to test out his or her preliminary understanding (Kabir, 2018). Sesotho was used during the interview, as it is a language for both interviewees and the researcher, and thereafter all the information gathered was translated to English and presented as the findings of the study.

3.6. Data collection procedure

The first stage, the researcher obtained the introduction letter from the National University of Lesotho dated 16th January 2023, which granted her permission to conduct the research. The

second stage, the letter was presented to the village chief by the researcher, who sought authorization to enter the village to undertake the study. Third stage, the interviews were conducted from 8th -9th February 2023. The interviews took two days because some of the participants were not available the first day, but the researcher managed to get their phone numbers and made appointments to come the following day.

3.7. Data presentation procedure

The process of comparing two or more sets of data sets with visual assistances such as graphs is known as data presentation (Lester et al, 2020). This is due to the fact that; the researcher was able to illustrate how information links to other data by utilizing a graph. The study displayed demographic data using a diagrammatic method, notably bar graphs, while thematic data was presented in the form of narratives and quotations from the respondents. The study further employed discourse analysis to investigate the spoken language used in relation to women empowerment through community development projects at Ha Ts'oeunyane. This data analysis approach was pertinent to this study because it looks beyond the sentence, to understand how language works in a particular environment.

3.8. Trustworthiness and credibility

Trustworthiness of a study refers to the degree of confidence in data, interpretation and methods used to ensure the quality of the study (Pilot & Beck, 2014). Trustworthiness is the most important factor in determining how rigorous a qualitative research study is (Amankwaa, 2016). The primary goal of trustworthiness is to support the claim made by the research that the findings are "worth" paying attention to (Elo et al, 2014). Given that, the data was legitimately gathered and in line with the technique used, as well as the fact that it came from participants in the alleged research, the study's findings are trustworthy and justifiable. As a result, the findings are sufficient to persuade readers that the study is trustworthy.

3.8.1. Credibility

This study is credible because it followed the standard technique employed in the suggested qualitative approach. Participants in the study were actively involved in the Ngope-Khubelu community development project. The researcher visited each participant at their home to prevent participants from influencing one another during the investigation.

3.9. Ethical consideration

The study adhered to the concepts of autonomy, informed consent and confidentiality. Participants were given full disclosure of all study-related information. The decision to engage in the study rests with the respondent. During the interview, respondent names were not required. Prior to conducting the research in the village, approval from the chief was sought.

3.10. Summary

This chapter discussed research methodology used for the study. The study was based on the post-positivism research paradigm. This is because it supports the idea that there are many realities rather than a single truth. This paradigm was appropriate for supporting this study since constructivists hold that people develop their own knowledge of the world through experiencing it and reflecting on it. The study used a qualitative methodology, the case study and explanatory research design. A qualitative research approach was deemed the most appropriate, because the purpose of the study was to investigate how Ngope-Khubelu community development project did not empower women. This chapter further discusses the population and sample of the study, research instruments, data collection and analysis procedure, ethical considerations and credibility and trustworthy issues. Next Chapter presents and discusses findings of the study.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.1. Introduction

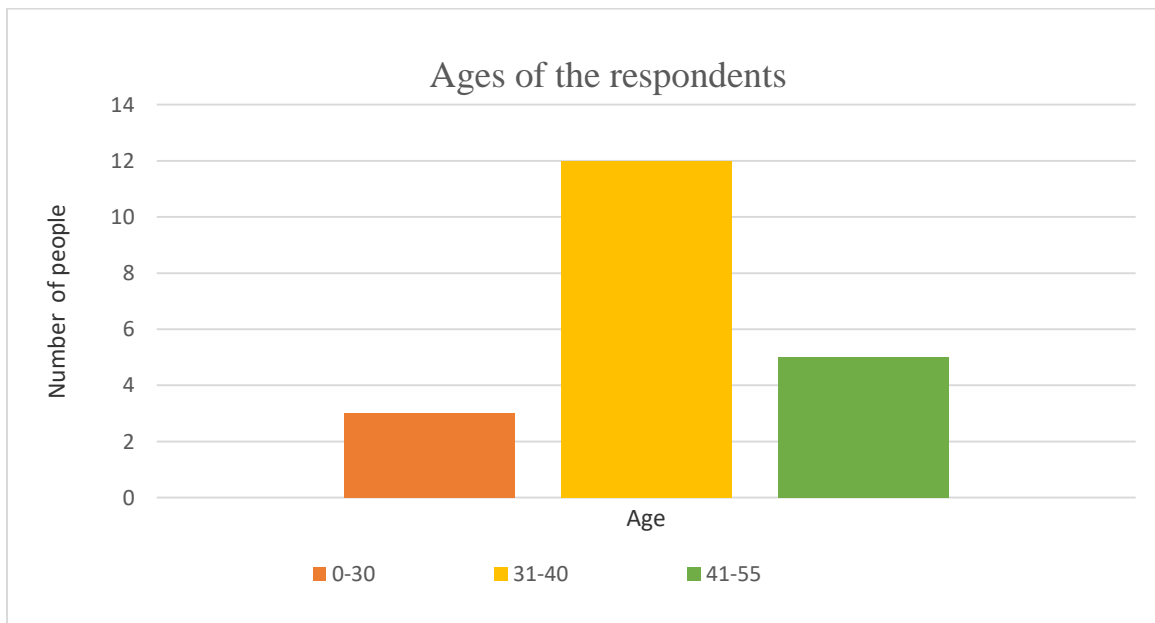
This chapter presents data collected through interviews during the study. It will be displayed through three thematic topics drawn from research objectives. Before presenting and discussing thematic findings, the chapter starts by looking at demographic characteristics of respondents. The chapter ends with summary of the chapter.

4.1.1. Demographic characteristics of respondents

Age, gender, and educational attainment were the three main demographic characteristics. This demographic data was sought in order to comprehend the respondents' backgrounds and their capacity to provide pertinent information that was valuable to this study.

4.1.2. Age of project members

Figure 4.1: Age of project members



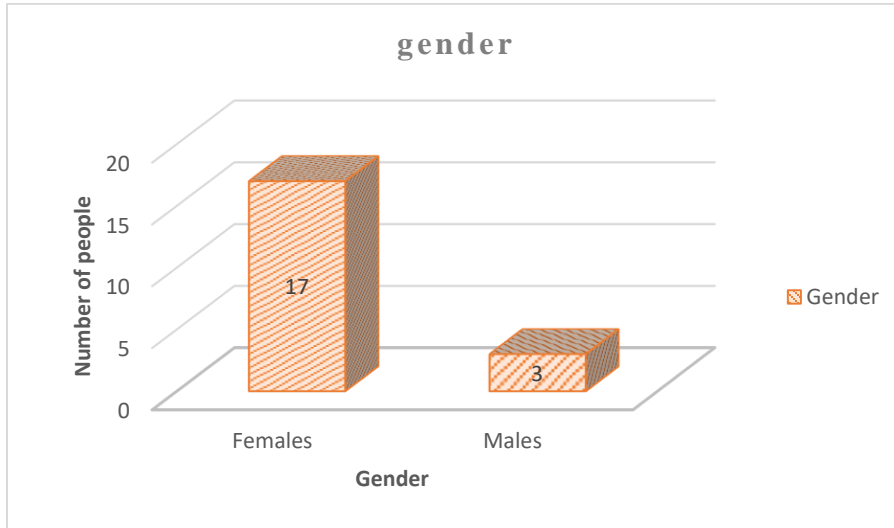
(Source: Primary Data)

These findings show that young women are not very much involved in poultry development projects. Instead, it is the older group that seems to have more interest in them. However, the expectation was the projects would be dominated by younger women, because the researcher

thought that the younger the person, the more interest she or he would show in development projects. The assumption was younger people are more innovative, intelligent, energetic and focused than older people.

4.1.3. Gender of project members

Figure 4.2: Gender of project members



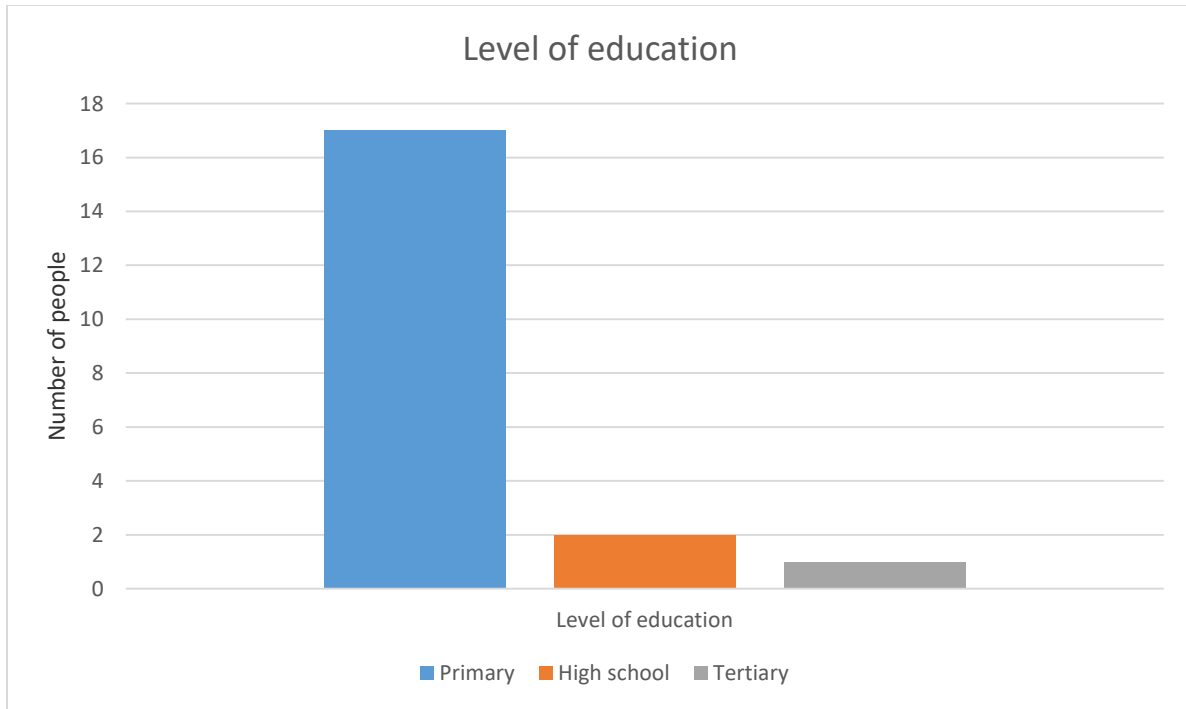
(Source: Primary data)

Investigating about gender was necessary as it revealed that the project did not only comprised of women but men as well, although the researcher's expectation was that it would be dominated by women. However, women were still in the majority in the project.

4.1.3. Level of education of project members

According to the data, the majority of the project's participants do not have appropriate education, as shown by the respondents' primary education levels. Due to the fact that they did not complete the entire project cycle, it is possible that, their lack of understanding contributed to their project's failure to accomplish its goal. This information on educational attainment points to traits that deter participants from taking an active role in project development. High literacy rates have a significant impact on the viability of projects. This is because women are more likely to express interest in ongoing project activities the more educated they are. Since education has the power to encourage and develop personal creativity.

Figure 4.3: Level of education of project members



(Source: Primary data)

In addition, the respondents claimed that they did not receive any training about the project, rendering it impossible for them to know what they ought to or ought not to do. In order to prepare participants for their roles and assure project success, training programmes are now offered regardless of the participants' educational backgrounds. As a result, there is a need for effective training, especially for those with less advanced academic backgrounds.

4.2. Thematic topic 1

Leadership and the process of women empowerment in poultry community development projects

The findings from the study revealed that leaders in the community development projects faced huge challenges because of the following several factors; lack of education, inadequate skills, experience and poor communication. Respondents from the study have shown that, their leaders in the purported project were not educated and this has made the project operation difficult. This was due to the chairperson's inability to perform his obligations as project manager. The reason being, he, himself did not comprehend what was expected of him. As a result, there was no way for him to grasp the role he should have played. This is why in most of the cases he did not

follow the correct procedure in undertaking his duties. This highlights the fact that a low level of literacy makes access to information difficult. If he had been more sophisticated, he could have sought other ways to empower himself with knowledge so that he could pass it on to his subordinates or brought in, those who are knowledgeable in the field to train them.

They went on to say that, the chairperson did not want to seek help even though it was obvious that he was compromising his ability to lead. He did not have the confidence to admit his flaws. That is why Mathipa & Tsoka (2001), stressed the view that, the only real way in which one could better understand how the concept of confidence operates, is by observing how an individual who is convinced that he or she possesses the necessary know-how, perform a specific function when called upon to do so. Thus, the chairperson really lacked confidence, by the way he acted.

The chairman was struggling a lot; it was obvious to everyone that this project was too much for him to lead. That is why he always do mistakes, but he did not have the confidence to admit them, because it seemed that if he accepts them he will show his weaknesses. It was because of this pride that deprived him to get help when it was necessary and his selfishness has impacted our project badly.

Moreover, most participants asserted that, the leadership in the project was ineffective. This was because the chairperson of the project by virtue of being a male in the project that aimed at empowering women was by itself questionable. They argue that, as the project was for the benefit of women, it should have been led by a woman. They claimed that, it was difficult if not impossible, for the project to succeed, because men and women do not have the same perceptions. It seemed they realized this point when the project was already operational. They emphasized the fact that men cannot understand women intentions about the project the same way, because they lack patience. That prompted the researcher to inquire as to why they had chosen a male to lead them in the first place, and one of the responses was as follows:

Here in our village, whether it's in community development projects or in groups for certain matter, it is like a norm, we believe that leadership is enshrined in men. As men are the head of the families, we have acknowledged that they are capable of leading everywhere. In our project for instance, the majority of the members are women and men are few, we have selected the chairperson to be a man as the way of

showing respect, as Basotho women especially in rural areas are still attached to old practices. There was no way a woman can take leadership position where men are present, that cannot happen here.

This response shows that the chairperson was not chosen on merit, but because of customary and traditional practices. These practices and traditions are no longer supported by law. Neither they are obligatory. Thus members of the project are not legally bound by these traditions. They have the capacity to bypass them if they are not working for them. Nevertheless, they seem to be attached to these traditions so much that they take precedence over their right to do what is beneficial for them, especially with regards their project. As evidence shows that there was no reason for them to keep on using practices that are detrimental to their development initiatives. Choosing someone who did not even have experience just because he was a male was a catastrophe and failure of the project. Hence, this view proves the point that, if this project was women-led, it would have taken more holistic and bottom-up approach, rather than this top down and that, would have made a projects' success (Hassan & Silong, 2008). This is because women tend to have certain abilities and approaches that make them particularly well-suited to successfully engage in administering community development projects.

The study also discovered that lack of skills to be a major factor that hindered the project's success. Respondents stated that, the chairperson and his deputy did not have leadership skills.

The chairperson and his deputy did not have any leadership abilities at all. When a person is a leader, you will see it in his or her actions. He will respect people who are under his leadership, and he too will be respected in return. As a Mosotho child, you know very well that respect starts from the highest-ranking house to the lowest. These ones did not respect us at all, but they wanted to be treated with respect. They did not have the ability to lead because there was no time for them to listen to us and hear our cries, and when we showed dissatisfaction, especially the chairperson, he became rude. That is not how a leader should behave. Their behaviour was totally unacceptable and showed that they did not have the necessary skills for the leadership position.

Another response was as follows;

Despite the fact that we were the ones who came up with the idea for the development project, our chairperson did not care about the project participants. Whatever suggestion we make about how to improve the project, he dismisses it. He was constantly convinced that his opinions were correct. I have never seen such an arrogant human being. How can you be a leader if you do not care for the people you lead? This one was only interested in the title because he lacked all of the abilities that go with it.

They emphasized that, these skills are significant as their absence had impacted their project negatively. This is evident as during the planning and implementation phase of the project, the chairperson and his deputy, did not check whether the project is feasible in terms of the location, quality, time and beneficiaries. This is due to the fact that, in the absence of a feasibility study, it might not be feasible to accurately design a project because it might not be clear what the project's overall goals are until basic planning is done. This lack of a feasibility study indicates inadequate project leadership planning. This emanates from the fact that, there were two project sites, one for vegetation and the other for poultry. Respondents stated that, according to them, they wanted the poultry housing to be established in the vegetation site, because they have realized that, there may be factors that can affect the poultry negatively.

However, there was no agreement between them and their leaders about the matter, the chairperson, who claims to be a bricklayer and very knowledgeable about buildings, asserted that the alleged project will not have any problems in that particular place, which is why the poultry housing was built there. They further said that, the project manager had demonstrated poor planning and inexperience by failing to select an appropriate location for the project and to identify its beneficiaries. They said that, if these beneficiaries were identified in the planning phase, there would not be issues regarding the market, as everything would have been set clearly from the onset. Respondents, on proving the incompetence of their leader, indicated that, there was also no backup site offered in the event the alleged project seem to fail, because another project would have already been underway at the vegetated site, which they first proposed to be used.

The majority of us preferred that the poultry housing be located on the flat ground over there, where the vegetation was planted, but the chairperson argued that the

location was more ideal than the one we are considering. As a person who knows how to build houses, he stated that the location is still safe and fine. We wanted to build the poultry housing at the vegetation site because we anticipated that it would considerably have more advantages than the one the chairman was pointing out in terms of marketability and accessibility. The chairperson managed to provide more justifications than us because we were merely making predictions without providing any concrete evidence for what we were stating because we are not bricklayers. As a result, the project was completed there despite our objections. Furthermore, we were concerned that if the poultry building was constructed in what we considered to be the inappropriate location and the project went wrong, there would be nowhere else to put the chickens because another project would have already been launched on the other site.

The respondents showed further that, they did not know the objectives of the project. As a result, they were not in the light of how they will achieve their project goal, because there were no projections, let alone specific duties assigned to each member. This point of view is in line with the argument made by Project Management Institute (2008) that, if the planning phase is not well performed, it is unlikely that the project will be successful in meeting its objectives. They noted that, if there had been division of labour, everyone would have done his or her part without pointing fingers to one another in performing their tasks.

We had no idea what our specific responsibilities were; in short, we had not been assigned any tasks individually, which led us to believe that if everyone had a specific task to complete, it would have been very easy to achieve our goal because all of the tasks that we were supposed to complete, would have been the steps required to reach the project goal. This would have been beneficial to the project because it would have prevented people from pointing fingers at one another when performing their duties. When a project activity was to be completed by all of us, there was a chance that not all of the project members would complete it. We believe it was the responsibility of the chairman to assign such duties to the project members but he failed to do so at the initiation phase of the project.

Moreover, respondents claimed that, the leader of the project had poor communication skills. The chairperson was not communicating well with the project members. This poor communication created a tense environment, as it led to misunderstandings. The respondents went on to say that, because of ineffective communication it was difficult to work closely together in carrying out project activities. As project reporting was slow and comes after a long period of time. The members were in the dark as to whether the project was progressing or not, as they were not receiving enough information when it is necessary. The feedback would have assisted the members to see in advance what they ought to or not do, so to make the project to be sustainable.

One respondent said;

“the chairman was too bossy, he didn’t want us to know where the project will be in a stated time and he don’t want to be questioned at all.”

This reaction demonstrates that certain team members were scared of the project manager and when people are apprehensive, they are unable to communicate. This is because fear frequently has far-reaching consequences, making members uncomfortable. This indicates that they would feel overwhelmed by their initiative, which will stress them out. Consequently, they would not produce as much as was anticipated because they regularly experience a dramatic fall in their health. On the other side, the absence of encouragement for their efforts prompted them to respond with resistance, which also resulted in a decline in productivity. This is due to the fact that, leaders who only emphasize discipline and provide feedback when team members violate rules or expectations, lower the team morale. Whereas, effective leaders understand that morale and production are inextricably linked; as a result, project members should be given credit when it is deserved.

Furthermore, most respondents alleged that, the chairperson was making decisions unilaterally. There was no time he would involve them in decisions pertaining the project activities. They said, he did not make them feel that they are part of the project or they own it and claimed that, it is the reason which made them not empowered. It seems that the project members were against the manager on decision making approach. The findings show that the project members wanted to be involved in every stage of the project and this had not taken place in their project. This is one of the reason the members showed lack of commitment to project along the way. This

unilateral decision-making approach limited the availability of options, which in the long run, would have impacted positively on the project, had they been allowed to come out. It is crucial to consider the concerns of other people since decisions will not be effective if people are not happy with how they are made.

In addition, it is evident that women in this study were denied the right to choose. The fact that they were not given the opportunity to contribute to decision-making, suggests that empowerment could not have occurred under such circumstances. This is because, in order to be empowered, one must employ their own judgment. Since there were no alternatives, these women cannot be regarded to have exercised their choice. They did not decide not to choose, but they only needed to comply with what the chairperson requested. It was not their decision to remain silent. This viewpoint was reinforced by Kabeer (2005), who contends that, the act of choosing, inherently entails alternatives and the capacity to make a different decision. This framework believes that empowerment can only occur where women have the ability to exercise their choice.

Respondents showed further that, they did not feel the importance of attending the meetings because they were not given the chance to express their views, and the bar was given only to the committee, hence they were given final decisions. This already made decision, no matter how good they are, it undermines the sense of ownership among the other participants, which results in a lower level of commitment to carrying out the decision. They went further to say that, because of being denied the opportunity to give their inputs, they stopped attending them. This shows that the project cannot be successful if its members are not participating, because it is only through participation that the members of the project can be empowered. Hence involving them in planning process is an end in itself, as when a project is designed and implemented with the beneficiaries, there is always a better chance that it will be sustained and cared for, by these same people, thus it gains more credibility. This view is also emphasized by Rowland who sees empowerment as a bottom-up process that cannot be formulated from top-down (Sharma & Mehta, 2021).

This viewpoint also responds to the researcher's inquiry on whether members fully participate in project activities. Several respondents, including the chairperson, suggested that the members lost interest in the project along the way because they expected everything to be done for them.

He went on to say that the majority of the members are lazy and only want to come out when the benefits are ready and do not want to be a part of the battle to make the project a success.

The project members are so lazy; they just sit back and want everything to be done for them. They wanted to come out only when we reaped the benefits. I have told them many times that if they do not want to work on the project activities, how will the project grow? These people are expecting a miracle; they are so lazy to an extent that they failed to do the simplest thing: to think. During the time the project housing was destroyed by rainfall, it was difficult for them to think of what could be done. It was I who came up with the idea that we should divide the chickens amongst ourselves and put them in our families as a means of rescuing them when the project housing was being fixed. They want someone to always think for them, just like children and you do everything for them.

However, some respondents indicated that they sometimes fail to participate in project activities due to domestic work. They claimed that they do have an interest in participating as they are also legitimate members, but because of house chores, they cannot. They claimed that they had to take care of the children and older people.

We want to participate in our project just like everyone else, but there will be no one to look after the children and the grandparents while we are there. These children are left with us because their mothers have gone to Johannesburg for job hunting, so they have no one to care for them except us. On the other hand, there are grandparents who are so old that they are unable to care for themselves; as a result, someone must be there at all times.

One respondent said;

In order to support my family as a widow, I make a living by cultivating other people's fields, especially now that maize, wheat, and sorghum are in season. My earnings come from the fields. I work there even during harvest season. The fact that I am occasionally unavailable during project activities does not indicate that I do not wish to participate; rather, it only means that my current circumstances prevent me from participating like the other members. However, I do enjoy taking part.

These comments demonstrate that while women are willing to take part in community development projects, they are hampered by domestic tasks, among other things. This is because in Africa, a woman's responsibility is to bear children, raise them and care for them, as well as the household (Kisimbii, 2020). They frequently miss project-related tasks, which is understandable given the inescapable causes. This can be ascribed to the fact that, project activities may not take into account women domestic chores, in the sense that some of them must perform them on their own, while others may have people who can assist them by the time they are at the project housing. When assigning project chores, it is critical that community development initiatives in rural areas accommodate women's domestic obligations time.

The study also discovered that project members viewed participation as a process in which the project manager involves them (members) in all stages of the project. They believe that, the project manager has no power to make decisions without their approval. Whereas, a manager has the authority to act unilaterally under certain circumstances, if it is in the best interests of the project by virtue of the position he occupies. Nonetheless, this viewpoint does not undermine the reality that, broad participation by all parties in the decision-making process, results in more accurate conclusions.

The study also found that the project chairperson lacked sympathy for the other team members. This was revealed as a result of the chairman's failure to put himself in the position of his subordinates. A leader must have empathy for the people he rules, yet in this project, the leader lacked this quality. When other project participants notified the chairman that they were ill and would be unable to attend the project caucus at another time, it appeared that the chairperson was unable to comprehend, based on the fact that their illness occurred when they were meant to meet.

Respondents said;

There was a time when we informed the chairperson of our illness and inability to attend the caucus. He was very furious, saying that we only get sick when we have to meet. We were startled to discover what sort of person he is, because he showed no trace of compassion for us. Imagine how old women our age could be playing with illness; it was as though we were lying. That person has no empathy at all.

Lack of empathy is a sign of poor leadership. This is due to the fact that a true leader has empathy. There is no other way to learn about each project participant's unique condition unless someone interacts with them and empathises with them. The development of each team member should originate from the leader's empathy, since lack of it forces them to hardly express themselves to him.

The findings of the study indicate that there was no accountability for the project. As a general rule, a leader must take responsibility of his actions as well as for the actions and performance of his team. However, in this project, the chairperson did not hold himself accountable for his managerial actions as he should, but looked for excuses for his failure. This manifested itself when the chairperson chose the bad site and the members were against it. It appeared that, when the site began not producing the expected results, he shifted the blame to other project members saying that they were lazy and that is why the project did not achieve its purpose. His defence was absurd, as he was the one who pointed to such a place and he was to account for its failure.

Additionally, that assertion he made was discovered to have demotivated the members and further showed his weakness. A good leader should have recognised the members' efforts in the project and created a good environment where everyone would feel valued. He should have acknowledged his mistakes, not denied them. This has negatively impacted the project, as people became unmotivated, and most of them do not want to engage in future community development projects.

Respondents said;

"We are fed up with this project. The treatment we experienced here made us never wish to indulge in any subsequent community development projects."

It is therefore established that bad leadership or poor leadership translates to the failure of a project as demonstrated in this case. As a result, it is crucial to have capable, dedicated leaders who are concerned with the development of both their teams and the success of their projects.

4.3. Thematic topic 2

Limited resources and the administration of the poultry community development projects

The study found that there was lack of operational resources for the Ngope-Khubelu community development project. This means that, human, physical and financial resources were not sufficient. The findings show that, human resource was not adequate, this is because the project comprised most of people who do not have the expertise and experience regarding the administration of projects. This has resulted in the project being difficult to operate and failing to achieve its stated goal. As a matter of fact, it is imperative that human resources should possess certain skills that will enable them to run the projects, as their absence will compromise the success of the projects. This view is also emphasized by Lever (2008) that, the need for the right people, with appropriate skills, for the right job, is very crucial in a project to execute it correctly. The study revealed that, project manager did not have all the knowledge necessary to undertake the project.

Respondents said;

Our project manager was struggling a lot, especially during the planning period; it was difficult for him to even organise the materials that are needed for the project. For instance, this manifested itself when he needed to count the number of metals and roofing required. We realised that this person was not good with numbers and the deputy had to assist him. Moreover, there was no schedule to follow during the operation of the project. A project cannot operate without a proper plan. Everything that needs to be done should derive from the schedule, as its absence gives the chairperson the freedom to do as he pleases. This also deprived the members of holding him accountable because there was nowhere to point that the chairperson had done this instead of that. Furthermore, the chairperson failed to identify the risks associated with the project and did not have a plan on how to overcome them in case they arose.

The findings of this study indicate further that the project was funded by its participants. This had a negative impact on the project because it has brought it to a standstill. The funds raised by the members were insufficient to keep the project going. During the initiation phase, the manager failed to inform the members that, due to the size of the project, more funds would be required, necessitating external financial aid. It appeared that the project did not have even a single sponsor. The respondents pointed out that they thought they would be able to handle it, not

knowing that the money required along the way will be beyond their means as they were not working. At other times, it becomes difficult for them to contribute for the project activities or in case where there is a need to buy new tools to replace the damaged ones. For instance, some members were unable to contribute money to buy metal roofing which was destroyed by the storm.

This demonstrates that, regardless of size, every project requires a sponsor who understands their role as the ultimate representative for the change and who holds the project team accountable for delivery. It is an irrefutable presumption that the project manager requires a sponsor to act as a partner in sharing any risks. This is evidenced by the deputy chairperson's and some members' remarks that if there had been a sponsor in the first place, they believe that the project would have taken a different path. They also stated that the change they desired to see in their lives would have occurred since the initiative would have fulfilled its purpose.

Our project was on point and it would have been a success if we had the sponsors. These sponsors would have made the project widely known and demonstrated to other investors that it is legitimate. The fact that we were able to build it from scratch showed commitment. It is simply that we did not have stable jobs and ran into financial difficulties along the way. This happened when we could not pay for resources needed to fix our project. If it were for funds, we would have been empowered, as we would have had permanent jobs that resulted from this project. Our lives would have been improved like everyone else's and our children would have gone to better schools.

The research also showed that, material resources used were insufficient. The poultry housing was made of old metals and a fence that was already in poor shape due to the nature of the project's location. As a result, the poultry housing was vulnerable to adverse weather, and the project did not last. This is because whenever the weather conditions were rainy or stormy, there was a chance that the poultry might be affected. As a result, the members were constantly restoring and repairing the house. Furthermore, there were no shade netting provided at the location to allow the chickens to cool off during hot weather. The project housing should have enough high-quality materials to ensure that it fulfils the highest standards achievable. The use of such high-quality materials guarantees endurance, lowers the possibility that they will need to be

replaced frequently, and increases their resistance to time and weather in general. Due to the issues caused by these substandard materials, the project site had to always undergo repairs and was always easily disrupted.

In addition, the use of high-quality materials does not only help the project's sustainability but also gives investors' confidence that their money will not be wasted, because they will be able to verify that the project actually exists and has the potential to grow. Given the benefits of using high-quality materials mentioned above, it is safe to say that using them in similar projects would actually produce results of high calibre.

Therefore, for a project to be successful, all other resources must be available. This contention is consistent with Kabeer's framework of empowerment, which states that resources should be beyond availability (Kabeer, 2005). This implies that in order for women to be empowered, they must have access to and control over these resources. Women should have access to all necessary resources in poultry community development programmes to ensure that the operations run smoothly. One could argue that a project cannot exist without resources because project activities never take place in a vacuum. Regardless of the management team's abilities, if the resources needed for the project are not sufficient in either quantity or quality, the project will undoubtedly fail.

4.4. Thematic topic 3

Geographical location and environment and community development projects in empowering women

Respondents when asked about the challenges that brought about this geographical location and environment, stated that, the situation have affected them badly, as many projects that have been previously established including the one under investigation, were destroyed by harsh weather conditions and the environment. The findings revealed that, the project area is surrounded by the mountains and it is situated at the bottom of the foothill. They said that, during heavy rainfall, the water seep into the project housing, killed many chickens, thereby reducing the number of chickens the project owned. They also show that, water that comes from the mountains, also comes in high volume and pass through the metal that are used to cover around the poultry housing.

The findings of the study demonstrate further that, during hot weather conditions, the chickens suffered from heat stress and that, they lacked the necessary appliances or equipment to cool down the heat, despite their efforts to provide ventilation in the poultry housing. They said that, they were compelled to let the chickens cool outside, which created another issue because the project area is near the mountains, where there are many hawks. They claimed that their chickens were killed by hawks and hot temperatures.

During excessive hot weather the chickens become vulnerable to an extent we realized that the best option is to let them to cool outside so to avoid this excessive heat indoors. However, due to our location, to make them be outside also posed a threat because the hawks usually take and kill them. The lack of modern equipment to provide for shade-nets during excessive hot conditions caused many of our chickens killed by this weather.

Moreover, the study found that, there is lack of infrastructure. Members of the project have indicated that, despite their efforts to carry out development initiatives in their area, the most difficult aspect is the lack of roads that pass through the villages. They said that, even though they tried to create them without the assistance of machines, car owners claimed that they could not transport their vehicles there because they would be damaged. This issue has affected the project as for instance, there was a Samaritan who volunteered to give donations in terms of equipment, cement, to be specific, had failed to do so because of lack of infrastructure and had maintained the view that he has a small car that cannot be able to travel on that handmade road. Many women asserted that due to these circumstances, women empowerment is impossible as development process fail to progress.

There is insufficient infrastructure in our area. Although our community members work extremely hard to build roads that travel through our village, there is still great difficulty since car owners are hesitant to drive their vehicles there. They claimed that these roads are unsafe because they are using little cars that do not have the capacity to travel there, and as a result, their vehicles may be damaged because we are not utilising machines. They also expressed concern about the high cost of repairing the vehicles. They stated that 4x4s are the best vehicles for travelling there.

This implies that all of our development initiatives will experience difficulties if we need to transport anything there.

Moreover, the respondents claimed that, there is lack of water in the project area. The absence of water in the project housing, during hot weather conditions has affected their project, as chickens become dehydrated. When the chickens are dehydrated, the feed intake is low and this caused them to poor egg laying, which also affect the egg shell quality, due to reduced calcium. This also sometimes cause the chickens to stop egg production entirely. The chickens also grow very slowly when there is no water.

In addition, project activities such as cleaning on the other hand, do not take place when there is no water. This is because they only have public taps, whereby water is only available during scheduled times and days. Sometimes, there is no water as it may be finished due to large demand by nearby villages that also source it from the very same main dam. As a result, they often sought water from wells despite the fact that it is unclean and poses a risk of diseases to their chickens.

They also alleged that, they did not have a contingency plan to account for these risk factors in their project. Hence that was one of the reasons the project did not achieve its goal, because they have tried many ways to improve the project housing so as to keep their poultry safe during bad weather but these conditions are beyond their control. They have realised that the only way in which they can avoid this problem is to change the project site.

As previously stated, there was no schedule to adhere to while the project was in operation, and this included the risk factors. There was no plan in place to deal with the risks that could arise. We were merely doing what any reasonable person would do in such circumstances; the mandate had nothing to do with the designed project schedule. As a result, there were issues, particularly financial ones, as money was often needed for the repair of the chicken house, but due to an emergency, the members could not have any on hand at that particular time.

Furthermore, the study discovered that, the project lacked market due to bad environment. Respondents noted that because the project was situated in hard to reach area, this made the outside people reluctant to come and buy their produce.

“Our project site is not conveniently located; it is only us who are used to getting there. People from other villages do not make the effort to come here and buy our poultry, due to the distance and unattractive location.”

However, even though the local people made purchases, it was not that much, as they have the mentality of believing that imported poultry is more of better quality than this locally produced one. This assumption might be true, as the challenges mentioned impedes good production in the area. In addition, in Lesotho there is no direct market for the poultry farmers, this means that there is no place, which is specifically designed for the poultry producers to take their produce to sell them. Had the government have such place it would have been possible for the producers to produce more knowing very well that there is business. Respondents mentioned that, what made the project members to be disempowered was an effect of unsuccessful project.

We still believe that if the project had been successful as anticipated, we would have been empowered. The success of the project, among other things, has relied mainly on the market. If we had a strong market, we would have produced more since we would have known that our produce would ultimately find a steady market. It can be discouraging for small community development initiatives like ours to take the risk of expanding because the government has not yet opened the market to chicken farmers.

The findings of the study also revealed that the Ngope-Khubelu community development project did not target the ultimate beneficiaries. This is due to the fact that the communities to which they proposed selling chickens to, were uninterested in that particular produce. This could be the reason the project did not work out. It appeared that, the project had failed to identify the needs of the beneficiaries during the planning phase. As a result, it was impossible for the project to precisely determine what the beneficiaries needed. Thus, prior to starting of any project, it is essential to fully understand and study the needs of the recipients in order to ensure its success. The beneficiaries themselves should lead the needs identification effort since they are the best people to comprehend their situation.

Furthermore, the study also discovered that there was no project monitoring. A project must be supervised in order to be effective. The successful implementation of a project depends heavily on project monitoring. Monitoring is significant for every project, regardless of its size (Adebayo

et al, 2018). This project tool, monitoring, did not appear to have taken place, as no members mentioned it during the interviews. If they had employed it, they would have been able to see ahead of time what steps needed to be taken at each stage of the project. This would have greatly aided the project's growth because the chairperson could have provided feedback on its progress and held himself accountable for every move. On the other side, project monitoring would have assisted in fulfilling the internal demands of the local community, empowering them, and improving the performance of the project.

However, one might argue that monitoring would not have been helpful as there was no pre-designed schedule for the project. This is because monitoring is used to watch and measure performance against predetermined goals. This idea was also reinforced by Dick-Sagoie et al (2023), who claimed that if project monitoring is not adequately handled, the project may fail to reach its stated objectives.

4.5. Summary

The chapter presented the findings of this research through three distinct thematic topics drawn from the research objectives. The finding provides a good picture of possible reasons how women empowerment in Ngope-Khubelu community development project failed to take place. The findings suggested that a lack of education and communication jeopardised the project's effectiveness. It appeared that the project manager was unsure of his responsibilities or how to conduct the project. This inadequate information, combined with his lack of skills, had resulted in misunderstandings between him and the project participants. It was also determined that the project's minimal resources had an impact, particularly on the finances, because the initiative lacked a sponsor. This had put a pressure on its members, who, on the other hand, were unemployed. As a result, many project efforts have come to a standstill. The chapter also demonstrates how the project's location and climate had an impact because the project housing was frequently interrupted and damaged during adverse weather. The next chapter gives a summary, conclusions and recommendations.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Introduction

This chapter presents a summary of the findings from three thematic topics drawn from the objectives of the study. It will also include conclusions per each objective, recommendations and recommendations for future studies.

5.2. Summary

The study outlines the problem and its setting. It indicates when community development projects were established, both globally and locally. It demonstrates their goal, which is to provide rural residents with a source of income. The majority of these projects are agricultural in nature, as agriculture is the primary source of income for rural residents. It is thought that community development initiatives can empower women. However, it appears that, numerous community programmes that were put in place to empower women have been ineffective because their quality of life has not improved. Due to this issue, the study sought to investigate how Ngope-Khubelu community development initiatives did not succeed in empowering women. The study had three specific objectives which it has accomplished, as well as research questions that go along with them. It also demonstrates the importance of carrying out this study since it will contribute to the literature, as there have previously been no studies that deal with women empowerment through community development initiatives in Lesotho.

The study was based on the post-positivism research paradigm. This is because it supports the idea that there are many realities rather than a single truth. This paradigm was appropriate for supporting this study since constructivists hold that people develop their own knowledge of the world through experiencing it and reflecting on it. The study used a qualitative methodology, the case study and explanatory research design. The study had the sample of ten participants and used interview as a method of data collection.

The findings revealed that a lack of education, experience and communication jeopardised the project's effectiveness. It appeared that the project manager was unsure of his responsibilities or how to conduct the project. This inadequate information, combined with his lack of skills, had resulted in misunderstandings between him and the project participants. It was also determined

that the project's minimal resources had an impact, particularly on the finances, because the initiative lacked a sponsor. This had put a pressure on its members, who, on the other hand, were unemployed. As a result, many project efforts have come to a standstill. It also demonstrated how the project's location and climate had an impact on the development projects as the project housing was frequently interrupted and damaged during adverse weather.

5.3. Conclusions

5.3.1. Leadership and the process of women empowerment in poultry community development projects

The study established that poultry community development projects are undermined by ineffective leadership. It demonstrated that if a project is supervised by someone who lacks the skills of effective leadership, it will fail. Additionally, it specifies that in order to manage community development projects, the necessary abilities are a must. As the process of empowering women in development projects is hampered by ineffective leadership, ineffective communication and a lack of knowledge and experience. The study further demonstrates that without a clear strategy, the project manager cannot possibly accomplish the goal of the project. The project was clearly negatively impacted by the project manager's lack of knowledge because there were recurring miscommunications among the team members. It is evident that when the members of the project consistently had misconceptions, they unexpectedly ceased participating in project activities, which makes it clear that the project manager's lack of education had a significant negative effect on the project. Therefore, it is believed that poor leadership prevented women from achieving their full potential in the project because no changes were made to the project members' daily life.

5.3.2. Resources and the administration of poultry community development projects

The study established that the project lacked adequate human, material and financial resources. The insufficiency of these resources negatively impacted the project, as it caused it to fall short of its objectives. The study asserts that all of these resources must be present and sufficient for a project's activities to run smoothly. The study found that the human resources were unskilled, and the material resources appeared to be in poor shape for the project. In addition, the project lacked sponsors. As a result, members were required to contribute financial resources to fund the

project. This created challenges for the project members because they were unemployed. For these reasons, the study concludes that limited resources have affected the administration of community development projects aimed at empowering women. For a project to be effective and run smoothly, it needs human, physical and strong financial resources.

5.3.3. Location and environment and community development projects in empowering women

The study established that geographical location and environment affected the sustainability of poultry community development projects in empowering women. This resulted from the fact that the project collapsed and failed to empower women. It is clear that the project under investigation was located on an unsuitable site. That is why it was always disturbed by severe weather. Moreover, there was no way the project could have a good market because its location was not accessible. It is obvious that customers do not want to travel a long distance to buy what they need; they will opt for the ones that are easily available. It is vital to take into consideration the geographical location and environment before projects can be established on any site to avoid collapsing

5.4. Recommendations

The study recommends the following to ensure women's empowerment in poultry community development projects:

- Poultry community development programmes should be led by women who have the appropriate abilities; however, if they lack those skills, training should be provided. This training should focus on personal growth, confidence building, and project management.
- Women, particularly those in rural areas, to renounce traditional practices in order to undertake community development projects in their villages. These practices are no longer legally binding or accepted. This is because it has been seen that adhering to traditional practices restrict women's ability to do as they desire. The practices limit women's development due to the fact that they do not consider them equal to men, which is why they constantly put males first in their projects.
- Male dominance in community development programmes should be eliminated.

- To encourage women to become more empowered, the government should offer assistance in the form of funds to those who currently have poultry development initiatives in their communities as well as those who wish to start new ones.
- There should also be financial services that exclusively lend money in villages to small community initiatives that are regulated by the government.
- There should also be programmes formulated by the ministry of small business, development cooperation's and marketing that encourage women in rural areas to participate in community development projects.

5.5. Recommendation for further studies

The study investigated how poultry community development projects did not empower women. In the Ngope-Khubelu poultry community development project, the study identified and addressed the barriers to women's empowerment. To achieve success, any future initiative should avoid such factors. As a result, additional research can be conducted to examine the impact of empowered women on poultry community development programmes in the district of Lesotho.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

The National University of Lesotho

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P.O. Roma 180
Lesotho
Africa

Faculty of Humanities

16, 01 2023


TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN


RE: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

This letter serves to confirm that Mr./Mrs./Ms. Lerato Kolisang is a Studies student with the university reading for a Master of Arts in Development Degree Programme. In this degree, research is a compulsory component of the programme. Please help her / him in this research endeavour.

Thank you in anticipation of your support.

Yours Sincerely


Prof. Maxwell Musingafi



Appendix B

Interviews guide

1. Are you a member of Ngope-Khubelu community development project?
2. What is your age group?
 - (a) 17-35
 - (b) 36-55
3. What do you understand by women empowerment and community development project?
4. How does leadership affect the process of women empowerment in poultry community development project?
5. How does geographical location and environment affect women empowerment in poultry community development project?
6. Do members really participate in project activities?
7. Is there any training given before the commencement of the project?
8. Did the project achieve its purpose?
9. Do you believe poultry community project can empower women?
10. How was your situation before and after your involvement in the project?
11. If you were supposed to give advice to the project implementers, what will it be?