# PERCEPTIONS OF RURAL COMMUNITIES ON INDICATORS AND DETERMINANTS OF WOMEN EMPOWERMENT: A CASE STUDY OF MAKHADO MUNICIPALITY IN LIMPOPO PROVINCE

By

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A thesis submitted to the Centre for Rural Development and Poverty Alleviation, School of Agriculture, in fulfilment of the Doctor of Philosophy Degree (PHDRDV)

University of Venda

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## DECLARATION

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To Nkosinomusa and Nkosinathi Moyo



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## ABSTRACT

Women empowerment is a process that is based on the premise that disadvantaged people have better insight into the challenges that militate against their development. As a result, the affected people are in a better position to develop practical solutions that lead to improvement in the quality of their livelihoods. The current study investigated the perceptions of children, youth, men, women and community leaders at village level on the indicators and determinants of women empowerment in some rural areas of Makhado Municipality in Limpopo Province of South Africa. A total of 5 924 participants from 41 villages in Wards 1, 29 and 37 of Makhado Municipality voluntarily participated in the confirmatory study from which data were collected from reflection circles using questionnaires requiring responses on a Likert-type scale. The Categorical Data Modelling (CATMOD) procedure of the Statistical Analysis Systems (SAS, 2005) and the pseudo Duncan multiple range procedure (Miller and Miller, 2004) were used to analyse the data.

The perceptions of children, youth, men, women and community leaders on the indicators and determinants of women empowerment were found to be different. There were significant differences in mean response levels for the perceptions: *most women can read and write; women have access to life improvement opportunities; women have access to old age grant; women are rarely physically, emotionally and sexually abused by men; women are aware of all government and private sector opportunities for their empowerment; women are financially independent; women have power and ability to develop their communities* and *women are respected when they become leaders* among the interest groups ($p < 0.1$). Also, the perceptions of the participants were the same among the three Wards.

Significant inter-Ward differences ($p < 0.1$) in mean response levels for the following perceptions were note:- *women are multi-skilled and talented; women know their rights and exercise the rights responsibly and freely; few women are unemployed; women have access to business opportunities; Women have a lot of time to do all the things they want; women occupy powerful leadership positions such as Principals and Ward Councillors; women are always given the chance to make firm decisions at home and in communities; women are undermined by men and society in general* and *most women are excellent role models for children and youths* were detected. However, opinions overlapped among the interest groups. It was concluded that the participants were not satisfied with the current level of women empowerment in rural areas of Makhado Municipality.

The study contributed significantly to rural development by opening up democratic channels for decision-making processes at community level. This holistic approach to community engagement can be used during *imbizos* and also by policy makers when formulating policies on development.

The study recommended that grassroots communities of Makhado Municipality should be actively involved in issues pertaining to their well-being. Also, there was need to undertake a similar study covering a larger geographical area such as Makhado Municipality.


**Key words:** Determinants, indicators, interest groups, perceptions, reflection circles, rural communities, women empowerment



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## ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|---|---|
| **ABET** | Adult Basic Education and Training |
| **ANC** | African National Congress |
| **AfCHPR** | African Charter on Human and People's Rights |
| **ASGISA** | Accelerated Shared Growth Initiative of South Africa |
| **BEE** | Black Economic Empowerment |
| **CEDAW** | Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women |
| **CGE** | Commission on Gender Equality |
| **CRDPA** | Centre for Rural Development and Poverty Alleviation |
| **DPSA** | Department of Public Service and Administration |
| **EPWP** | Expanded Public Works Programme |
| **FAO** | Food Agriculture Organisation |
| **GEAR** | Growth, Equity and Redistribution |
| **HIV** | Human Immunodeficiency Virus |
| **ICRW** | International Centre for Research on Women |
| **JIPSA** | Joint Initiative on Priority Skills Acquisition |
| **NGM** | National Gender Machinery |
| **NGOs** | Non–Governmental Organisations |
| **OSW** | Office on the Status of Women |
| **RDP** | Reconstruction and Development Programme |



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| | |
|---|---|
| **SADC** | Southern African Development Community |
| **SAHRC** | South African Human Rights Commission |
| **SAS** | Statistical Analysis Systems |
| **SMME** | Small, Medium, Micro Economic Enterprises |
| **PWG** | Parliamentary Women's Group |
| **UN** | United Nations |
| **UNIFEM** | United Nations Development Fund for Women |
| **UNIVEN** | University of Venda |
| **WEU** | Women's Empowerment Unit |



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# CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Background to the Study

Women play an integral role in both the economic and social spheres. In the economic sphere, women are workers, managers and entrepreneurs (Dlamini-Zuma, 2007). In the social sphere, women serve as wives, mothers and care-givers (Gueye, 2000; Dimandja, 2004; Akpotor, 2009). Women's triple roles as producers, reproducers and community workers bear testimony to the immense contribution they make towards economic growth and human development (Kabeer, 2003). Despite these crucial roles in society, women continue to experience multiple deprivations. For example, gender inequality, discrimination, oppression and poverty hinder their full emancipation (United Nations, 1995; Gueye, 2000; World Bank, 2001; Chaudhry and Nosheen, 2009; Sultana, 2010).

Inequalities between men and women contribute immensely to the spread and entrenchment of poverty at individual and societal levels (United Nations, 1995; World Bank, 2001; Anunobi, 2003). The inequalities precipitate unequal access to economic resources, education, training, decision-making processes and participation in politics, to name just a few challenges (World Bank, 2001; Anunobi, 2003; Johnson, Markham-Elizabeth and Oyinade, 2004; Mosedale, 2005; Olakulein and Ojo, 2006; FAO, 2008; Moagi, 2008; Torkelsson and Tassew, 2008). As a result, women are left in powerless, impoverished and vulnerable states (World Bank, 2001). This state of affairs demands urgent redress and achievement of genuine empowerment of women.

Empowerment is a multi-dimensional process and means different things to different people. Kabeer (2001a: 19) defines it as "the expansion in people's ability to make strategic life choices in a context where this ability was previously denied to them." Van Driel (2004: 49) regards empowerment as "an ongoing process in which people see themselves as having the capacity and right to act and influence the circumstances they find themselves in." Mosedale (2005: 252) extends the debate by arguing that women empowerment is "the process by which women redefine and extend what is possible for them to be and to do in situations where they have been restricted compared to men, from being and doing. The common denominator in all these definitions is that empowerment is a process that involves changes in power relations, making it possible for women who have been disempowered before to make decisions on issues pertaining to their well-being. It is crucial to highlight the



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fact that genuine empowerment requires that women occupy the driving seat and stir the wheel of change relating to their situations.

Central to the empowerment process is the concept of *agency* (Kabeer, 2001a), which refers to the ability to define one's goals and act upon them. The extent to which disadvantaged people, particularly women in developing countries, including South Africa, can exercise this agency given the gender inequalities and socio-cultural complexities that exist within the communities they reside in is not clear. Therefore, it is imperative that answers to this issue are found. The information that the research generates would be vital in addressing the challenges that women are confronted with in their everyday lives.

The Beijing Platform for Action Conference of 1995 singled out women empowerment as an essential strategy for reducing poverty and correcting the imbalances existing between men and women. Through implementing the empowerment strategy, women would be able to determine the course of their destiny through making decisions relating to their well-being.

Democratic South Africa, like many other developing countries, adopted the empowerment of women as a major poverty alleviation strategy (Office on the Status of Women: OSW, 2000; African National Congress: ANC, 2001). Various programmes and elaborate support structures were established. The National Gender Policy Framework (OSW, 2000), for example, was specifically formulated to provide direction on how to champion women empowerment. The framework recognises meeting the specific needs of different categories of women and men as central to the realisation of genuine empowerment. Also, it places special emphasis on devising and implementing gender-sensitive programmes based on a detailed understanding of people's needs. However, the extent to which this is practiced is not clear.

In support of South Africa's constitutional imperatives, the government introduced the National Gender Machinery (NGM). Its objective was to incorporate gender issues in all the structures of government and civil society (Commission on Gender Equality: CGE, 2000). A key component of the NGM is the OSW, which is housed in the Office of the Presidency and Provincial Premiers' offices (McEwan, 2000; ANC, 2001). Its prime purpose is to promote 'gender mainstreaming', policy formulation and implementation (Booysen-Wolthers, 2007).

In addition to the structural arrangements highlighted above, there is the 'Women's Budget', which examines how programmes of every government department at national, provincial and local levels impact on women (CGE, 2000). The extent to which this policy position



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serves as a principal guideline for implementing women-focused social change initiatives especially in rural communities remains unknown. Also, whether the pro-women initiatives resonate with the aspirations of women in rural areas is questionable. For example, the results of a study that Mathaulula (2008) carried out in Makhado Municipality show that rural women, men and community leaders believe that although there has been some noticeable improvement in some aspects of their lives, women are still marginalised and have benefited only to a limited extent from government programmes introduced post-1994.

There are numerous programmes that were introduced by the post- 1994 South African government to help women and society in general to make informed choices as they work towards improving their livelihoods. The programmes include among many others, Universal access to primary health care, Black Economic Empowerment (BEE), Affirmative Action, Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) and The Flagship Programme. These initiatives are explained in greater detail in Chapter 2. Despite the fact that there are so many opportunities that women and girls in particular can take advantage of, Dlodlo (2009) argues that lack of access to reliable information makes it virtually impossible to do so.

Although women have made significant inroads into their empowerment through taking advantage of initiatives at their disposal, considerable challenges still exist. The OSW (2000) singles out poor implementation of pro-women policies as the topmost challenge. Rural infrastructure is either inadequate or completely lacking, making it difficult to effectively address the multiple women empowerment challenges. As already highlighted, improving access to reliable information on opportunities that women in rural areas can take advantage of needs urgent attention. Lack of employable skills, resources and a proper framework for co-ordinating women empowerment initiatives especially in rural areas, coupled with unclear lines of communication and accountability are issues that need urgent attention (OSW, 2000). Failure to find solutions to these impediments, which are mostly felt in rural areas, implies that sustainable women empowerment will continue to be an elusive aspiration.

The OSW (2000) states that most women in South Africa do not have access to agricultural resources such as land, credit, appropriate technology, marketing and information that would help promote their contribution to farming. Limited information about land rights hampers their efforts to access land (Cousins, 2007; Moagi, 2008). Quite often, the attitudes of traditional leaders, rules and practices of customary law, patriarchal demands and community relations hinder women's access to both land and knowledge about their rights (Moagi, 2008). The failure of women to acquire land entrenches them in poverty. In addition, it perpetuates their dependence on men for their upkeep, which invariably exacerbates their



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problems. Kongolo and Bamgose (2002: 82) allude to the fact that "there has been insufficient political will and sustained commitment to meeting the economic needs and interests of most rural women by local authorities and governments."

The underlying cause of most of the problems discussed above seems to emanate from the fact that development agents, including government, take blueprints to the people. Rarely are the intended beneficiaries consulted to make inputs into the appropriateness and viability of the programmes. Yet, consultations are of paramount importance since they inform policy makers on the level at which implementation of the interventions ought to start. Failure to engage the vulnerable members of society regarding development issues tends to disempower them. Therefore, in the current study the real challenges that women in rural communities faced were engaged. Through grassroots community engagements the ways that could help accelerate the unlocking of the potential of women, boost their self-esteem and effectively mobilize the support of key stakeholders within and outside their communities were investigated.

## 1.2 Statement of the Problem and Justification of the Study

Although women in South Africa have made considerable inroads into their empowerment through taking advantage of various initiatives at their disposal, those in rural areas continue to face immense challenges (Makofane, 2001; Kongolo and Bamgose, 2002; McEwan, 2003; Oberhauser and Pratt, 2004; Jiyane and Mostert, 2008; Mathaulula, 2008; Dlodlo, 2009). Topmost among the challenges has been poor implementation of policies designed to empower the women. It is likely that the slow pace of women empowerment emanates from the failure of both government and development agents to meaningfully engage grassroots communities so that they articulate what they perceive to be the local level issues to address.

Fonjong (2001: 230) argues that "women's empowerment requires that the population in general as well as the women themselves, know the extent of their problems, so that proper strategies can be adopted to reverse the situation." Mosedale (2005: 245) reinforces this argument, stating that "analysis of women's position should be based on the realities of their lives rather than on a generalised assumption that they are oppressed." In support of this view, Omorodion (2007) suggests that needs assessments should be conducted at grassroots levels to determine the concerns of women since they are bound to differ depending on the inherent social and cultural realities of their communities. Through such



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community engagements, a deeper and better understanding of women empowerment challenges and opportunities for improvement would be realized.

Furthermore, current women empowerment processes fail to involve men and community leaders in a more meaningful manner. Yet, most of the problems that women face are closely linked with cultural beliefs and norms whose foundation is patriarchal in nature (Gueye, 2000; Makofane, 2001; Kongolo and Bamgose, 2002; McEwan, 2003; Izugbara, 2004; Ansoglenang, 2006; Omorodion, 2007, Kanjere, 2008). Thus, in this study it was resolved that the cooperation and support of men in efforts designed to find lasting solutions to the problems besetting women and improve gender relations were crucial. Taking this argument into account, this study sought to engage a broad range of interest groups in some rural communities of Makhado Municipality in Limpopo Province to unravel their perceptions with respect to women empowerment. This took into account the context specific nature of empowerment needs. Armed with the context-specific empirical evidence, appropriate strategies for women empowerment would then be developed.

## 1.3 Research Objectives

The main objective of the study was to analyse the perceptions of rural communities in some parts of Makhado Municipality in Limpopo Province of South Africa with respect to the indicators and determinants of women empowerment. This was achieved through the following specific objectives:

1. To establish whether children, youth, women, men and community leaders in rural communities have similar perceptions on the indicators and determinants of women empowerment;
2. To determine whether the indicators and determinants of women empowerment differ across Wards and community interest groups; and
3. To propose a potential strategy for empowering women in some rural areas of Makhado Municipality.

## 1.4 Research Hypotheses

The main hypothesis that anchored the study was that the perceptions of community members of different ages and sexes regarding indicators and determinants of women



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empowerment within rural communities in Makhado Municipality were the same. Specifically, the study tested the following hypotheses:

a) There are no differences in the perceptions of children, youth, women, men and community leaders with respect to the indicators and determinants of women empowerment;

b) The perceptions of children, youth, women, men and community leaders with respect to the indicators and determinants of women empowerment are the same in all the municipal Wards and among community-level interest groups in Makhado Municipality.

## 1.5 Definition of Key Terms and Concepts

Various terms and concepts that were used in this thesis are defined below. This represents what each one of them specifically means in the context of the current study.

*Community* refers to people living together in a village or Ward. The people share the same norms and values. In this study, community comprises children, youth, women, men and leaders within villages and municipal Wards.

A *determinant* is any factor that promotes women empowerment. These factors can be economic, political, social, legal or psychological in nature (Malhotra, Schuler and Boender, 2002). In the current study, determinants were placed in access, awareness-raising, participation and control categories.

*Foot Soldiers* refer predominantly to youth who were actively involved in the day to day local development activities in the villages located in Wards 1, 29 and 37 of Makhado Municipality where this study was carried out. They served as research assistants in this study.

*Indicators* are observations or pointers assumed to be the evidence of attributes or properties of a phenomenon (De Vos, Strydom, Fouche, Delport, 2005). In this study, the indicators used were derived from the Mathaulula (2008) exploratory study, which was also conducted in Wards 1, 29 and 37 of Makhado Municipality. The indicators were placed into access, awareness-raising, participation and control categories.

*Interest/social groups* are groups of people who live in the same community, share common values, interests and beliefs. In the current study, the interest groups were classified according to age, sex and positions of leadership held in that community.



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A *perception* refers to a thought or conviction. In this study, a perception refers to a participant's belief.

A *reflection circle* refers to a group of people sitting in a circle, collectively deliberating on the issue at hand. All the participants in a reflection circle are afforded the chance to express their views freely. In the current study, reflection circles were comprised of children, youth, women, men and community leaders.

In this study, *women empowerment* is regarded as a process that affords female members of society the chance to take part in decision-making alongside men, particularly in areas in which they were previously denied. Women empowerment was categorized into access, awareness-raising, participation and control aspects as defined in the underlying pillars UNICEF 1994), adopted from Sarah Longwe.

## 1.6 Delimitation of the Study

This study was carried out in Wards 1 and 29 (both in Vuwani administrative region) and 37 (in Dzanani) of Makhado Municipality, in Limpopo Province. It was restricted to these areas where the Centre for Rural Development and Poverty Alleviation (CRDPA) was jointly implementing the "Amplifying Community Voices" project with Makhado Municipality (Francis, Dube, Mokganyetji and Chitapa, 2010). Carrying out the research in these Wards was intended to help strengthen the on-going community development work. Deploying the same "Foot Soldiers" in the forefront of implementing the "Amplifying Community Voices" project as research assistants further enriched their skills and enhanced understanding of the desirable development agenda in the three Wards. All of them could read and speak the local Tshivenda language well. This helped minimise communication barriers and improved the quality of data collected.

## 1.7 Organisation of the Thesis

In addition to this chapter, the thesis is made up of six other chapters. Each chapter represents a paper. However, a detailed methodology for each chapter is as outlined in Chapter 3. The chapters are structured as outlined below.

*Chapter 2* presents a review of the status of women world-wide and progressively narrows it down to Africa and South Africa. The international and regional conventions that highlight the plight of women are covered. In this review, empowerment and women empowerment are



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explained. The theoretical framework underpinning the study and the framework for measuring women empowerment are examined. Participation as a key pillar of governance is also discussed. Some indicators and determinants of women empowerment are discussed. Following this is a subsection dedicated to women empowerment in South Africa, the Gender Machinery and the women empowerment initiatives introduced post-1994. Furthermore, the indicators of women empowerment and challenges militating against the empowerment of women are reviewed. The last part of this chapter is a summary of the salient points distilled from the review of literature.

*Chapter 3* covers "*access to resources*" as a factor of women empowerment. The chapter is structured as follows: description of the study area; research design; research methods; description of the population, sample, sampling methods and data collection tools used. Ethics adhered to during the study are highlighted. Data analysis is covered in detail followed by a presentation of the results, discussion and conclusion.

*Chapter 4* addresses the concept of "*awareness-raising*" as a factor in the empowerment of women. Since the methodology used in Chapter 3 is the same here, only data analysis and presentation of the results are addressed. A discussion of the results is presented. In *Chapter 5, participation* as a key component in the empowerment of women is examined. *Chapter 6* presents the analysis of perceptions on "*control*" as a key feature of women empowerment. The research methodology sections for both chapters 5 and 6 are structured as in chapter 4.

*Chapter 7* occupies the last out of a series of chapters of this thesis. This chapter restates the objectives before presenting the summary, conclusions, contribution of the study to the body of knowledge, value of the current study in building community-university partnerships and recommendations for further research. The recommendations are of a policy, development practice and research nature.

Lastly, the references used throughout this study are presented. Following the references are relevant appendices.



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# CHAPTER 2 REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

## 2.1 Introduction

The debate on women empowerment has occupied space in development discourse for many decades (United Nations, 1995; Oxaal and Baden, 1997; Kabeer, 1999; Longwe, 2000; World Bank, 2001; Mosedale, 2005). Special attention has tended to be mainly on how best to implement the strategy in order to assist women to overcome the numerous challenges they face in their daily lives. In this chapter, the roles that women play in both the economic and social spheres are explored, moving from a global perspective to Africa and then South Africa. Treating the subject in this way provides a balanced assessment of the contribution that women make in all spheres of life and development. The various conventions that aim to address the plight of women are discussed. Concepts such as empowerment and women empowerment are examined. Also, this chapter presents the theoretical framework underpinning the study, including the analytical framework of women empowerment. The concept of participation, in particular its importance in rural development, is examined. A general discussion of rural women's understanding of empowerment and factors militating against their empowerment are reviewed. The state of women empowerment in South Africa is explored. Also, the views of rural women on empowerment and the challenges to their empowerment are highlighted. Lastly, a synopsis of the whole chapter is provided.

## 2.2 Status of Women in the World

It is highlighted in chapter 1 that throughout the world, women play crucial roles in both the economic and social spheres (Gueye, 2000, FAO, 2003, Dimandja, 2004). In the economic sphere, they provide the bulk of the labour that is needed in the agricultural sector (United Nations, 1997; World Bank, 2001; FAO, 2003; 2005; 2008). Estimates that FAO (2003) provides show that women constitute a substantial share of the total agricultural labour force, as individual food producers or agricultural workers. Two thirds of women in the developing economies are engaged in agricultural work. They are involved in food production, processing and in marketing. Despite their huge contribution to societal growth and development, 70 % of the world's poor are women (United Nations: UN, 1997). Women who reside in developing countries encounter multiple challenges such as lack of access to land, credit, technology, labour and market information, education and training, extension services, agricultural inputs and assets, fewer benefits under customary or statutory legal



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systems and greater time burdens than men (FAO, 2008). Table 2.1 gives statistics that show a breakdown of work done by women in the family and in the agricultural sector.

The state of affairs presented above reflects violation of Article 14 (g) of CEDAW, viz. "State Parties should ensure that women have access to agricultural credit and loans, marketing facilities, appropriate technology and equal treatment in land and agrarian reform as well as in land resettlement schemes." Failure of State Parties to observe these rights leaves women in vulnerable conditions of poverty and subordination because they have to rely on their spouses for personal and family upkeep. This limits their personal development and that of the communities they reside in.

Unless women's economy is strengthened, the prospects of reducing poverty, gender inequality or realising progress regarding the UN's Millennium Development Goals will remain elusive.

In the social sphere, women are involved in food preparation and provision of health care to the young, the elderly and the sick (Anunobi, 2003; Dimandja, 2004, Chant, 2008). Because of their roles as care-givers, many women experience a decrease in their productive activities, which results in a decrease in their contribution to household income (FAO, 2005). This state of affairs demands that intervention measures which seek to lessen the burdens of women are sought so as to allow them some space to fulfil their ambitions. Women are also responsible for the nutritional needs, upkeep and providing a clean living environment for the family (Quisumbing and Meinzen-Dick, 2001). They have added responsibilities associated with being *de jure* heads of households. This arises from internal and external migration of men, civil conflict, disease and disruptions to traditional family structures (Anunobi, 2003; FAO, 2003). Furthermore, women carry out community-based activities at weddings and funerals. Chant (2008) argues that women's mounting responsibilities are not matched by any observable increase in rewards or entitlements. Instead, the social worth of their efforts tends to go unacknowledged, robbing them of personal gains, prestige or satisfaction. This situation suggests that gender roles should be examined in such a way that guarantees that women benefit from the empowerment initiatives at their disposal.



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**Table 2.1: Share of women in agricultural employment and unpaid family work, 2007**

| Region | Agricultural | Unpaid family |
|---|---|---|
| | Percent (%) | |
| Oceania | 75 | 67 |
| Sub-Saharan Africa | 62 | 43 |
| Southern Asia | 57 | 47 |
| South-Eastern Asia | 44 | 37 |
| Eastern Asia | 36 | 26 |
| Western Asia | 34 | 21 |
| CIS Asia | 30 | 9 |
| Northern Africa | 43 | 27 |
| Latin America &the Caribbean | 11 | 7 |
| CIS Europe | 9 | 0 |

**Source:** Ahearn, M.C. and Tempelman, D. (2010) http://www.typo3.fao.org/fileadmin/templates/ess/pages/rural/wye_group/2010/May/WYE_2010.4.2_A



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## 2.3 Status of Women in Africa

In Africa, women are expected to perform various duties in and outside the home. These include bearing and nurturing children, carrying out household chores, teaching children good morals, looking after the elderly and sick members of their families, taking care of the nutritional needs of the family and participating in community activities (Gueye, 2000, Anunobi, 2003). Added to these responsibilities is the task of advising their husbands on family matters as well as work-related and political issues (Dimandja, 2004). Furthermore, rural women, in particular carry out a lot of productive work. Yet, they remain obscure and invisible in the economic sphere of life (Kongolo and Bamgose, 2002, Anunobi, 2003). Anunobi (2003) contends that the key to improving women's status is to ensure that they have greater influence on social, economic and political issues especially in areas that are of particular concern to them. The roles that African women play are discussed in detail in the proceeding sections.

### 2.3.1 Women as wives, mothers and educators

In the social sphere, women are wives, mothers and educators (Dimandja, 2004). As wives and mothers, they work in partnership with their husbands to establish family units, which is the first and most important agent of socialisation. Dimandja (2004: 2) describes African women as "the foundation pillar upon which all the family and community structures rely." Their responsibilities encompass bearing and nurturing children, cooking and cleaning, among many other chores (Anunobi, 2003; Akpotor, 2009). They also take care of people with disabilities and elderly members of their families (Oglethorpe and Gelman, 2008). As mothers, women provide the first education to their children. They are responsible for inculcating good values and morals in their children since they directly interact with them on a daily basis. Women face the huge task of being good role models for their children and communities (Dimandja, 2004). Although women perform all these tasks, low value is accorded to their work (Veeran, 2003). It is vital to change this situation and ensure that women receive due recognition. Such initiatives must strive to empower them, build their confidence and entrench their roles in societal transformation and development.

### 2.3.2 Women as advisors and peace keepers

Behind the scenes, African women act as influential advisers to their husbands on family, work and political issues (Dimandja, 2004). Cultural expectations require that they do not voice their concerns publicly but should do so behind the closed doors of their homes



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(Zaman, 2000). African culture, which is predominantly in most patriarchal societies, forbids women to claim equality with men (Dimandja, 2004). The man makes decisions pertaining to the running of the home (Fonjong, 2001). Cultural practices such as the bride price give men control over the woman's productive and reproductive roles. Emanating from this practice, husbands often curtail and violate married women's movements and rights.

In their families and communities, women act as peace keepers (Dimandja, 2004). They are a unifying force. In support of these facts, Dimandja (2004) argues that because they give life, women are more concerned about what threatens life. Because they know the price of life more than anyone else, often they do whatever they can to protect fragile lives. Where violence is common, women try to bring peace and stability. Lastly, in situations where tensions and divisions exist they serve as peacemakers.

### 2.3.3 Women and the economy

Women in African societies form the backbone of the rural economy. They produce food, manage natural resources, earn income and take care of household food and nutrition security (Food and Agriculture Organisation: FAO, 2003). Negash (2006) alludes to the fact that women's economic empowerment helps them to take care of their lives. At the same time they contribute directly to the development of their children through providing proper nutrition, education and health. Failure to access the necessary resources compromises the quality of their life. This infringes on their right to a decent life. Article 3 of CEDAW provides that State Parties should "take appropriate measures including legislation, to ensure the full development and advancement of women, for the purpose of guaranteeing them the exercise and enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms on a basis of equality with men." When women have equal access with men to resources and opportunities, they are in a better position to set goals and work towards the achievement of those goals thereby improving their livelihoods. Given the integral roles they play in agricultural production as well as family and community life, it remains unclear why women continue to be sidelined. Presumably, realistic answers to this issue lie in engaging grassroots community members of all ages and sexes to reveal what they believe are the impediments that require attention and associated solutions.

## 2.4 Status of Women in South Africa

South African women like their peers in other parts of the world perform various tasks that conform with societal expectations. These include both reproductive and productive duties.



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Numerous constraints, for example gender-based violence, HIV and AIDs, unemployment, lack of education and cultural practices hamper the execution of such duties. The issues are explained in the sections that follow.

### 2.4.1 Women as wives, mothers and care-givers

In South Africa, as in other developing countries, women perform various household tasks, which include child care, cooking, feeding the family and collecting firewood and water, among many others. Women in rural areas have the added task of running the families while their husbands work in the cities (Kongolo and Bamgose, 2002), which makes them *de jure* heads of households. They nurse the sick and elderly members of their families (Oglethorpe and Gelman, 2008). The services that they render in the private sphere are often taken for granted, particularly in typical patriarchal societies (Anunobi, 2003). They experience higher levels of poverty when compared to their male counterparts (Oberhauser and Pratt, 2004). This is due to the fact most of them reside in rural areas where infrastructure and service delivery are both poor (Office on the Status of Women: OSW, 2000, Oberhauser and Pratt, 2004). Women empowerment that ignores this reality is not likely to succeed in fulfilling the goal of improving women's livelihoods.

### 2.4.2 Women, gender-based violence and HIV/AIDS

Violence against women seriously impedes the development and empowerment of women (OSW, 2000; Penzhorn, 2005). South African women are subjected to high levels of physical and psychological abuse at the hands of their spouses (OSW, 2000; Penzhorn, 2005). High rates of sexual and domestic violence expose them to vulnerable situations (Veeran, 2003). South Africa is one of the countries with the "highest levels of violence against women and an inter-related HIV and AIDS epidemic driven in significant part by gender roles that encourage men to equate manhood with dominance over women, sexual conquest and a range of risky behaviours" (Setswe, Nkomo, Friedman, Magezi, Nyuswa and Majola, 2009: 2197). Penzhorn (2005) concurs and explains that violence reflects unequal power relations in societies while also serving to maintain the inequality. Violence against women hampers their development in economic, social, religious and political spheres. Ultimately, it suppresses their creative potential (Makofane, 2001).



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### 2.4.3 Women's access to employment

Although South African women's access to employment is improving, a considerable proportion of women remain unemployed. Because they lack the necessary skills, education and training which are needed in the job market women cannot secure employment (OSW, 2000, Dlodlo, 2009). Consequently, women's employment is largely confined to domestic and farming sectors where they serve as casual workers (OSW, 2000). This implies that equipping women with the necessary knowledge and skills that will enable them to search for better paying jobs thereby improving their livelihoods and image in their respective communities will go a long way in empowering them. Olakulein and Ojo (2006:3) agree with this view and point out that:

> "when women are given the requisite education, relevant to their needs and environment, they will gradually become more visible and recognized in the mainstream of activities both at home and in society at large."

### 2.4.4 Women's access to land and implementation of laws

Although South Africa is championing land and agrarian reforms, entrenched cultural practices such as patriarchy make it difficult to effectively implement them (OSW, 2000; Moagi, 2008). Unequal ownership and control of land remains a big challenge for rural women as it hampers their efforts to advance economically (Moagi, 2008). On a similar note Walker (2007) states that although land redistribution has been the government's major focus since 1994, it is in the communal areas, where the majority of women live that challenges to gender equality in land reform are mostly felt. Cousins (2007) asserts that lack of clarity on land rights constrains infrastructure and service provision. Moagi (2008) states that without the development of proper structures and land tenure systems it is unlikely that women can enjoy security.

## 2.5 Conventions/Declarations highlighting the plight of Women

Several conventions have been organised to find workable solutions to ease women's problems. In 1979, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). It was resolved that discrimination against women in all spheres of life, be they economic, political, social or legal should be eliminated. Article 4 of the Convention allowed countries to take temporary special measures to address inequality between men and women, and one of them is affirmative



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action meant to that level the playing field for men and women was vital. Post-1994 South Africa signed and ratified this international legislative instrument committing itself to abide by the terms of the agreement (Commission on Gender Equality CGE, 2000). It is necessary to interrogate how far the terms of the agreement contained in the legislative document have been used to find solutions to the plight of rural women in South Africa.

The Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women World Conference of 1985 was a follow up to CEDAW. It advocated for equity and inclusion of women's issues in mainstream development programmes (gender mainstreaming) if change was to be sustainable. The conference identified equality as the main goal of women's advancement. Active involvement and inclusion of women in politics, for example, was singled out as fundamentally important.

Ten years after the Nairobi World Conference, 189 member states endorsed the Beijing Declaration of 1995. In this conference, women's rights were classified as human rights. This meant that participating governments had the mandate to prioritise five areas they would use to advance the cause of women. Therefore, women empowerment was singled out as an essential strategy for reducing their poverty and correcting the imbalances existing between men and women. Decision-making, violence against women, education, poverty, human rights, and health, among others, were some of the main focal areas. It was acknowledged that women's poverty was directly related to the absence of economic opportunities, lack of credit, land ownership patterns and inheritance, lack of education and support services as well as women's minimum participation in decision-making processes. Once again, empowering women was recognised as the answer to their problems. Governments of member countries were tasked with ensuring that all the aspects that dealt with the well-being of women were incorporated into mainstream policies.

In 1996, South Africa ratified the African Charter on Human and People's Rights (AfCHPR). The country went further and ratified the African Protocol on Rights of Women. In 1997, in Blantyre, Malawi, the Southern African Development Community (SADC) adopted the Declaration on Gender and Development. Member states were mandated to use whatever methods they had at their disposal to increase the participation of women at all levels of decision-making to 30% by 2005. All the member states were required to report back on the progress made towards meeting this target. Allocation of quotas was adopted as the best way that would help achieve this goal. By 2004, South Africa, Mozambique, Tanzania and Namibia had surpassed the 30% target. The share of women parliamentarians was about 30% in Namibia and Tanzania, 33% in Mozambique and 38% in South Africa (SADC Today,



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2008). Other countries in the region were still lagging behind. Longwe (2000) strongly argues that equal representation of women should not be seen as a goal in itself but should be regarded as a step towards removing legalised gender discrimination and ensuring gender equality and justice in all governance. Longwe (2000) further states that women's empowerment is not merely pushing women into positions of power but is about using the positions to release them from their present subordination and to improve their quality of life.

The establishment of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) in 1976 was meant to provide financial and technical assistance to innovative programmes and strategies that promote women's human rights, political participation and economic security. It mainly targeted the vulnerable women and those directly subjected to exclusion or discrimination, with the goal of enabling them to advocate for having their priorities incorporated in key national or regional policies, programmes and budgets (UNIFEM, 2009). It is worth finding out how far rural women have benefited from these initiatives, whether there is any tangible evidence to show as proof of their empowerment.

All conventions were unanimous in the belief that the only workable solution to women's problems was through empowering them. Since the adoption of the empowerment strategy in Beijing, several countries, including South Africa, have incorporated the strategy into their national development policies, strategies and frameworks (CGE, 2000). Women empowerment continues to be promoted as a way of assisting women, who because of gender inequalities in social structures have been more disadvantaged in comparison to their male counterparts (Anunobi, 2003). Empowering women would thus help improve their economic and social standing.

Taking all the agreements cited above into question, it is vital to find answers to the following questions: (a) to what extent have the needs and aspirations of rural women been incorporated into government policies? (b) how effective is implementation of programmes meant to address the plight of women? (c) what role(s) have women been playing in formulating and implementing initiatives meant to empower them? (d) what empirical evidence exists to suggest that initiatives are indeed empowering women? Answers to these questions can only be found if the concepts of empowerment and women empowerment are well understood. The fundamental aspects of the empowerment process is explored below and put into perspective of the overall study. Governments, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and individuals need this knowledge as it helps shape their empowerment programmes.



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## 2.6 The Meaning of Empowerment

Olakulein and Ojo (2006) assert that the need for empowerment originates from the inability of an individual or a group of people to actualise their dreams and reach their greatest potentials taking into account the artificial barriers that individuals and other groups within the same society create. Kabeer (2001a) and Mosedale (2005) concur with this view when saying that for one to be empowered he/she must have been disempowered before. Empowerment involves transformation (Bartlett, 2008).

Empowerment is one of the three pillars of the strategy that the World Bank (2001) adopted in its fight against poverty and social injustice. The other two pillars are opportunity and security. Various scholars (Oxaal and Baden, 1997; Page and Czuba, 1999; Kabeer, 2001a; Van Driel, 2004; Mosedale, 2005) and development organisations (World Bank, 2001) have different perspectives on empowerment and this depends on the context in which this concept is used. Because of this there are various interpretations of the concept of empowerment, which provides ample proof that it is multi-dimensional.

Kabeer (2001a: 19) defines empowerment as "the expansion in people's ability to make strategic life choices in a context where this ability was previously denied to them." Van Driel (2004: 49) defines empowerment as "an on-going process in which people see themselves as having the capacity and right to act and influence the circumstances they find themselves in." The author further argues that empowerment includes acting on oppressive, unequal, unfair and discriminatory situations. Bartlett (2008) has strong views on empowerment and argues that it cannot be seen as a sequence of a project, nor can it be reduced to a measurable objective. On the contrary, it involves rural people setting their own goals, managing their own goals and activities, and accessing their own performance. What is common with all the definitions of empowerment is that it is an on-going process which deals with changes in power relations, making it possible for people to make decisions on issues that affect their well-being. The process starts with the people and ends with the people affected by the issue under consideration.

Other definitions of empowerment are presented in Table 2.2. At the root of empowerment is *power* (Oxaal and Baden, 1997; Kabeer, 1999; Longwe, 2000; Mosedale, 2005). The concept of power has four dimensions, namely *power over, power to, power with* and *power within* (Oxaal and Baden, 1997; Mosedale, 2005). All of them are explained in Table 2.3. Agency which includes *power within* is a crucial component in the empowerment process.



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**Table 2.2: The Meaning of Empowerment**

| Source/Author (s) | Definition | Comments |
|---|---|---|
| Page and Czuba, 1999 | Multi-dimensional social process that helps people gain control over their own lives | All these definitions show that empowerment is a process; involves changes in power, which includes making choices for the betterment of one's life. It can occur at individual, group and macro level. Men continue to control most of the resources and decision making processes. Cultural norms and values that are deeply entrenched in social institutions, in particular the family, perpetuate this state of affairs. |
| World Bank, 2001 | Enhancing the capacity of an individual or group to make choices into desired actions and outcomes | |
| Adegoroye and Adegoroye, 2008 | A process of giving a disadvantaged group of people or socially marginalised group of people the ability to improve their situations economically, educationally, politically, socially and physically | |
| Alsop and Heisohn, 2005 | Process where an individual or group possesses the capacity to make effective choices, i.e.to translate their choices into desired actions and outcomes | |
| Wikipedia http://www.wikipedia.org/ | Increase in spiritual, political, social or economic strength of individual communities. Often, it involves the empowered developing confidence in their capacities. It includes encouraging and developing the skills for self-sufficiency, which focus on eliminating the future need for clarity or welfare in the individual or the group | |



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**Table 2.3: Dimensions of Power**

| Dimensions of power | Definition | Importance/Example |
|---|---|---|
| *Power over* | Involves having control over individuals or groups. Can lead to conflict between powerful and powerless interest groups. | An example of *power over* is men controlling women |
| *Power to* | Involves capacity building, supporting individual decision-making, leadership and access to resources. | Allows people to extend their boundaries of what they can accomplish, e.g. learning to drive |
| *Power with* | Synonymous with collective action. It involves social mobilisation, building alliances and coalitions. | Collective action is important in sharing ideas and allows people to learn from each other |
| *Power within* | Involves increasing self-esteem, awareness or consciousness raising and confidence building | This is an essential component of the empowerment process |

**Source**: Oxaal and Baden (1997); Mosedale (2005)



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According to Kabeer (2001a), agency is the ability to set one's goals and act upon them. Malhotra and Schuler (2005) posit that agency refers to the ability to access resources and control them as well as make decisions that affect important life outcomes. Agency includes other actions such as motivation, bargaining, resistance and negotiations, to mention just a few activities (Van Driel, 2004). Bartlett (2008) posits that the concept *agency* stems from the idea of 'human agent'. Furthermore, the author states that rural people can either become the agents of their own development or they can remain the objects of somebody else's development. In support of this belief, Makombe (2007: 59) argues that "without change in one's inner self, removing the barriers to one's development would be almost impossible." It is therefore important for women to realise that change to their situations can only come about if they themselves have the desire to see change in their livelihoods.

## 2.7 What is Women Empowerment?

There are various interpretations of women empowerment. The meanings vary from place to place and also depend on time. Mosedale (2005: 252) defines women empowerment as "the process by which women redefine and extend what is possible for them to be and do in situations where they have been restricted, compared to men, from being and doing." Oxaal and Baden (1997: 6) posit that women empowerment involves a process "whereby women can freely analyse, develop and voice their needs and interests, without them being pre-defined, or imposed from above, by planners or other social actors." In the same vein, Fonjong (2001: 230) argues that "women's empowerment requires that the population in general as well as women themselves, know the extent of their problems, so that proper strategies can be adopted to reverse the situation." Freire (1972: 24) concurs and asserts that "to surmount the situation of oppression, men must first critically recognise its causes, so that through transforming action they can create a new situation."

What is clear from the definitions given above is that empowerment of women is a process that entails reflecting on one's situation, mainly the gender relations and power struggles embedded in them and taking appropriate corrective action. Women should be actively involved in issues pertaining to their well-being. They should occupy the driving seat and steer the wheel of change in order to protect their needs and aspirations, including those of the communities they come from. They should be involved at all stages, namely decision-making, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. By being involved, women are likely to bring change that is sustainable. Developmental organisations and governments on the



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other hand can facilitate the process by creating an enabling environment for women to empower themselves.

## 2.8 The Theoretical Framework underpinning the study

The study was anchored on the Gender and Development (GAD) approach, which is one of the theories of social change. The GAD approach came into existence in the second half of the 1970s and the 1980s (Jacka, 2006). It emerged as an alternative to the liberal feminist Women in Development (WID) approach. The latter, mainly aimed at incorporating women into existing developmental programmes. According to Jacka (2006), the GAD approach focuses on women's reproductive and productive roles. It puts emphasis on promoting the role of the state in maintaining and improving social services, central to women's well-being. Gender and Development focuses on the needs and interests of women at the grassroots level and encourages women to build coalitions in order to improve their livelihoods. The concept of empowerment is central to the GAD approach. According to Rathgeber (1989), the GAD approach treats women as active agents of development. The approach stems from the premise that in order to improve gender relations, both men and women must participate in developmental processes, including decision making. The approach recognises participation as a vital tool for enhancing the process, a view that Chambers (1983) espouses as well. Jacka (2006) reveals that in the 1980s, GAD activists argued that genuine development required that local women (as well as men) be empowered to challenge the gender inequalities that shaped their lives. The process involved awareness-raising in women and the need for them to work as a collective in order to protect their needs and interests. Thus, in the 1990s the approach focused more on gender mainstreaming to enable both women and men to benefit equally.

## 2.9 Framework for measuring women's empowerment

In line with the GAD approach, the current study employed the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF, 1994) Women's Equality and Empowerment Framework (WEEF) developed by Sara Longwe in 1991 to measure the women empowerment variables. The framework measures women's empowerment based on five pillars namely welfare, access, awareness-raising, participation and control (Table 2.4). It is worth noting that in the pillars chosen by the current study, active participation of women is of paramount importance. In the section that follows, participation and its importance in rural development are discussed.



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**Table 2.4: The five major pillars of the United Nations Women's Equality and Empowerment framework, 1994 (WEEF)**

| Component | Brief description |
|---|---|
| Welfare | Addressing the basic needs of women without necessarily paying attention to the underlying causes that led to the services being provided |
| Access | Equal access to resources such as land, educational opportunities and credit is seen as very crucial to the advancement of women. Empowerment is initiated when women recognize that lack of access to resources constrains their growth and hence take action to redress this. |
| Awareness raising | *Awareness-raising* enables women to recognise the structures and institutions that perpetuate their subordination and discrimination and the need to take appropriate action to close the gender gaps or inequalities. Women must also recognize the role they play in maintaining the status quo. |
| Participation | Women are mobilised and make decisions alongside men. Through working together women get empowered, leading to greater control of resources. |
| Control | Final stage in the empowerment process with women being able to make decisions alongside their male counterparts on issues pertaining to their livelihoods and those of children. |

**Source: UNICEF 1994.**



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## 2.10 Participation as a Key Pillar of Governance in Development Discourse

Participation is the key component in any development process. Reid (2000) posits that participation is the heart that pumps the community's life blood, its citizens, into the community's business. It is therefore of paramount importance that communities are directly involved in issues regarding their well-being.

### Background of Participation

Participation has its roots in development in the 1970s when people started questioning the top-down approaches (Penzhorn, 2005). The participatory research came to prominence in 1972 through Paulo Freire's works with adult literacy programmes (Penzhorn, 2005). In his book, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Freire (1972) argued that because the oppressed had been reduced to *things* by the oppressor and systems that be in place at that particular time, they were to desist from fighting for their freedom as *things* but as men.

What the preceding statement advocated for was a change of mindset and total commitment on the part of the oppressed. To put it in simpler terms, it called for real dedication and active participation on the part of the disadvantaged members in order to bring about change to their situations.

Oakley (1991) contrasts participation in two ways namely participation as a *means* and also as an *end*. Participation as a *means* involves harnessing local people's resources and support as an input into a programme on the assumption that this will improve its effectiveness and efficiency. This type of participation focuses more on the results achieved through participation than the act of participating (Oakley, 1991). It is a passive form of participation. On the other hand, participation as an *end* aims at strengthening the capacity of local people to participate, whether in economic or political sphere or both as a way of getting rid of their reliance on other people. Participation as and end is viewed in rural development circles as active. It involves people taking greater control of their lives for example when women play a role in the management of livelihood assets, both in absolute terms and relative to other interest groups (Bartlett, 2008). The study advocated for participation as an *end* as opposed to participation as a means.



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## Importance of Participation in Rural Development

Participation of those affected by a problem is a key feature of governance in development work. It is the hallmark of democracy (Bowen, 2008). Oakley (1991) asserts that, participation increases people's sense of control over issues which affect their lives, helps them to learn how to plan and implement, and on a broader front, prepares them for participation at regional or even national level. Williams (2006) asserts that participation becomes beneficial when participants claim or demand power to achieve specific concrete goals such as implementing a specific plan, project or programme at local level. Oakley (1991) endorses this view by saying that all arguments for more participation in development should be scrutinized in terms of the tangible results and of the interests of the rural people themselves.

Bowen (2008) argues that "genuine participation requires that special attention be paid to involving all constituent groups in the local community, including the poor people, in strategic planning and decision-making." In the same vein, Titterton and Smart (2008) believe that using the knowledge of community members can enhance implementation of development initiatives, apart from increasing ownership. Communities should be allowed to participate in activities that take place within their areas because they have a lot of insight on what works or does not work for them. Through being directly involved in solving their own problems, the communities feel motivated and development initiatives become meaningful to them. This way, change will not be imposed on them, but rather occurring as a result of their inputs (Mouton, 2002). The participants will thus be part of the project and not serve as objects to be researched on (De Vos et al, 2005). This helps bring about sustainable change. Also, by working with the communities, development agents gain a better understanding of the communities they are dealing with and the problems besetting them.

Involving local people can help women develop skills and widen their knowledge, thereby increasing their chances of being employed. Participation inculcates a spirit of togetherness in solving real life challenges thereby strengthening social cohesion. Participants feel a sense of belonging and commitment towards the development initiatives, thereby boosting their self-esteem (De Vos et al, 2005). Mouton (2002) views participation as a way of encouraging communities to be self-reliant.
From the foregoing discussion, it is clear that participation of women in issues of their empowerment is likely to go along way in solving the many hurdles that they face.



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## 2.11 Women's views on the impact of Empowerment on their lives

### 2.11.1 Access and control of resources

In the study that Izugbara (2004) conducted in Nigeria, women highlighted that because of the loans that they had acquired there was reduction in gender-based violence. This they said had been due to the fact that they could also contribute to the upkeep of their families. Previously, they were exposed to both verbal and physical abuse from their spouses. The statement from one of the participants in the study (Izugbara, 2004: 79) provides evidence relating to the abuse:

> "my husband beats me less often these days unlike before.....he knows I also bring resources into the family. If he hurts me and I don't go to the market, he knows it is the family that will lose."

The statement confirms that generation of own income can considerably reduce the abuse of women.

In the studies by Kabeer (2001b); Izugbara (2004); Makombe (2006) and Umashankar (2006), women participants alluded to the fact that economic independence was a crucial step towards their emancipation. With the loans they had secured, they were able to acquire movable and immovable assets such as cattle, clothes, land, houses, start businesses or expand them. By so doing, they enhanced their asset bases (Kabeer, 2001b, Izugbara, 2004, Umashankar, 2006). Long distance trading helped them generate savings which they could use to improve their livelihoods (Muzvidziwa, 2006; Omorodion, 2007). The views expressed above buttress the assertion that women's economic empowerment helps them take care of their lives and at the same time contributes directly to the development of their children through the provision of better nutrition, education and health (Negash, 2006).

Some women in India alluded to the fact that they were able to move into their own home-based business ventures rather than working for other people (Kabeer, 2001b). In addition, they were able to withdraw their money from banks at any time without questions being asked (Umashankar, 2006). Women fed their families and sent their children to school. In the process, they welcomed their self-reliance with much joy because they no longer relied on their husbands to provide for them (Garikipati, 2008). Kabeer (2001b) reported that some women were of the opinion that sharing their loans with their spouses did not mean loss of control over these loans. What mattered to them was their ability to participate in the



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decisions pertaining to the use of the loans as well as the income they generated through using the loans. Also, in the studies conducted by Kabeer (2001b) in India, Izugbara (2004) in Nigeria and Garikipati (2008) in India, women were of the opinion that contributing towards the running of their homes, free movement and exercising their rights brought a sense of self-worth to them.

Thus, women viewed economic independence positively as it contributed to their emancipation.

### 2.11.2 Freedom to exercise their rights

Kabeer (2001b) and Makombe (2007) in their studies in India and Tanzania respectively noted that women were able to exercise their rights after having been empowered. Some women felt that they had freedom of movement, could participate in business associations and in trade fairs after having been empowered. They were also aware of social injustices. Apart from all this, the women believed that division of labour between men and women should be equal. Umashankar (2006) provided evidence of how women exercised their rights. She reported that women could demand seats in banking halls or voice their concerns whenever they felt that services were not provided on time and not to their satisfaction.

To a large number of women in Bangladesh, freedom to move in public places, interact with others in their neighbourhood and being able to go to the markets on their own was empowering to them. Because of the purdah practice, women in Bangladesh were restricted from moving outside their family homes (Kabeer, 2001b). However, things changed for the better when they started accessing loans. They were now at liberty to network with others in their neighbourhood. Also, they could even talk to elite people in the society and to the police, who previously intimidated them. The women had the freedom to go and purchase raw materials on their own as well as produce goods for sale (Umashankar, 2006). The above findings serve to prove that access to economic resources is a crucial step towards the emancipation of women.

### 2.11.3 Participation in decision-making processes and social inclusion

Women participants in the studies by Izugbara (2004) in Nigeria and Umashankar (2006) in India were unanimous in their belief that their access to loans enabled them to be involved in family decision-making processes. Studies by the above authors showed that prior to the attainment of loans, decision-making was a preserve for the males. However, because of



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their newly acquired wealth (the loans in this case), women were regarded as important members of their communities. This implies that economic independence helps improve women's status both at home and in the communities. Fondo (2007) adds weight to this view by stating that "a woman's ability to bargain in the household is usually augmented by the increase in her income."

## 2.12 Barriers and Determinants of Women Empowerment from a Global Perspective

The review of literature on women empowerment has revealed that there are numerous challenges to women empowerment. Various studies (Kalaycioglu and Rittersberger-Tilic, 2002; Oberhauser and Pratt, 2004; Ansoglenang, 2006; Muzvidziwa, 2006; Makombe, 2007; Mayoux, 2007; Omorodion, 2007; Garikipati, 2008; Dlodlo, 2009) have shown that there are numerous obstacles that women face in their endeavours to penetrate what is mainly a male-dominated world. The obstacles include lack of financial and material resources, restriction from participating in some income-generating activities, gender-based violence, time constraints, lack of knowledge and skills, and human rights abuses, among many other challenges. In the following sections these issues are discussed in greater detail.

Table 2.5 gives a summary of the challenges, their related causes and comments or questions arising from the review. The women empowerment challenges are discussed in detail in the following sub-sections.

### 2.12.1 Acquisition of knowledge and skills

Working in Ghana, Ansoglenang (2006) reported that women lacked basic knowledge in business management. They were also unable to keep written records of their activities. Women's lack of literacy and numeracy skills is rooted in the fact that in many patriarchal societies, especially in Africa, educating women is not considered a top priority (Johnson; Markham-Elizabeth and Oyinade, 2004).

The explanation that is often given is that women eventually get married and hence no need is seen in prioritizing their education (Sultana, 2010) Instead, emphasis is placed on ensuring that they know how to cook and to look after their husbands and homes. Consequently, many girls drop out of school to help their mothers with household chores. The education of males is viewed as a top priority since males are expected to look after their parents in old age (Johnson; Markham-Elizabeth and Oyinade, 2004; Sultana, 2010).



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**Table 2.5: Summary of determinants of women empowerment**

| Determinants | Causes | Comments/Questions |
|---|---|---|
| **Access to resources**<br>*Women lacked knowledge and skills and depended on their husbands for assistance<br><br>*Lack of access to markets and information<br><br>*Women lacked finances to repay their loans<br><br>*Women had greater workloads than men and are unable to participate in empowerment projects<br>*Women were not well versed on political issues | Gender inequalities between men and women lead to unequal access to resources<br><br>Socially constructed gender roles cause women's work-overload<br>Cultural norms and beliefs have contributed negatively to women's knowledge of politics | Can women be regarded as having been empowered when they do not control the use of resources?<br>Need to come up with strategies that will help women gain information on markets<br>Strategies to help women access finances should be devised<br>Ways of lessening women's workload to be explored<br><br>Programmes to improve women's knowledge of political issues |
| **Awareness-raising**<br>*Women's movements controlled by their husbands<br>*Women saw no need of challenging their subordinate positions<br>*Women subjected to a lot of violence by their husbands<br><br>*Disabling attitudes of women | Patriarchal ideology perpetuates the domination of men and the subordination of women | Need to review cultural practices that hinder women's development<br><br>Awareness-raising campaigns to educate communities about the need to respect and protect the rights of women<br>There is need to make women aware of their capabilities in bringing change to their situations |
| **Participation**<br>*Women lacked decision-making powers in and outside home<br><br>*They regarded politics as a preserve for men | In most patriarchal societies in developing countries, women's education is not considered a priority<br>Patriarchal belief that politics is a preserve for men | Improvements on women's resources might open avenues for them to be included in decision-making processes<br>Campaigns to educate women on political issues |
| **Control**<br>*Women lacked control of assets<br>*Women received very small loans | Gender inequalities between men and women lead to unequal access to resources | Need to improve women's asset base which they could use as collateral to secure loans |

**Source:** Various authors, e.g. Zaman, 2000; Kabeer, 2001; Makofane, 2001; Mayoux, 2001; Erman, Kalaycioglu and Rittersberger-Tilic, 2002; Kongolo and Bamgose, 2002; Mc Ewan, 2003; Izugbara, 2004; Ansoglenang, 2006; Muzvidziwa, 2006; Umashankar, 2006; Acharya *et al.*, 2007; Makombe, 2007; Omorodion, 2007; Garikipati, 2008; Jiyane and Mostert, 2008; Mathaulula, 2008; Dlodlo, 2009



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However, this perception is slowly dying out as the education of a girl child is now also regarded as a right and not a privilege (United Nations Article 13 of 1999).

Education enhances a person's sense of self-worth, confidence and also creates awareness of capacity (Olakulein and Ojo, 2006: 3). The authors further argue that education is a "social leveller, an instrument designed for piercing the social barrier that has been created by all other structures of society." Agbalajobi (2008) posits that "education arms the individual with the skills needed for survival, social interactions as well as contribution to societal development." The author further states that if a woman is educated it enhances her human capital and serves as a major force for her to obtain political power and exercise it effectively in taking decisions that will affect the nation as a whole. Knowledge and skills are vital for both human and economic development since such attributes enable one to start new business ventures and run them effectively.

Failure to access skills and knowledge is detrimental to the development of women since they have to rely on other people, especially their husbands, to do the job for them. This perpetuates and deepens their subordinate position.

### 2.12.2 Lack of economic resources

Lack of economic resources is a major hindrance to the advancement of women. A study conducted in Zimbabwe by Muzvidziwa (2006) showed the hardships that cross border women endured in a bid to raise income to sustain their families. They spent many days or weeks away from their families. The prolonged absence from their families often caused marital tension. Quite often, they had to eat unhealthy food and sleep in squalid conditions in a struggle to sell their wares. Furthermore, they had to endure harassment from the police, immigration officials and other law enforcement agents. At times they were forced to bribe officials in order to be allowed entry into neighbouring countries such as Botswana and South Africa. Unmarried women were forced to engage in immoral relationships in order to secure accommodation during their stay in a foreign country.

In India, Garikipati (2008) showed that even though women had access to loans, they did not have control of their use. The loans were diverted to meet household requirements, including consumption needs of their families. Where assets were acquired using the loans, women had minimal control of them. Because of this, they could not use the income generated from the assets to repay their loans. Instead, they worked for long hours in order to get money to repay the loans. Some women alluded to the fact that they found it difficult to



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make profit because their loans were small and there were no joint investments. Longwe (2000) strongly argues that empowerment is not about accessing resources but is about controlling the accessed resources in order to improve one's quality of life.

In a study that she conducted in Nigeria on Esan women's experiences on micro-finance, Omorodion (2007) made the same conclusions as Garikipati (2008). Some men borrowed money from their wives but were not forthcoming when it was time to make repayments. Some husbands used the money to pursue their own business ventures. As a result, the women fled their homes for fear of being arrested by law enforcement agents after defaulting on payments. This state of affairs impacted negatively on the women's health and their social relationships. Some of them suffered stress-related illnesses such as hypertension and depression. The question that arises from the above discussion is; can women really claim to having been empowered if they have no control of resources? Finding answers to the preceding question will help address women's woes.

Mayoux (2001) made similar observations in a study that she conducted in Cameroon. Women reported that their involvement in micro-finance activities made their husbands fail to contribute meaningfully to household needs. The women assumed added responsibilities of making loan repayments from their meagre resources. In some parts of Cameroon, women rented land at exorbitant prices. Since they used rented land, they were not allowed to plant permanent trees. Therefore, their desire to market cash crops such as coffee, rubber, cocoa and palm never came to fruition.

In Turkey, Erman, Kalaycioughu and Rittersberger-Tilic (2002) found that in the case where the husband and wife kept their earnings separately, the wife's money was used to meet daily expenses. The husband's earnings were often used to purchase durable goods. As a result, women had problems in building up their asset bases, which they could use as collateral when applying for loans from banks.

The discussion in the preceding paragraphs shows that gender inequality in communities causes women's lack of access and control of resources. It manifests itself in accessing and distributing resources, gendered labour and allocation of wages. Patriarchal ideology perpetuates gender inequality and has over the years caused unequal access to resources between men and women. As a result of their failure to access resources, women rely on their husbands to provide for them. This exacerbates their subordinate position. Waterhouse and Neville (2005) are of the view that gender inequality is perpetuated by the fact that



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women's voices have quite often been excluded from policy-making and decision-making arenas.

It is therefore essential that intervention strategies are developed so that women can access and control resources. They should also be involved in decision-making processes in order to accommodate their needs.

### 2.12.3 Work overload and time related issues

Traditionally, women have always been confined to the private sphere where they undertake household chores and care work whilst their male counterparts work in the public sphere. Because of poverty, women are forced to work in and outside their homes in order to supplement family income (Kabeer, 2003). Ansoglenang (2006) found that Ghanaian women had no time to rest since they had to perform various duties. Tarkowska (2002) shares this view and posits that women's poverty is a combination of their duties in the home and in the public sphere. Combining these duties leaves them very exhausted.

Health is a pre-requisite for economic development. If women are healthy, it means more work will be done and result in economic growth (International Centre for Research on Women (ICRW, 2005). Kabeer (2003) believes that long working hours in intensive forms of work negatively affect women's nutritional status. The commonest health problems that women face include anaemia and protein-energy malnutrition. Kabeer (2003) further argues that heavy work during pregnancy can lead to premature labour. Without increased energy supply, this can lead to the birth of under-weight babies or even miscarriage.
Umashankar (2006) observed that shortage of resources and lack of amenities added to women's woes. Women spent time looking for firewood and soil needed for their projects. This took a lot of their time and also increased their workload. The Human Development Report (UNDP, 2006) notes that;

> "Time is an important asset for the development of capabilities. Excessive time demands for essential labour lead to exhaustion, and reduce the time available for rest and child-care, and limit choice. It reduces substantive freedoms that women enjoy... Time poverty also contributes to income poverty. It reduces the time available for participation in income generation, limits the scope for women to take advantage of market opportunities and impedes their ability to expand capabilities and skills, reducing further economic returns."



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The foregoing arguments imply that gendered division of labour is a major challenge of work-overload. Society expects women to perform household chores which include care work whilst their male counterparts are expected to work in the public sphere where their work is remunerated (Tarkowska, 2002). Finding answers to the following question, arising from this discussion, can go a long way in achieving genuine women empowerment: How should gender roles be approached so that women benefit from empowerment initiatives at their disposal?

### 2.12.4 Restricted movements of women

Restricted movement is a major barrier to women's quest for empowerment. Omorodion (2007) found that husbands restricted married women's movements. Nursing mothers were not permitted to make long trading trips. Also notable is the fact that most African men believe that the right place for women is in the home, where they are expected to perform household chores together with looking after their husbands and children. Such restrictions hamper development. Because women are not able to network freely, they cannot get advice or mentorship from others on how to handle issues that affect their daily lives and also access ideas on business initiatives that they can engage in. In his study in Tanzania, Makombe (2007) observed that women's freedom of movement was one area where traditional beliefs were still resistant to change. This could be emanating from the belief that working women become liberated and assertive and this appears not to augur well with men especially from patriarchal societies.

Controlling women's mobility is a patriarchal practice which men use to keep women under their control. The common belief seems to be that if the husband can keep track of the wife's whereabouts, it would prevent her from 'misbehaving.' Yet, this is detrimental to the wife's advancement and infringes on her right to be herself. Getting women to interact with others widens their horizon, which can in turn benefit their families and communities.

### 2.12.5 Socio-cultural issues

Onwueme and Ugbor (1994) define socio-cultural factors as a range of issues working against an individual's ranking or position in a society. These socio-cultural factors are reflected in patterns of behaviour, beliefs, preferences, customs and traditions which account for gender-based differences within society. These forms of abuse can include domestic violence, restricted mobility, cultural restrictions, oppression and lack of support among many other issues. These occur mainly within families where most of these abuses go



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unnoticed since the family is regarded as a private place far from state interference (Chant, 2008). Aderinto (1991) reveals that some socio-cultural environments in which women operate do not motivate them to attain their full potential. In trying to release disadvantaged women from socio-cultural boundaries, awareness-raising is required in any empowerment effort (Acharya, Yoshino, Jimba and Wakai, 2007).

Ansoglenang (2006) found that local Ghanaian culture marginalised and discriminated against women with respect to the allocation of resources. Women were excluded from owning land, which was a very crucial resource to them. They could not use it for their businesses or as collateral when acquiring loans from banks. Failure by women to own land meant that they have to rely on men for their upkeep since all development required use of land. Women's dependence on men for their upkeep exacerbated their problems. It is therefore crucial that women are sensitised on the structures that hinder their progress with a view of helping them take a leading role in overcoming their problems.

### 2.12.6 Domestic violence issues

Women have often been subjected to considerable gender violence at the hands of their spouses or partners (Makofane, 2001; Strebel, Crawford, Shefer, Cloete, Henda, Kaufman, Simbayi, Magome and Kalichman, 2006; Umashankar, 2006). For many years this has gone unreported or tolerated because of the fact that the family was normally regarded as a private sphere. Even today, some women stay in abusive relationships for the sake of their children and also to protect the image of the family. The stigma that society attaches to divorce forces women to stay in the abusive marriages. Erman, Kalaycioglu and Rittersberger-Tilic (2002) posit that some conflicts emanate from the shortage of financial resources. When husbands fail to bring enough money home, they often express their anger through behaving aggressively towards their wives and children. Such economic difficulties remain a fertile ground for aggression against women.

Gender-based violence impacts negatively on economic development and ultimately affects the growth of communities since the growth of the latter depends on how well the economy is performing. Also, it affects the economy through reducing the participation of women in the labour market and productivity, leading to lower earnings and investment (ICRW, 2005). Domestic violence puts a strain on personal relationships and quality of life. Abused women are often socially isolated, thereby preventing them from participating in income generating activities. It is pivotal that policies are put in place to curb violence against women to pave way for them to engage in meaningful activities that would benefit them and their families.



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### 2.12.7 Women's control over their sexual and reproductive rights

Health plays an important role in economic development. Reproductive health is particularly important to women because it affects their ability to access economic assets and resources, including the opportunities to use them effectively for themselves and their families (Gupta and Malhotra, 2006). When women have access to family planning facilities, they are able to balance the timing and number of children with their need for income. This represents a positive step for women and their families. Oxaal and Baden (1997: 18) believe that:

> "promoting women's reproductive and sexual rights goes to the heart of gendered power relations at the individual and household levels. Empowering women in this area implies tackling internalised oppression, sensitive issues around sexual behaviours, and the complexities of decision-making."

It is worth noting that lack of economic resources leaves women in a vulnerable position to refuse sexual services and might even trigger prostitution. The opposite becomes true, that if women have access to economic resources, chances of them being involved in prostitution become minimal (Oglethorpe and Gelman, 2008). Patriarchal control of women's sexuality, reproductive and productive roles is one of the major reasons behind the problems besetting women.

All the challenges to women empowerment discussed here have their roots in patriarchal ideology of male supremacy. Since men perpetuate women's problems, why should they not be part of the solution to the problems? What role can they play in addressing these problems? Addressing these questions is likely to go a long way in finding lasting solutions to the problems besetting women and efforts to empower them.

### 2.12.8 Women's self-esteem

Patriarchal oppression and subordination of women have negatively contributed to women's low self-esteem. They see themselves as lesser beings whose role is to serve the interests of men. Acharya, Yoshino, Jimba and Wakai (2007) are of the view that 'women's socio-economic activities in male-dominated societies reflect values of female submission, silence, sacrifice, inferiority and obedience. As a result of accepting this subordinate role, women suffer quietly, endure physical, verbal and psychological abuse. Makofane (2001: 96) concurs with this view and says



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> "some women do not perceive themselves as victims of abuse, because they strongly believe what they have learned from the elders—that women have big buttocks to be able to sit on their problems and hide them from public scrutiny."

The results of a study that Makombe (2007) undertook in Tanzania showed that some women felt that they were not free to travel without the permission of their spouses. Another study (Izugbara, 2004) found that women were not willing to challenge their inequality with men. In the Izugbara (2004) study, women argued that male control of the home was natural and alluded to the fact that those who tried to seek equality with men were wayward. They saw no reason for challenging their lack of resources, subordinate positions or personal circumstances. Women also viewed leadership and politics as a male preserve that could not be challenged. Programme implementers worsened the situation by telling women that their access to credit did not mean challenging the status quo (Izugbara, 2004). It is important to note that empowerment involves challenging structures that oppress women so that they are in a position to make decisions concerning their destiny. This can only happen when they eloquently articulate their concerns, after which actions can be taken.

### 2.12.9 Decision-making issues

Decision-making in many patriarchal societies is viewed as a preserve for males. Women are rarely given the chance to make meaningful decisions. Cultural practices such as the paying of the bride price (lobola) perpetuate this state of affairs. This custom tends to give husbands the right to control their wives' sexuality, reproductive and productive rights. Because of this, women's freedom to make choices on issues that directly affect them is curtailed. Failure to involve women in decision making processes means that their needs and aspirations, together with the challenges that they face, are not often addressed in policy formulation forums. Given all these realities, there is a need for establishing how women participate and take charge of their lives. Could this be realised through making available a platform where they can make decisions?

### 2.12.10 Political matters

The political sphere is where the core of empowerment lies and is still a male monopoly (Fonjong, 2001). Longwe (2000) concurs by saying that African governments do not want any programmes that will upset the existing political order of male dominance. This emanates from the fact that politics has to do with *power* and any attempts that are directed at usurping that power are bound to meet strong resistance from those in power. According



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to Bari (2005: 4), "the gender role ideology is used as an ideological tool by patriarchy to place women within the private arena of home as mothers and wives and men in the public sphere." The author goes further to say that this setup is what shapes the level of women's political participation. A study conducted by Waterhouse and Neville (2005) in Kenya revealed that some women candidates felt that the political project that was implemented in that area was benefitting elite women at the expense of ordinary women. For this reason, they had no desire to pursue political careers. In Afghanistan, people were of the opinion that women were not knowledgeable enough to participate in decision-making forums.

Zaman (2000) is of the view that women spend most of their time with family members, children and the elderly who have limited knowledge about politics. As a result, their scope on political issues is limited. Lack of money to invest in a political career, fear and threats or even aggression against women and lack of self-confidence prevent women from taking an active part in political activities (Longwe, 2000, Agbalajobi, 2008). Nna and Nyeke (2005) concur by saying that lack of finance makes the dissemination of information, logistic and mobilisation of the masses for political message impossible. Added to that, women lack properties and access to land to meet the costs in politics.

Cultural and religious beliefs which call for women to be silent in front of men also act as a serious stumbling block to women's political empowerment (Zaman, 2000). According to Bari (2005), the times when political meetings are held also conflict with women's domestic responsibilities. Lack of fixed hours for political engagements makes it difficult for women to avail themselves due to the pressure of domestic work (Zaman, 2000; Mc Ewan, 2003). Also, Oxaal and Baden (1997) believe that some women in positions of power may fail or be unwilling to represent grassroots women's interests. The reasoning behind this perception could be that as these elite women move up the social and economical ladder, they tend to enjoy their comfort zone resulting in them failing to identify with the suffering masses. This state of affairs impacts negatively on rural women because they have no one to raise issues on their behalf. Interventions seeking to improve the quality of participation must accompany efforts that support women's empowerment. Involving women in politics uplifts their status. When the status of women is improved, they become competent to contribute positively in their communities.

## 2.13 Women Empowerment in South Africa

South Africa, like other young democracies singled out the women empowerment challenge as a priority issue. The emphasis was on rural women. This bias is due to the fact that rural



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women are a vulnerable group that bears the brunt of poverty most (Motteux, Binns, Nel and Rowntree, 1999). Partly, this state of affairs is rooted in apartheid policies which systematically and socially engineered the confinement of women to rural areas where there was substandard infrastructure and unproductive land (Office on the Status of Women (OSW, 2000; Oberhauser and Pratt, 2004). The most affected women were those in the former Homelands of Lebowa, Gazankulu and Venda (Oberhauser and Pratt, 2004). In addition to the restrictive apartheid laws, women had to contend with repressive customs and traditions on a daily basis (OSW, 2000). Men migrated to urban areas in search of jobs and better living conditions, leaving women behind to take care of themselves and their families (Kongolo and Bamgose, 2002). Effectively, this made women de jure heads of households.

Although men and women have been actively involved in empowerment programmes and they have benefited at varying levels, studies conducted in South Africa (Kongolo and Bamgose, 2001, Makofane, 2001, McEwan, 2003, Oberhauser and Pratt, 2004, Jiyane and Mostert, 2008, Mathaulula, 2008) have highlighted the bottlenecks women still face in their endeavours to get empowered. These are discussed in the proceeding sections. However, before this is done, it is important to build an understanding of gender machinery in the country.

### 2.13.1 The Gender Machinery in post-apartheid South Africa

In South Africa, empowerment anchored on the observance and respect for individual rights of both men and women. The rights are contained in the Bill of Rights of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act 109 of 1996. Women's rights are enshrined in the human rights, which encompass the right to human dignity, equality and freedom. South Africa is obliged to abide by the terms of the Constitution, making sure that every citizen, including those at grassroots community level, are afforded the opportunity to lead a decent life. Chapter 2 of the Bill of Rights adopted in 1996 is an integral component of the Constitution of the country. The rights of women are equated to those of men. Clause 9, paragraphs 1 and 2 state that "Everyone is equal before the law and has the right to equal protection and benefit of the law. Equality encompasses the full and equal enjoyment of all rights and freedoms."

Of particular note is the National Gender Policy Framework, which was formulated to provide direction on how to champion women empowerment. The framework recognises meeting the specific and distinct needs of different categories of women and men as central to the realisation of genuine empowerment. Also, it highlights the centrality of devising and



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implementing gender programmes based on a detailed understanding of the specific and distinct needs of women.

As discussed in Chapter 1, in support of the Constitutional imperatives, the government introduced the National Gender Machinery (NGM). The NGM has structures at national governmental, legislative and statutory body levels. Several pieces of legislation, namely the Termination of Pregnancy Act (1996), the Maintenance Act (1998), Domestic Violence Act (1998), Recognition of Customary Marriages Act (1998) and Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Bill of 2000 (McEwan, 2000) and Employment Equity Act of 2001 are crucial pillars of women empowerment.

The Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA) is another critical component of the NGM at national level. It is the custodian of the Public Service Act of 1994. Apart from this, the DPSA has the mandate to ensure that Affirmative Action programmes in the Public Service are implemented, in addition to holding government departments accountable for running gender programmes in the work place.

In the Legislature, the vital components of NGM are the multi-party Women Empowerment Unit (WEU), Parliamentary Women's Group (PWG) and Committee on Improvement of Quality of Life and Status of Women (ANC, 2001). The latter structure was established in August 1996 and charged with the responsibility of gender mainstreaming during policy formulation and review. On the other hand, the PWG is a multi-party women's caucus whose role is to make parliament more gender sensitive. The WEU aims to identify and address the obstacles to full participation in law-making processes. Lastly, the CGE, South African Human Rights Commission (SAHRC), Public Protector, Public Service Commission and Financial and Fiscal Commission are all independent statutory bodies established as part of the NGM.

Act 39 of 1996 paved the way for the establishment of the CGE. Specifically, it promotes and protects gender equality. The main focus of CGE along with the Human Rights Commission is to ensure that the equality clause in the constitution is observed (McEwan, 2000). The author further states that the CGE's mandate also involves monitoring and evaluating practices of state institutions, statutory bodies and authorities, private business enterprises and institutions. Although its constituency is all South Africans, it focuses mainly on the women in remote areas such as rural locations, on farms, in domestic employment and also informal settlements. Principally, its work involves providing information and education. One of the major criticisms of the work of the CGE is that its programmes tend to benefit mainly



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elite women who have easier and more reliable access to information when compared to women in rural areas.

The SAHRC was established so that it monitors implementation of human (especially socioeconomic) rights as stipulated in the Bill of Rights (Chapter 2). Non-sexism and non-racism are entrenched in the Bill of Rights. The SAHRC is tasked with the responsibility of ensuring that state organs, statutory and public bodies, and the private sector, adhere to human rights, including women's rights. Rural dwellers lack education and information relating to the rights and thus rarely benefit from initiatives introduced to assist them.
The idea of having all the NGM structures is noble. It is not clear how the structures are formalized at provincial, district and municipal levels. This lack of clarity in decentralization raises questions about the effectiveness of the NGM in providing quality service to women residing in remote rural areas.

As alluded to in Chapter 1, the 'Women's Budget', which examines how programmes of every government department at national, provincial and local levels impact on women was introduced (CGE, 2000). Also, in June 2009 the new Jacob Zuma-led South African government established the Ministry of Women, Youth, Children and People with Disabilities.

### 2.13.2 The South African Intervention Strategies and Support Structures

Various programmes and elaborate support structures were also established after 1994. As shown in Table 2.6, they include Universal access to primary health care, Black Economic Empowerment (BEE), Affirmative Action, CGE, Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) and The Flagship Programme. Other programmes (See Table 2.7) seek to develop the rural areas in terms of infrastructure, services, skills and training for the poor, creating jobs and an environment conducive to both human and economic development. Growing the economy would help the poor to secure jobs, thereby getting sufficient income to sustain themselves and their families.

## 2.14 Empowerment as Perceived by Women in Rural Areas of South Africa

It has already been highlighted that empowerment means different things to different people. For this reason, it is desirable to contextualize this concept. Thus, the views of women and other segments of communities in rural areas in South Africa regarding what empowerment really meant to them are explored and discussed.



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**Table 2.6: South African government's intervention strategies and support structures with a focus on women, 1994-2009**

| South African government initiative | Comments on key features of women empowerment and their implementation |
|---|---|
| Social Grants | Safety net for poor men, women and children. They are not enough to cover all the basic needs. It is necessary to equip women with knowledge and skills that help them acquire more resources. |
| Universal access to primary health care | Aimed at providing children and pregnant mothers' access to state hospitals and clinics. Health care facilities and transport needed to access the facilities are inadequate. |
| Affirmative Action | A policy aimed at taking active steps to increase representation of disadvantaged groups of people especially women in educational institutions and work places. Although designed to address disadvantaged women's inability to be appointed, it has had little effect on rural women. |
| The Flagship Programme | Meant for unemployed women who have children less than 5 years old to be self-reliant through creating an enabling environment that enables them to gain access to economic opportunities. |
| Financial and Fiscal Commission | Advises government on allocation of government funds; allocation formula favours rural provinces. It is assumed that the bias has a positive impact on women since they constitute the majority among rural residents. |
| Public Service Commission | Supports gender equality in the Public Service; Promotes public administration and employment practices based on ability, objectivity, fairness and also addresses past imbalances. |
| The Victim Empowerment Programme | Seeks to make the justice system more responsive to the needs of women and children |
| Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) | Designed to assist adults with basic education and training to enable them to improve their literacy and numeracy skills. Does not cater for the needs of rural women since there are no programmes specifically designed to suit the circumstances surrounding them. |
| Black Economic Empowerment Programme (BEE) | Aims to reduce poverty amongst the disadvantaged Black people, especially women, youth and people with disabilities. Critics argue that BEE has created a clique of rich Black South Africans at the expense of the more deserving poor. |
| Department of Women, Youth, Children and People with Disabilities | Established in June 2009 to ensure that issues facing disadvantaged and often marginalised groups of society have better access to development opportunities. Still at its infancy stage. It is still too early to objectively judge its effectiveness. |



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**Table 2.7: South African Government's Intervention Strategies, 1994-2008**

| Government Intervention | Key features of implementation | Comments |
|---|---|---|
| Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) ( Introduced in1994) | Aim was to rebuild townships, restore services in rural and urban centres whilst at the same time creating jobs and providing training, especially for unemployed youth. | Has partly addressed the plight of women in that most of them have electricity and tap water in their houses. However, there is a serious shortage of accommodation and service delivery in rural areas is poor |
| Small, Medium, Micro Economic Enterprise development (SMME) | Introduced to provide financial and other support to entrepreneurs. | Women in rural areas lack assets to use as collateral to access funds. |
| Growth, Equity and Redistribution (GEAR) (introduced in 1996) | The aim was to create employment and promote public works programmes, achieve equity and eliminate discrimination, improve labour standards and guarantee job security, minimum wages and training of skilled labour. | Rural women still compete for the few jobs created. Their limited education makes it impossible to have proper access to the jobs. |
| Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) (Introduced in 2003) | Aimed at creating job opportunities for the unemployed to engage in productive work, and obtain skills. It was also introduced for job creation, infrastructure development and service delivery, training and skills development. Jobs were created in the construction industry. | Caters for all marginalised groups, not women. Also, jobs are for a limited duration and thus can only partially alleviate poverty. |
| Accelerated Shared Growth Initiative of South Africa (ASGISA) (Introduced in 2006) | Originated from the commitment to halve unemployment by 2014. Aimed at stimulating economic growth. | Women lag far behind in knowledge and skills. Thus, they find it difficult to compete for job opportunities with their male counterparts |
| Joint Initiative on Priority Skills Acquisition (JIPSA) (Introduced in 2006) | Aimed at identifying solutions for skills shortages in critical areas and is a programme is designed to anchor ASGISA | Most rural women are illiterate. It is unlikely that women will benefit much. |
| Public Protector (Introduced in 1995) | Receives complaints from the public against government bodies and officials, and investigates cases of unfair conduct. | Most rural women are illiterate. It is unlikely that women in rural areas will have knowledge about this service |



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### 2.14.1 Access to resources

Participants in the study that Makofane (2001) undertook in the then Northern Province (now Limpopo Province) highlighted the needs of abused women. Women-focused outreach programmes were deemed necessary. The preferred programmes were those that enlightened the women on their rights, the causes and effects of violence as well as available resources that they could utilise to empower themselves. Apart from this, they requested for assertive training courses as a strategy for protecting themselves from their abusive spouses. Lastly, the women desired financial independence. Central to all these arguments was the need for providing information that they could use to improve their situation. Thus, it is important to ensure that women have reliable and adequate access to useful information, without which they cannot achieve their empowerment goals.

In the study conducted by Oberhauser and Pratt (2004) in the rural areas of Limpopo Province also, research participants alluded to the fact that being able to acquire skills and also contribute to the family income was crucial. Furthermore, the ability to network with other women was seen as an important step in accessing information relating to creating their own businesses and expanding existing ones. Lastly, gaining economic independence was something that they all looked forward to achieving.

The participants in the study by Kim, Watts, Hargreaves, Ndhovu, Phetla, Morison, Busza, Porter and Pronyk (2007) on the Impact of Microfinance on Women's empowerment and the Reduction of intimate partner violence conducted in the Limpopo Province alluded to the fact that economic independence and the ability to provide for their families were key issues for them.

Mathaulula (2008) conducted a study in the rural areas of Makhado Municipality. The participants came up with a number of indicators they thought were crucial in determining whether or not women in their communities had been empowered. Chief among the indicators was the need for women to be literate. By being able to read and write, women would be in a position to access reliable information regarding their empowerment. Secondly, proper training in tender procedures, leadership and project management were considered to be other essential indicators.



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### 2.14.2 Participation in decision-making processes

Participants to the study by Mathaulula (2008) alluded to the fact that being involved in decision-making and securing leadership positions was seen as key to their empowerment because they would use those positions to pursue and safeguard their interests. The women participants to the McEwan (2003) study in Cape Town alluded to the fact that they wanted to be included in the decision making processes pertaining to the intervention programmes put in place by their local municipality.

## 2.15 Barriers to Women empowerment in rural South Africa

Although men and women have been actively involved in empowerment programmes and they have benefited at varying levels, studies conducted in South Africa (Kongolo and Bamgose, 2001, Makofane, 2001, McEwan, 2003, Oberhauser and Pratt, 2004, Jiyane and Mostert, 2008, Mathaulula, 2008) have highlighted the bottlenecks women still face in their endeavours to get empowered. The challenges identified included lack of access to resources and participation.

### 2.15.1 Lack of access and control of resources

Kongolo and Bamgose (2002) carried out a study in KwaZulu Natal and the Free State Provinces of South Africa. The study revealed that rural women encountered various challenges. Chief among these were lack of information, resources, government assistance, education and skills. Since each participating community had its own unique characteristics, it was found desirable to approach women empowerment differently. This observation confirmed the need for contextualizing women empowerment initiatives through appropriate engagement of the people intended to benefit from them. Such an approach is likely to precipitate a sense of belonging and ownership of development initiatives implemented in the communities in question. Titterton and Smart (2008) support this view and argue that using the knowledge of community members can enhance implementation of development initiatives, apart from increasing ownership.

In their study on women within the informal sector in Umhlatuze Municipality of South Africa, Jiyane and Mostert (2008) found that lack of knowledge on how to obtain information and run their businesses hampered women empowerment efforts. The women needed information on how to market and expand their businesses, how to attract customers, where to obtain raw



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materials, pricing of products and also networking. Illiteracy was another major challenge that constrained the women from realising their empowerment goals. As a result, they relied on their friends, relatives, neighbours, employers and personal experiences for information since they could not use libraries. The women research participants cited lack of support and assistance from government and support agencies such as banks and educational institutions as some of the challenges they faced.

Another study undertaken in the rural areas of Limpopo Province (Oberhauser and Pratt, 2004) confirmed that women continued to experience hurdles in accessing viable markets, knowledge about social grants and credit programmes. Inadequate financial resources, low incomes, poor working conditions, limited assets to use as collateral when applying for credit, and lack of investment capital for services such as electricity and boreholes impeded women empowerment. All these resources and conditions are crucial for ensuring that women gain economic independence.

The International Finance Corporation's Gender Entrepreneurship Markets (GEM) programme commissioned a study on behalf of the Gender and Women's Empowerment Unit of the Department of Trade and Industry (Naidoo, Hilton and Melzer, 2006). The study showed that although women had better credit repayment records than men, they found it more difficult to raise finance than their male counterparts. Various obstacles to access to finance were identified. Women lacked understanding of credit processes and the role of credit bureaus. They had a poor understanding of financial terminology and lacked awareness of bank and microfinance services.

Apart from the issues distilled above, Naidoo *et al.* (2006) in their study pointed out that there was a problem with the attitudes of banks. For example, only one out of the four major banks in the country was contemplating to introduce a specific programme designed to increase its share of women-owned enterprises. Also, a few women in business knew about the different financial institutions' products range and how to access them. It was asserted that generally women had less financial confidence than men. Another result from the Naidoo *et al.* (2006) study was that available financial products were inappropriate. This was due to the fact that the products were often unaffordable. Emphasis on collateralised and asset-based lending disqualified most women from accessing business loans. Given the prevailing conditions in rural areas, the experiences of women residing there were likely to be worse than what has been articulated here.



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The study by Mathaulula (2008) conducted in the rural areas of Makhado Municipality showed that women had challenges in accessing resources such as knowledge and skills and financial resources.

Dlodlo (2009) undertook a study in Moutse village of Mpumalanga Province of South Africa. She investigated the impact of socio-economic factors of girls and women's access to information communication technologies (ICTs) in education and training in a rural South African environment. The study brought to light numerous challenges militating against women's access to ICT education in their community. Shortage of ICT teachers was one such constraint. This meant that women could not get the knowledge they needed to enable them to survive in a highly competitive and technologically evolving world. Dlodlo (2009) also observed that women were not eager to venture into the world of technology because they regarded it as a preserve for males. As a result of their negative attitudes, women were found to be more technologically challenged when compared with their male counterparts. This hampered the realisation of their dreams of getting empowered, thus supporting the views of Mosedale (2005) who posits that empowerment starts from within an individual (power within). The inner power then responds to external forces such as financial resources and education, among other determinants. This implies that if women are not ready inwardly to get empowered, no external force can manage to do so.
In the Dlodlo (2009) study, women failed to access ICT education and training because of high levels of illiteracy among them. Learning materials were written in English, which most of the women could not comprehend. Added to this fact was the finding that they could not afford the new materials since the women did not have control over household income. Apart from this, women were unaware of the benefits of taking ICT training. Nor did they comprehend the benefits of utilising ICTs. This was due mainly to lack of exposure to the ICTs. Consequently, women entrepreneurs encountered problems when they tried to market their products. High electricity charges heightened their predicament and thus could not have ICTs in their homes. Therefore, failure to access information negatively affected their ability to run their businesses effectively and efficiently. According to Dlodlo (2009), the women also had multiple responsibilities and found it difficult to isolate and devote time to travel, learn and use ICTs. Lack of childcare for women who had the desire to receive training added to these woes.

### 2.15.2 Cultural restrictions

Kanjere (2008) conducted a study also in rural areas of Limpopo Province and revealed the numerous impediments women school principals were confronted with as they tried to



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penetrate the male dominated world. It was reported that women had to prove to the surrounding communities that they had the necessary qualities of good leadership. In addition, women leaders had to contend with the lack of support from both male educators and communities they worked with. This lack of cooperation was resulted from cultural stereotypes associated with women leaders. Also, some communities did not permit women leaders to wear trousers because this violated some cultural imperatives. Female colleagues were not comfortable with women leadership and thus preferred men to lead them.

### 2.15.3 Lack of participation in decision-making processes

McEwan (2003) highlighted the shortcomings of developmental initiatives that the South African government implemented through local municipalities. Women participants in this study felt that they were excluded from decision making processes. As a result, they were unaware of some programmes implemented in their communities. The people's disillusionment, arising from being excluded, is reflected in the following comments that some respondents made:

> *"We can't wait for the government to give us the things that they decide we need. We have to get involved and tell them what we need and how things should progress" (McEwan, 2003: 14).*

> *"We are never asked for our opinion on what should be done. If anything happens, it comes from the council and we are not asked for the things that we think are important. No, we are not consulted about what we need" (McEwan, 2003: 20).*

The Mathaulula (2008) study also revealed that women still encountered numerous obstacles in their quest for empowerment. The challenges included lack of decision making powers. Also, socio-cultural restrictions made it difficult for women to participate meaningfully in development activities. They suffered from various forms of abuse at the hands of their spouses. This study, which included men, women and community leaders, highlighted the need for involving them in development work for more meaningful and sustainable change to be achieved.

## 2.16 Summary of Literature Review

The review of literature highlighting the triple roles played by women in both the economic and social spheres from a global perspective, progressively narrowing it down to Africa and



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South Africa helped give a balanced and objective analysis of the work done by women. A review of the conventions and declarations held to address the plight of women was meant to highlight the effort that the International world, Africa and the Southern Development Community (SADC) have put in trying to improve the status of women. The meanings of empowerment and women empowerment were addressed in order to highlight the fundamental aspects of the empowerment process. The theoretical framework underpinning the study and the framework used to determine women's levels of empowerment were explored. Participation and its importance in rural development were also examined so as to draw the attention of policy makers on the need to involve women in issues pertaining to their empowerment. Furthermore, the study looked at the indicators and determinants of women empowerment, first from a global perspective moving on to South Africa in order to bring out a balanced view of the issue.

The findings showed that women remain largely sidelined from development initiatives. Material, financial and social resources are often lacking. Wherever they are available, they are inadequate to meet the needs of those who need them. It has been unravelled that reliable information and economic resources, in particular, are vital because they help unlock the doors leading to the other avenues of life. Examples of such avenues are proper nutrition, good education, participation in decision-making processes and politics, to name just a few.

The study concluded that for genuine empowerment of women to be achieved there was need for the world at large and the South African government in particular and other pro-development bodies to improve how they engage grassroots communities in crafting interventions. Improved engagements were likely to accelerate the unlocking of the potential of women, boost their self-esteem and effectively mobilize the support of crucial stakeholders within and outside their communities. Although considerable progress had been made in creating an enabling environment for women empowerment, inadequate information and the dearth of economic empowerment models were to be addressed urgently if women, in particular those in rural areas, were to be meaningfully empowered. The literature search managed to bring to fore the aim of the study whose focus was finding out what the perceptions of rural communities were regarding the indicators and determinants of women empowerment.



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# CHAPTER 3: RURAL COMMUNITIES' PERCEPTIONS ON ACCESS TO RESOURCES AS A FACTOR OF WOMEN EMPOWERMENT IN MAKHADO MUNICIPALITY

## 3.1 Introduction

It has been widely debated (Kongolo and Bamgose, 2002; Olakulein and Ojo, 2006; Chaudhry and Nosheen, 2009) that access to resources such as education and skills, credit, information on businesses opportunities and knowledge pertaining to individual rights are fundamental aspects that can promote women empowerment. Although this is the case, it remains unclear whether access to such resources represents genuine women empowerment. For example, are women free to determine the course of their destinies after accessing the resources? In this respect, Kabeer (1999) argues that although it is crucial that those who have been denied privileges before are given the opportunity to do so, it does not guarantee them automatic empowerment. Even though access to resources is a precondition in the empowerment process, such a procedure only puts the disadvantaged people, for example women, at a vantage position for other processes to take place. Longwe (2000) concurs with this view and points out that access to resources alone is not enough. Empowerment relates to changes in power relations. This means that women must possess the power for them to control resources and make invaluable decisions to improve their livelihoods.

Empowerment is context-specific. This implies that what empowers one group of people might not necessarily have the same effect on another. The arguments presented above highlight the need for investigating the extent to which rural communities perceive access to resources as a factor of women empowerment within their contexts. Thus, this study sought to find out what the perceptions of village-level communities were regarding access to resources-based indicators and determinants of women empowerment in some rural areas of Makhado Municipality in South Africa.

## 3.2 Research Methodology

### 3.2.1 Study Area

The study was conducted in the rural areas of Makhado Municipality in Vhembe District, which is one of the five Districts that constitute Limpopo Province. Makhado is one of the four local Municipalities in Vhembe District. The Municipality is predominantly (70%) rural and has its headquarters in Louis Trichardt town (Makhado Municipality, 2009). Louis



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Trichardt lies on the 23°01'S latitude and 29°43'E longitude. Four administrative regions, namely Makhado, Dzanani, Vuwani and Waterval make up the Municipality.

Makhado Municipality covers a geographical area of about 8 530 $km^2$. It is subdivided into 279 villages located in 37 Wards and (Municipal Demarcation Board, 2006). The Municipality is home to 471 800 people and the population growth rate is 1.4 % per annum (Makhado Municipality, 2009). Out of the total population, 55 % are women. The study was carried out in Wards 1 and 29, both situated in Vuwani administrative region, and Ward 37 (found in Dzanani region) (Figure 3.1). According to Statistics South Africa (STATSSA, 2001), Ward 1 has a surface area of about 78 $km^2$ and a population of 14 780. In contrast, Ward 29 has a surface area of approximately 19 $km^2$ and a population of 11 210. Lastly, Ward 37 is the largest and most rural of the three Wards. It covers a surface area of 342 $km^2$ and is home to about 12 770 people.

### 3.2.2 Research Design

This study was confirmatory in nature. It adopted both the qualitative and quantitative research designs. It was a follow up to the qualitative and exploratory research that Mathaulula (2008) conducted in the same Wards 1, 29 and 37 of Makhado Municipality where the current study was carried out. The purpose of the current study was to compare what children, youth, women, men and community leaders' interest groups at village level regarded as access to resource-based indicators and determinants of women empowerment. Furthermore, the study sought to establish whether the indicators and underlying issues of women empowerment differed across Wards and community interest groups in the rural Wards.

### 3.2.3 Population and Sampling Methods

The study sample was drawn from residents of Wards 1, 29 and 37 who were already actively participating in a community development-oriented project popularly referred to as *Amplifying Community Voices in Makhado Municipality* (Francis, Dube, Mokganyetji and Chitapa, 2010). The Centre for Rural Development and Poverty Alleviation (CRDPA) at the University of Venda was jointly implementing this project with Makhado Municipality. For this reason, the Wards and the interest groups were conveniently sampled. Conducting the research in these Wards served to help strengthen the on-going community development work.



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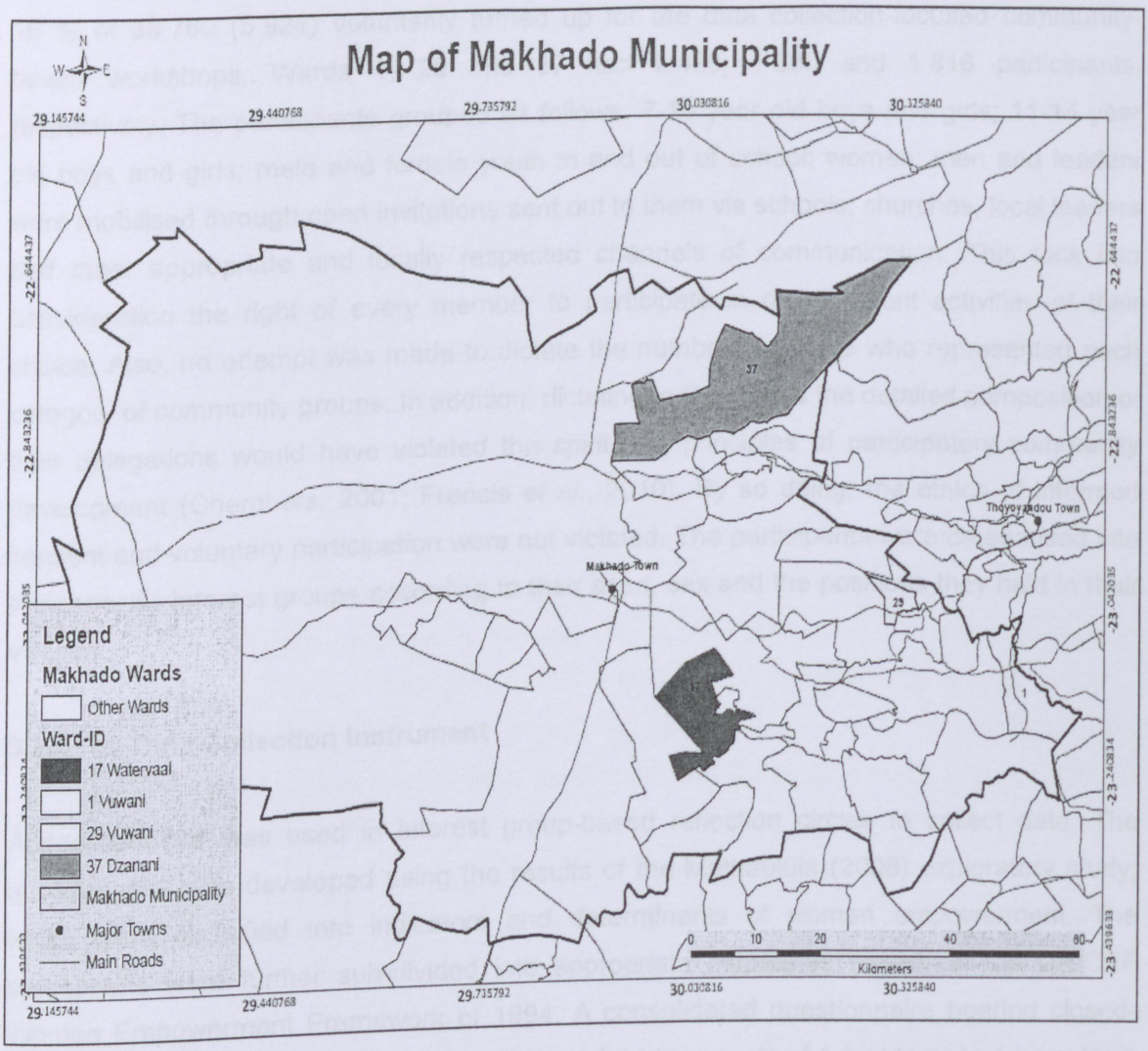



**Figure 3.1: A map showing Wards 1, 29 and 37 in Makhado Municipality (Source: GIS Resource Centre, School of Environmental Sciences, University of Venda)**



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All the 41 villages that made up the three Wards were included in this study. Approximately, 15 % of 38 760 (5 924) voluntarily turned up for the data collection-focused community-based workshops. Wards 1, 29 and 37 had 2 428, 1 680 and 1 816 participants, respectively. The participants grouped as follows: 7-10 year old boys and girls; 11-14 year old boys and girls; male and female youth in and out of school; women; men and leaders were mobilised through open invitations sent out to them via schools, churches, local leaders and other appropriate and locally respected channels of communication. This took into consideration the right of every member to participate in development activities of their choice. Also, no attempt was made to dictate the number of people who represented each category of community groups. In addition, dictating to the Wards the detailed composition of their delegations would have violated the spirit and principles of participatory community development (Chambers, 2001; Francis *et al.*, 2010). By so doing, the ethics of informed consent and voluntary participation were not violated. The participants were categorised into their specific interest groups according to their ages, sex and the positions they held in their villages.

### 3.2.4 The Data Collection Instrument

A questionnaire was used in interest group-based reflection circles to collect data. The questionnaire was developed using the results of the Mathaulula (2008) exploratory study, which were classified into indicators and determinants of women empowerment. The perceptions were further sub-divided into appropriate categories based on the UNICEF Women Empowerment Framework of 1994. A consolidated questionnaire bearing closed-ended questions that required responses on a Likert-type scale of 1 (not true) to 4 (very true) (Appendix C) was constructed. Thereafter, the questionnaire was translated by a qualified translator into Tshivenda, which is the language commonly spoken in the Wards under study. It was imperative to translate the questionnaire because most local people could not read, write, speak or understand English. Well-trained University students served as research assistants. The students were conversant with both English and Tshivenda languages.

Prior to data collection, an orientation workshop was held to prepare for the village-based research engagements. The preparatory training on reflection circles involved teams of stakeholders from all the three participating Wards. The teams included "Foot Soldiers" and University of Venda students. According to Francis *et al.* (2010), "Foot Soldier" was a term used to describe agents of development who were spearheading village-level community work on behalf of the *Amplifying Community Voices in Makhado Municipality* project. During



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the training, the community engagement process was explained and the questionnaire pre-tested. The orientation helped to gauge the time required to complete the questionnaire, ease of understanding and administering the questions and clarity as well as the appropriateness of the engagement process given the village-specific realities.

### 3.2.5 Village-level Data Collection

The village-level research participants were stratified into specific interest group reflection circles as already reported above. According to Reed and Koliba (1995), a reflection circle refers to a group of people sitting in a circular set up (Figure 3.2) and collectively deliberating on the issue at hand based on individuals' lived experiences. In this case, the reflection circles focused on access to resources as a dimension of women empowerment in their communities. Each participant had a right and opportunity to speak. Every idea was regarded as value adding to the discussion. The facilitator sat with the group and his/her duty was only to direct the process. In this regard, the facilitators were well-trained university undergraduate students and "Foot Soldiers". Their main role was to ensure that all members of reflection circles had a say in the collectively adopted response to perceptions in the questionnaire. Persons with domineering tendencies and those who tended to be reserved were appropriately managed.

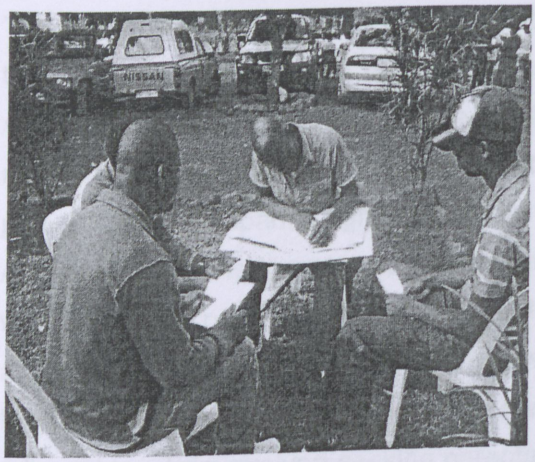
Participants were made aware of the need to respect each other's views and that every member had the right to express his/her views freely without any interruption.

## 3.3 Ethical considerations

The reflection circles were managed such that the rights of the participants and their communities were not compromised. For example, the Wards where the study was conducted fell under the jurisdiction of Chiefs who normally serve as the principal custodians of African tradition, culture, values and land within their communities. Taking this into account, permission to undertake the study was sought from Makhado Municipality as well as the respective Ward Councillors, Chiefs and Village Headmen. Village leaders who felt that the study could not be conducted in their areas were informed that they were free to make this decision. Participants were given the chance to decide whether to participate in the study or not. It has been shown in this study that this could have helped to obtain a deeper and better understanding of the issues at hand.



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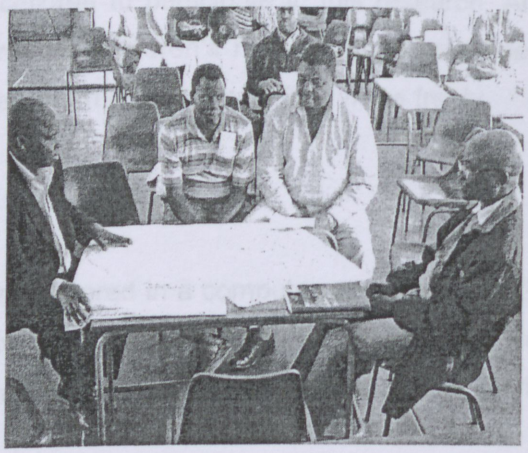
a) Male youth in a reflection circle



b) Women in a reflection circle



c) Men in a reflection circle



d) Community leaders in a reflection circle

**Figure 3.2: Some interest groups participating in reflection circles constituted at village level**



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The community members were informed that there was no remuneration for participating in the study. Furthermore, the respondents were assured that they would remain anonymous. Assurances and guarantees on the confidentiality of the information they supplied were made. It was specifically highlighted that the information would not be disclosed to third parties. The participant's right to withhold information that was too personal was respected. Also, the researchers explained fully that the data would be used for degree purposes and it was likely that peer-reviewed manuscripts would be developed and published. However, assurances were given that names of research participants would not be disclosed at all. Involving children in the current study meant that certain ethical considerations had to be adhered to. This involved seeking parental approval for children to participate in activities of this nature. Letters were sent out to community members whose children were to take part in these engagements. All participating children had to produce signed slips from their parents indicating whether or not they wanted their children to participate in this research. All the participants were reminded of the need to respect children's rights and views. Research assistants made sure that every child was given room to express his/her views freely.

### 3.4 Data Management and Analysis

The data were appropriately coded before being stored in a computer as a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet. Thereafter, the data were imported into the Statistical Package for Social Scientists version 17.0 (SPSS) and Statistical Analysis Systems (SAS) Version 9.1 for analysis.

#### 3.4.1 Pearson's (*r*) correlation coefficient

The Pearson's correlations were calculated to establish if there were any strong linear relationships among the "access to resources" variables. These variables included:- *most women can read and write; women are multi-skilled and talented; women know their rights and exercise the rights responsibly and freely; few women are unemployed; women have easy access to life improvement opportunities; women have easy access to business opportunities; women are never overworked; women have a lot of time to do all the things they want* and *women have easy access to old age grant* were calculated to establish if there were any strong linear relationships among them. This analysis was desirable because of the need to establish if multivariate methods of data analysis could be applied. As shown in Table 3.2, the linear relationships among the variables were weak (absolute correlations less than 0.5). It has been shown in this study that this could have helped to obtain a deeper and better understanding of the issues at hand. This nullified the use of multivariate methods



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of data analysis such as Principal Component Analysis (PCA) and Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) to investigate the effects of Ward and interest group on "access to resources" variables. These methods are appropriate and effective only if variables under consideration are highly correlated. As a result of the characteristics exhibited by the dataset, the variables were modelled individually as functions of the main and interaction effects of Ward and interest group. Simple Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was considered for use in investigating the main and interaction effects of Ward and interest group factors on each variable. However, because each variable was discrete, with possible values of 1, 2, 3, 4, this method could not be used. This was due to the realisation that ANOVA is only appropriate if the variables under consideration are continuous, among other assumptions.

After all the considerations presented above, the Categorical Data Modelling (CATMOD) procedure for fitting linear models with ordinal or nominal response variables was chosen to investigate the main and interaction effects of Ward and interest group on each variable. The actual categorical data modelling was done using the CATMOD procedure in Statistical Analysis Systems (SAS) Version 9.1.3. For the CATMOD results to be reliable, the number of group respondents in each Ward by Village and by interest group combination should be at least 5. It was clear that this rule of thumb would be violated if Village was included as a factor in the CATMOD model. Thus, Village was excluded as a factor in the CATMOD model. In other words, Village was assumed to have no effect on the responses. A brief theory of the CATMOD data analysis procedure is presented in the following section. The first response variable on the state of women empowerment, "*most women can read and write*" is used as an example (Agresti, 2002; Grizzle, Starmer, and Koch, 1969; Chapter 22 (http://www.okstate.edu/sas/v8/sas pdf /stat/chapter22.pdf )

### 3.4.2 CATMOD Data Analysis Procedure

Consider the perception, "*most women can read and write*" and suppose that any reflection circle from the $i^{th}$ Interest group within the $j^{th}$ Ward chooses the response levels 1, 2, 3 and 4 of the perception with unknown probabilities $p_{ij1,}$ $p_{ij2,}$ $p_{ij3,}$ and $p_{ij4}$ = 1- $p_{ij1}$ - $p_{ij2}$ - $p_{ij3}$, respectively. Then, the mean response level of the perception of $i^{th}$ Interest group within the $j^{th}$ Ward is given by:

$M_{ij} = 1\,p_{ij1} + 2\,p_{ij2} + 3\,p_{ij3} + 4\,p_{ij4,}$, $i$ = 1, 2, 3, 4,...,11, $j$ = 1, 2, 3;

where: $j$=1 if Ward 1, $j$=2 if Ward 29, $j$=3 if Ward 37; and $i$=1 if 10 year old boy, $i$=2 if 10 year old girl,...,$i$=10 if men, $i$=11 if women.



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The full model for $M_{ij}$, also called the saturated model is given by:

$M_{ij}$ = Overall mean + $j^{th}$ Ward *effect* + $i^{th}$ Interest group *effect* + $j^{th}$ Ward x $i^{th}$ Interest group *interaction effect;*

where: Overall mean is an unknown population mean also called the intercept; the three Ward effects are unknown but their sum is equal to zero; the eleven Interest group effects are unknown but their sum is equal to zero; and the Ward x Interest group effects are unknown but their sum of either the Wards or Interest group effects is equal to zero. Note that the purpose of the sum equal to zero constraints imposed on the effects in the model is to make the overall mean and the effects in the model uniquely defined.

The model just described reduces to the following reduced models for $M_{ij}$ if certain null hypotheses about the effects in the full model are true.

1) $M_{ij}$ = Overall mean + $j^{th}$ Ward effect + $i^{th}$ Interest group effect

   Null hypothesis $H_{o1}$: The Ward x Interest group interaction effects are all equal to zero

2) $M_{ij}$ = Overall mean + $j^{th}$ Ward effect + $j^{th}$ Ward x $i^{th}$ Interest group effect

   Null Hypothesis $H_{o2}$: The Interest group main effects are all equal to zero

3) $M_{ij}$ = Overall mean + $i^{th}$ Interest group effect + $j^{th}$ Ward x $i^{th}$ Interest group effect

   Null Hypothesis $H_{o3}$: The Ward main effects are all equal to zero

4) $M_{ij}$ = Overall mean + $j^{th}$ Ward x Interest group effect

   Null Hypothesis $H_{o4}$: the Ward and the Interest group main effects are all equal to zero

5) $M_{ij}$ = Overall mean + $i^{th}$ Interest group effect

   Null Hypothesis $H_{o5}$: The Ward x Interest group interaction effects and the Ward main effects are all equal to zero

6) $M_{ij}$ = Overall mean + $j^{th}$ Ward effect

   Null Hypothesis $H_{o6}$: The Ward x Interest group interaction effects and the Interest group main effects are all equal to zero

7) $M_{ij}$ = Overall mean

   Null Hypothesis $H_{o7}$: The Ward x Interest group interaction effects, the Ward main effects and Interest group main effects are all equal to zero

The sample mean response level of the perception corresponding to $M_{ij}$ is given by:

$$Y_{ij} = 1\frac{n_{ij1}}{n_{ij}} + 2\frac{n_{ij2}}{n_{ij}}\ 3\ \frac{n_{ij3}}{n_{ij}} + 4\frac{n_{ij4}}{n_{ij}},\ i = 1, 2..... 11,\ j = 1, 2, 3;$$



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where: $n_{ij} = n_{ij1} + n_{ij2} + n_{ij3} + n_{ij4}$ is the size of the sample taken from the $i^{th}$ Interest group within the $j^{th}$ Ward (total number of reflection circles sampled from the $i^{th}$ Interest group within the $j^{th}$ Ward); and $n_{ij1}$, $n_{ij2}$, $n_{ij3}$ and $n_{ij4}$ are the respective numbers of reflection circles from the $i^{th}$ Interest group within the $j^{th}$ Ward who chose response levels 1, 2, 3 and 4 of the perception.

The model for the sample mean response levels of the perception ($Y_{ij}$) is given by:

$Y_{ij} = M_{ij} + e_{ij}$, $i = 1, 2,...,11$, $j = 1, 2, 3$;

where: $M_{ij}$ is either the full model or any one of the seven reduced models for $M_{ij}$ presented above; and $e_{ij}$ are the random errors or residuals.

In order to find the best model, the following full model was fitted to the raw data using the CATMOD procedure in SAS Version 9.1:

$Y_{ij}$ = Overall mean + $j^{th}$ Ward effect + $i^{th}$ Interest group effect + $j^{th}$ Ward x $i^{th}$ Interest group effect + $e_{ij}$.

Insignificant effects were sequentially removed from the model, and the reduced model $Y_{ij} = M_{ij} + e_{ij}$ refitted to the raw data, until they were no significant effects remaining in the final reduced model.

Determination of the significance/insignificance of any effect in the model was done using a Chi-square ($\chi^2$) test whose value of the test statistic and the p-value of the test were calculated by the SAS CATMOD procedure. The decision rule of the test was that the effect was insignificant if the p-value was larger than the 0.1 level of significance. Furthermore, the goodness-of-fit of the final reduced model was tested using a Chi-square ($\chi^2$) test whose value of the test statistic and p-value of the test were also calculated by the SAS CATMOD procedure. The decision rule of the test was that the final reduced model fitted the data well if the p-value of the test was larger than the 0.1 level of significance in which case the degrees of freedom of the $\chi^2$ distribution of the test statistic were also approximately equal to the value of the test statistic.

Further investigations of the interest groups were made only when the final reduced model contained significant Interest group effects and/or significant Ward x Interest group



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interaction effects. For example, in the case of the presence of significant Ward x Interest group interaction effects in the final reduced model, further analysis of the data involved categorising the interest groups at the 0.1 level of significance as follows:

**Group 1:** consisted of those interest groups within the Ward whose effects were negative (estimated mean of interest group less than estimated overall mean/model intercept) and significant (p-value < 0.1).

**Group 2:** consisted of those interest groups within Wards whose effects were insignificantly different from zero (estimated mean of Interest group statistically equal to the estimated overall mean/model intercept) (p-value > 0.1).

**Group 3:** consisted of those interest groups within Ward whose effects were positive (estimated mean of interest group greater than estimated overall mean/model intercept) and significant (p-value < 0.1).

In the case of the presence of significant Interest group *effects* and insignificant Ward x interest group *interaction effect* in the final reduced model, the interest groups were categorized as above. However, the effect of Ward was ignored.

A pseudo Duncan multiple range procedure (Miller and Miller, 2004) was used to categorize the interest groups only when the final reduced model contained significant Interest group effects and/or significant Ward x Interest group *interaction effects*. In the case of the presence of significant interest group *effects* and the Ward x Interest group *interaction effects* in the final reduced model, the interest groups within a Ward were categorised, at the 0.1 level of significance, as follows:

1. The 11 interest group means within a Ward were arranged in ascending order.
2. The significance of the difference between the last and the first interest group means were tested at the 0.1 level of significance using p-values calculated within the SAS CATMOD procedure. When the difference was not significant, then all the interest group means within the Ward were declared statistically equal and indexed by the same lower case letter of the alphabet. Otherwise, tests for the significance of the difference between all the adjacent sets of the two interest group means were carried out. In making the comparisons, adjacent means in a set whose means were not significantly different were indexed by the same lower case letter.

When significant Interest group *effects* and insignificant Ward x interest group *interaction effect* in the final reduced model were detected, the grouping pseudo Duncan multiple range procedure described above was used.



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## 3.5 Results

This section presents the results of the study whose aim was to assess the extent to which access to resources affects women empowerment. Biographical information is presented first followed by outputs of analysis for each perception of women empowerment.

### 3.5.1 Biographical information

Approximately, 15 % out of a population of 38 760 people participated in this study. Out of these, 41, 28 and 31 % were from Wards 1, 29 and 37, respectively. Females made up 54 % of the total number of participants. The respective proportions of female participants in each Ward were 56, 55 and 51 % for Wards 1, 37 and 29. Relative to the total number of participants, the proportions of children were (38 %), youth (27 %), adults (26 %) and community leaders (9 %).

Four hundred and forty-two (442) reflection circles were formed. Forty-one percent (41 %) of the reflection circles were constituted in Ward 37, 35 % in Ward 1 and the remaining 24 % in Ward 29. Thirty-two (32 %) of the reflection circles were made up of children only, whilst 31 %, 22 % and 15 % were entirely made up of youth, adults and community leaders, respectively.

### 3.5.2 Extent of agreement with perceptions

On average, about 62 % of the respondents from the three Wards agreed with all the perceptions on access to resources as factor of women empowerment (Table 3.1). In Ward 1, the proportions ranged from 51 % for the perception *women have easy access to old age grant* to 77 % for *few women are unemployed.* In Ward 29, the proportions ranged from 53 % for *women are never overworked* to 76 % *most women can read and* write. Lastly, Ward 37's proportions ranged between 51 % for the perception that *women have access to business opportunities* to 76 % for *few women are unemployed.* Other notable perceptions from the three Wards were that *women are multi-skilled and talented* (69 %), *Women have a lot of time to do all the things they want* (63 %); *women know their rights and exercise the rights responsibly and freely* (60 %) and *women have easy access to life improvement opportunities* (60 %).



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**Table 3.1: Extent of agreement with respect to "access to resources" as a factor of women empowerment in Wards 1, 29 and 37**

| Perception | Name of Ward | Proportion of respondents (%) | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Not true | Somewhat true | True | Very true |
| **Education and training** | | | | | |
| 1. Most women can read and write | 1 | 21 | 9 | 41 | 29 |
| | 29 | 19 | 5 | 46 | 30 |
| | 37 | 18 | 11 | 46 | 25 |
| 2. Women are multi-skilled and talented | 1 | 21 | 7 | 43 | 29 |
| | 29 | 20 | 11 | 43 | 26 |
| | 37 | 22 | 12 | 43 | 23 |
| 3. Women know their rights and exercise the rights responsibly and freely | 1 | 27 | 9 | 44 | 20 |
| | 29 | 35 | 9 | 31 | 25 |
| | 37 | 26 | 14 | 43 | 17 |
| **Socio-economic issues** | | | | | |
| 1. Few women are unemployed | 1 | 14 | 9 | 45 | 32 |
| | 29 | 25 | 12 | 36 | 27 |
| | 37 | 14 | 10 | 53 | 23 |
| 2. 5.Women have easy access to life improvement opportunities | 1 | 25 | 13 | 42 | 20 |
| | 29 | 23 | 16 | 40 | 21 |
| | 37 | 24 | 18 | 42 | 16 |
| 3. Women have easy access to business opportunities | 1 | 33 | 14 | 35 | 18 |
| | 29 | 29 | 12 | 40 | 19 |
| | 37 | 31 | 18 | 32 | 19 |
| 4. Women are never overworked | 1 | 25 | 16 | 36 | 23 |
| | 29 | 30 | 17 | 37 | 16 |
| | 37 | 31 | 17 | 35 | 17 |
| 5. Women have a lot of time to do all the things they want to | 1 | 21 | 16 | 42 | 21 |
| | 29 | 24 | 13 | 37 | 26 |
| | 37 | 22 | 14 | 44 | 20 |
| 6. Women have easy access to old age grant | 1 | 33 | 16 | 36 | 15 |
| | 29 | 31 | 14 | 32 | 23 |
| | 37 | 30 | 16 | 40 | 14 |



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### 3.5.3 Relationships among perceptions on access to resources as a factor of women empowerment

Predominantly weak but positive correlations were observed among the perceptions on access to resources as a factor of women empowerment (Table 3.2). The Pearson's correlation coefficients (*r*) ranged from as low as 0.08 for the perception, *women have easy access to business opportunities* versus *few women are unemployed* to a maximum of 0.43 for *women are multi-skilled and talented* versus *most women can read and write.* There was weak linear among the women empowerment variables, that is to say, the values were less than 0.5 (rule of thumb: if an absolute correlation is less than 0.5 then the correlation between the 2 variables is weak).

### 3.5.4 Differences in perceptions of interest groups on "access to resources" as a factor of women empowerment

#### Perceptions on "most women can read and write"

There were significant differences among the mean response levels of the interest groups on the perception, "*most women can read and write*" (p-value = 0.0008). Figure 3.3 shows that the differences among the interest group mean response levels relating to the perception, "*most women can read and write*" were the same in all the Wards, confirming that there were no Ward x Interest group interaction effects on the response levels.

As shown in Table 3.3, women had the lowest mean response level to the perception "*most women can read and write",* with that for female youth out of school being the highest. Although the mean response level for women was not significantly different from that for community leaders, men, 14 year old girls, and male youth out of school at the 0.1 level of significance (p–value ≥ .2341), it was lower than those for the other interest groups. There were no significant differences among the mean response levels for leaders, men, 14 year old girls, male youth out of school, 10 year old boys, female youth in school, and 10 year old girls at the 0.1 level of significance (p –value ≥.1177).



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**Table 3.2: Correlations among the "access to resources" variables**

| | Most women can read and write | Women are multi-skilled and talented | Women know their rights and exercise the rights responsibly and freely | Few women are unemployed | Women have easy access to life improvement opportunities | Women have easy access to business opportunities | Women are never overworked | Women have a lot of time to do all the things they want to | Women have easy access to old age grant |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Most women can read and write | 1.00 | | | | | | | | |
| 2. Women are multi-skilled and talented | .43 | 1.00 | | | | | | | |
| 3. Women know their rights and exercise the rights responsibly and freely | .24 | .32 | 1.00 | | | | | | |
| 4. Few women are unemployed | .24 | .22 | .16 | 1.00 | | | | | |
| 5. Women have easy access to life improvement opportunities | .33 | .36 | .33 | .10 | 1.00 | | | | |
| 6. Women have easy access to business opportunities | .33 | .28 | .19 | .08 | .32 | 1.00 | | | |
| 7. Women are never overworked | .27 | .29 | .23 | .19 | .27 | .21 | 1.00 | | |
| 8. Women have a lot of time to do all the things they want to | .28 | .26 | .29 | .15 | .28 | .21 | .23 | 1.00 | |
| 9. Women have easy access to old age grant | .28 | .23 | .27 | .14 | .42 | .35 | .28 | .25 | 1.00 |



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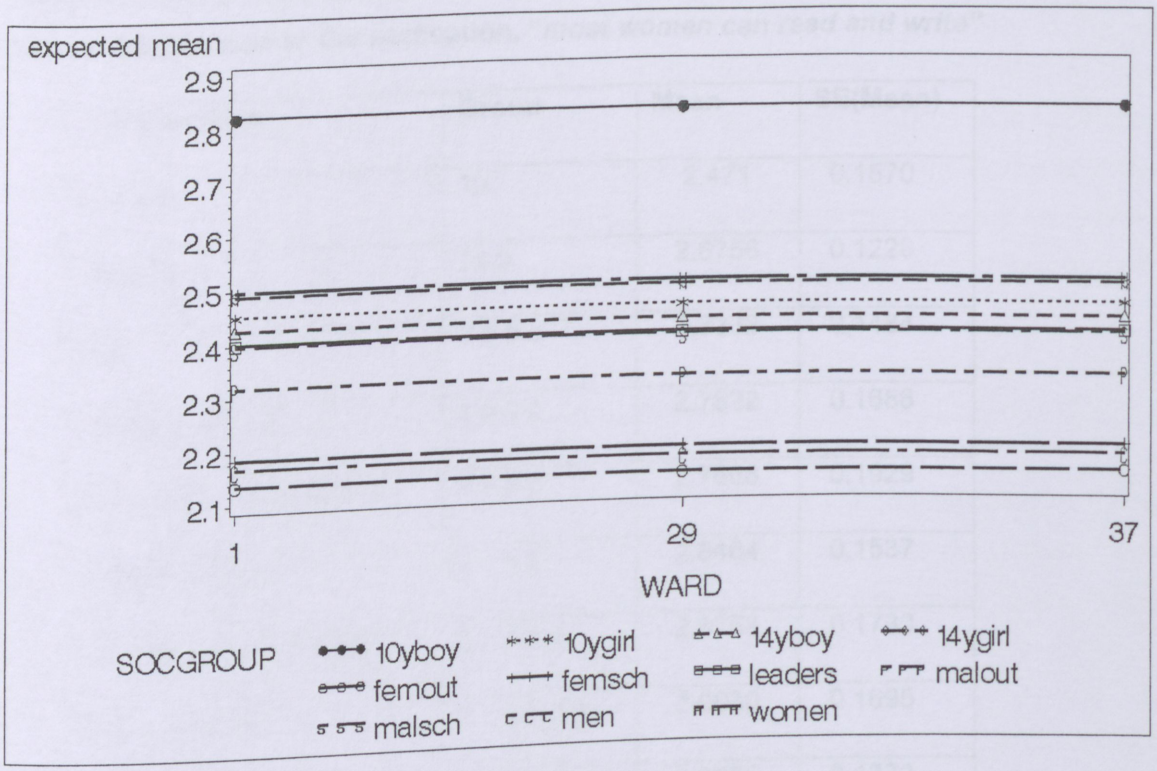



**Figure 3.3: Mean response levels to the perception that *"most women can read and write"* versus Ward for each Interest group (SOCGROUP)**

**femsch** = female youth in school; **femout** = female youth out of school; **malsch** = male youth in school; **maleout** = male youth out of school; **10yboy** = 10 year old boys; **10ygirl** = 10 year old girls; **14ygirl** = 14 year old girls; **14yboy** = 14 year old boys



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**Table 3.3: The pseudo Duncan multiple range's categories of mean response levels of the interest groups to the perception, *"most women can read and write"***

| Interest group | Group | Mean | SE(Mean) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Women | 1a | 2.471 | 0.1570 |
| Leaders | 1a b | 2.6756 | 0.1228 |
| Men | 2 a b c | 2.7332 | 0.1484 |
| 14 year old girls | 2 a b c | 2.7622 | 0.1686 |
| Male youth out of school | 2 a b c | 2.7666 | 0.1929 |
| 10 year old boys | 2 b c | 2.8464 | 0.1537 |
| Female youth in school | 2 b c d | 2.8758 | 0.1733 |
| 10 year old girls | 2 b c d e | 3.0030 | 0.1695 |
| 14 year old boys | 2 c d e | 3.0555 | 0.1373 |
| Male youth in school | 3 d e | 3.1613 | 0.0778 |
| Female youth out of school | 3 e | 3.2969 | 0.1344 |

a: p –value ≥ .2341; b: p –value ≥.1177; c: p –value ≥ .1109; d: p –value ≥ .1329; e: p –value ≥ .1742

*Same lower case letter implies that the Interest Group means are not significantly different

**Key:** Overall mean= 2.8770; **Group =1:** Interest group mean significantly less than the overall mean (Interest group effect < 0, p-value<0.1); **Group 2:** Interest group mean insignificantly different from the overall mean (Interest group effect = 0, p-value >= 0.1); **Group 3:** Interest group mean significantly greater than the overall mean (Interest group effect > 0, p-value < 0 .1)



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Also, there were no significant differences among the mean response levels for men, 14 year old girls, male youth out of school, 10 year old boys, female youth in school, 10 year old girls, and 14 year old boys at the 0.1 level of significance (p –value ≥ .1109). The mean response levels female youth in school, 10 year old girls, 14 year old boys, and male youth in school were found to be not significantly different at the 0.1 level of significance (p –value ≥ .1329) but were lower than the insignificantly different mean response levels (p –value ≥ .1742>0.1) of 10 year old girls, 14 year old boys, male youth in school, and female youth out of school.

**Perceptions on "women are multi-skilled and talented"**

Figure 3.4 shows that the differences among interest group mean response levels for the perception, "*women are multi-skilled and talented*" vary across Wards. There were significant Ward x interest group interaction effects on the mean response levels for this perception at the 0.1 level of significance (p-value= 0.0142).

It is shown in Table 3.4 that in Ward 1, 14 year old boys had the lowest mean response level with respect to the perception, *women are multi-skilled and talented*. Although the mean response level for the 14 year old boys was the lowest, it was not significantly different from those for the rest of the interest groups at the 0.1 level of significance (p–value ≥ .1299).

In Ward 29, the 10 year old girls had the lowest mean response level and the 14 year old boys, the highest. The 10 year old girls, female youth out of school, men and 14 year old girls had mean response levels which were similar (p–value ≥.1644> 0.1). The same was true for the mean response levels for female youth out of school, men, 14 year old girls, leaders, male youth out of school, male youth in school and female youth in school (p–value ≥ .1125>0.1); men, 14 year old girls, leaders, male youth out of school, male youth in school, female youth in school, women and 10 year old boys (p –value ≥.1299>0.1); and 14 year old girls, leaders, male youth out of school, male youth in school, female youth in school women, 10 year old boys and 14 year old boys (p–value ≥.1477>0.1).

In Ward 37, the mean response level for the male youth out of school was the lowest with that of the 10 year old girls being the highest. However, the mean response level for the male youth out of school was not significantly different from those of the other interest groups (p-value ≥.3107 >0.1) but significantly lower than that of female youth out of school and the 10 year old girls (p-value ≥. 8939>0.1).



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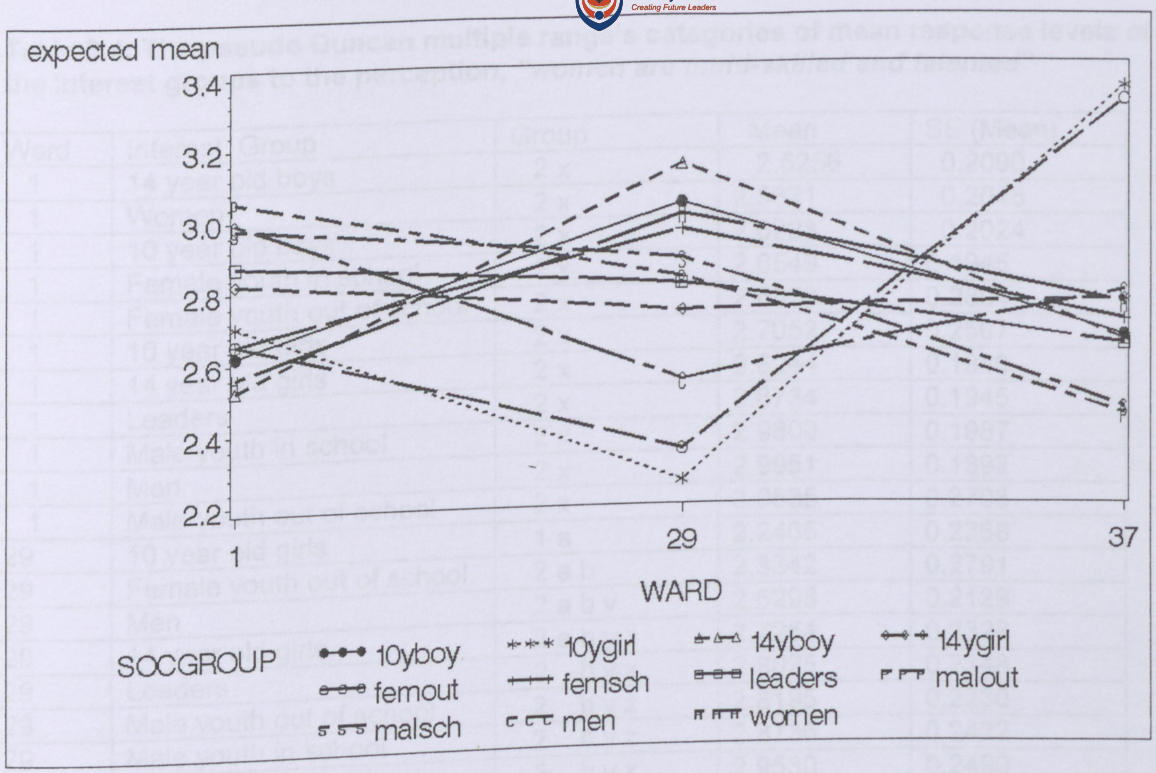



**Figure 3.4: Mean response levels to the perception that *"women are multi-skilled and talented"* versus Ward for each interest group (SOCGROUP)**

**femsch** = female youth in school; **femout** = female youth out of school; **malsch** = male youth in school; **maleout** = male youth out of school; **10yboy** = 10 year old boys; **10ygirl** = 10 year old girls; **14ygirl** = 14 year old girls; **14yboy** = 14 year old boys



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**Table 3.4: The pseudo Duncan multiple range's categories of mean response levels of the interest groups to the perception, *"women are multi-skilled and talented"***

| Ward | Interest Group | Group | Mean | SE (Mean) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 14 year old boys | 2 x | 2.5256 | 0.2090 |
| 1 | Women | 2 x | 2.5621 | 0.2046 |
| 1 | 10 year old boys | 2 x | 2.6223 | 0.2024 |
| 1 | Female youth in school | 2 x | 2.6549 | 0.1945 |
| 1 | Female youth out of school | 2 x | 2.6553 | 0.2894 |
| 1 | 10 year old girls | 2 x | 2.7052 | 0.2567 |
| 1 | 14 year old girls | 2 x | 2.8244 | 0.1940 |
| 1 | Leaders | 2 x | 2.8734 | 0.1945 |
| 1 | Male youth in school | 2 x | 2.9800 | 0.1987 |
| 1 | Men | 2 x | 2.9951 | 0.1892 |
| 1 | Male youth out of school | 2 x | 3.0535 | 0.2708 |
| 29 | 10 year old girls | 1 a | 2.2465 | 0.2388 |
| 29 | Female youth out of school | 2 a b | 2.3342 | 0.2791 |
| 29 | Men | 2 a b y | 2.5298 | 0.2129 |
| 29 | 14 year old girls | 2 a b y z | 2.7254 | 0.2328 |
| 29 | Leaders | 2 b y z | 2.8025 | 0.2148 |
| 29 | Male youth out of school | 2 b y z | 2.8195 | 0.2230 |
| 29 | Male youth in school | 2 b y z | 2.8736 | 0.2422 |
| 29 | Female youth in school | 2 b y z | 2.9530 | 0.2490 |
| 29 | Women | 2 y z | 2.9987 | 0.1736 |
| 29 | 10 year old boys | 2 y z | 3.0297 | 0.2345 |
| 29 | 14 year old boys | 3 z | 3.1390 | 0.1593 |
| 37 | Male youth out of school | 2 c | 2.4320 | 0.2491 |
| 37 | Male youth in school | 2 c | 2.4515 | 0.1844 |
| 37 | Leaders | 2 c | 2.6291 | 0.1709 |
| 37 | 14 year old boys | 2 c | 2.6405 | 0.1913 |
| 37 | 10 year old boys | 2 c | 2.6531 | 0.2101 |
| 37 | Female youth in school | 2 c | 2.6972 | 0.2235 |
| 37 | Women | 2 c | 2.7442 | 0.1891 |
| 37 | 14 year old girls | 2 c | 2.7552 | 0.2065 |
| 37 | Men | 2 c | 2.7802 | 0.2234 |
| 37 | Female youth out of school | 3 d | 3.3156 | 0.1489 |
| 37 | 10 year old girls | 3 d | 3.3534 | 0.2329 |

x: p –value ≥ .1299; a: p –value ≥.1644; b: p –value ≥ .1125; y: p –value ≥.1299; z: p –value ≥.1477; c: p-value ≥.3107; d: p –value ≥.8939.
*Same lower case letter implies that the Interest Group means are not significantly different

Key: Overall mean= 2.7683. Group =1: Interest group mean significantly less than the overall mean (Interest group effect < 0, p-value<0.1); Group 2: Interest group mean insignificantly different from the overall mean (Interest group effect = 0, p-value >= 0.1); Group 3: Interest group mean significantly greater than the overall mean (Interest group effect > 0, p-value < 0 .1)



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**Significance of differences in perceptions on "women know their rights and exercise the rights responsibly and freely"**

Figure 3.5 shows that the differences among interest group mean response levels regarding the perception, "*women know their rights and exercise the rights responsibly and freely*" varied across Wards. These interaction effects were significant at the 0.1 level of significance (p-value = 0.0017 < 0.1).

In Table 3.5, it is shown that the mean response level for 10 year old boys in Ward 1 was the lowest compared to the other interest groups. Although this was the case, the 10 year old boys' mean response level was not significantly different from those of the other interest groups (p-value ≥.1097).

In Ward 29, the mean response level for male youth out of school with respect to the perception, "*women know their rights and exercise the rights responsibly and freely*" was the lowest and the 10 year old boys had the highest mean response level. However, no significant differences were detected among the mean response levels for male youth out of school, 10 year old girls, female youth in school and 14 year old boys (p-value ≥.1164). Similar conclusions were obtained for 10 year old girls, female youth in school, 14 year old boys, leaders, female youth out of school, women, male youth in school and men (p-value ≥ .1903).
Lastly, female and male youth in school, 14 year old boys and girls, leaders, female youth out of school, women, men, and 10 year old boys had similar mean response levels (p-value ≥. 1486).

In Ward 37, 14 year old girls had the lowest mean response level for the perception, "*women know their rights and exercise the rights responsibly and freely* while that for female youth in school was the highest. The former's mean response level was not significantly different from those for the rest of the interest groups (p-value ≥.1132) except for the female youth in school.



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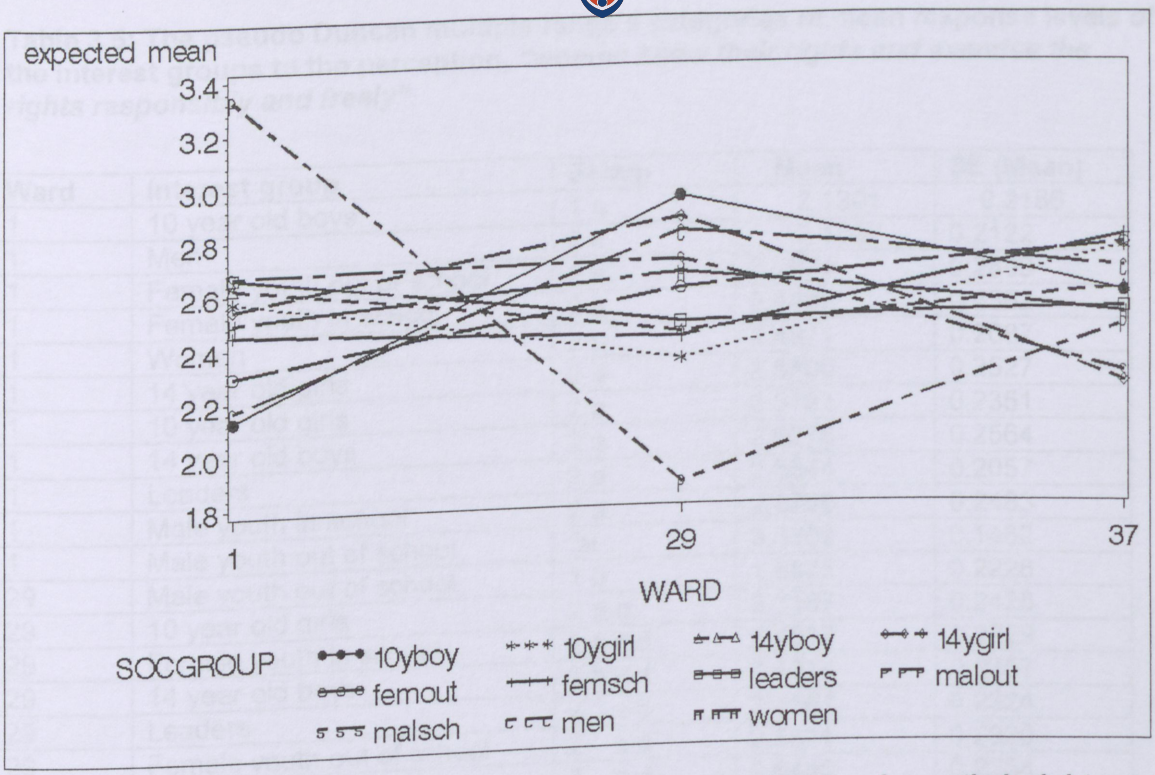



**Figure 3.5: Mean response levels to the perception that *"women know their rights and exercise the rights responsibly and freely"* versus Ward for each interest group (SOCGROUP)**

**femsch** = female youth in school; **femout** = female youth out of school; **malsch** = male youth in school; **maleout** = male youth out of school; **10yboy** = 10 year old boys; **10ygirl** = 10 year old girls; **14ygirl** = 14 year old girls; **14yboy** = 14 year old boys



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**Table 3.5: The pseudo Duncan multiple range's categories of mean response levels of the interest groups to the perception, *"women know their rights and exercise the rights responsibly and freely"***

| Ward | Interest group | Group | Mean | SE (Mean) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 10 year old boys | 1 a | 2.1301 | 0.2186 |
| 1 | Men | 2 a | 2.1697 | 0.2122 |
| 1 | Female youth out of school | 2 a | 2.2974 | 0.2899 |
| 1 | Female youth in school | 2 a | 2.4485 | 0.2362 |
| 1 | Women | 2 a | 2.4971 | 0.2087 |
| 1 | 14 year old girls | 2 a | 2.5480 | 0.2527 |
| 1 | 10 year old girls | 2 a | 2.5761 | 0.2351 |
| 1 | 14 year old boys | 2 a | 2.6276 | 0.2564 |
| 1 | Leaders | 2 a | 2.6644 | 0.2057 |
| 1 | Male youth in school | 2 a | 2.6706 | 0.2483 |
| 1 | Male youth out of school | 3a | 3.3302 | 0.1462 |
| 29 | Male youth out of school | 1 b | 1.8573 | 0.2228 |
| 29 | 10 year old girls | 2 b c | 2.3187 | 0.2426 |
| 29 | Female youth in school | 2 b c d | 2.4017 | 0.2729 |
| 29 | 14 year old boys | 2 b c d | 2.4214 | 0.2757 |
| 29 | Leaders | 2 c d | 2.4561 | 0.2324 |
| 29 | Female youth out of school | 2 c d | 2.5841 | 0.2920 |
| 29 | Women | 2 c d | 2.6440 | 0.2254 |
| 29 | Male youth in school | 2 c d | 2.6919 | 0.2853 |
| 29 | Men | 2 c d | 2.8010 | 0.2617 |
| 29 | 14 year old girls | 2 d | 2.8521 | 0.2932 |
| 29 | 10 year old boys | 3 d | 2.9314 | 0.2305 |
| 37 | 14 year old girls | 2 e | 2.2253 | 0.2114 |
| 37 | Male youth in school | 2 e f | 2.2628 | 0.2421 |
| 37 | Male youth out of school | 2 e f | 2.4379 | 0.2294 |
| 37 | Women | 2 e f | 2.4843 | 0.2034 |
| 37 | Leaders | 2 e f | 2.5048 | 0.1686 |
| 37 | 10 year old boys | 2 e f | 2.5638 | 0.1997 |
| 37 | 14 year old boys | 2 e f | 2.5764 | 0.1846 |
| 37 | Men | 2 e f | 2.6547 | 0.2388 |
| 37 | 10 year old girls | 2 e f | 2.7306 | 0.2381 |
| 37 | Female youth out of school | 2 e f | 2.7439 | 0.2351 |
| 37 | Female youth in school | 2 f | 2.7752 | 0.2448 |

a: p – value ≥ .1097; b: p – value ≥ .1164; c: p – value ≥ .1903; d: p – value ≥ .1486;
e: p – value ≥ .1132; f: p – value ≥ .1505
*Same lower case letter implies that the Interest Group means are not significantly different

**Key:** Overall mean= 2.5418 **Group =1:** Interest group mean significantly less than the overall mean (Interest group effect < 0, p-value<0.1); **Group 2:** Interest group mean insignificantly different from the overall mean (Interest group effect = 0, p-value >= 0.1); **Group 3:** Interest group mean significantly greater than the overall mean (Interest group effect > 0, p-value < 0 .1)



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**Significance of differences of perceptions on *"few women are unemployed"***

Figure 3.6 shows that there were differences in perceptions relating to "*few women are unemployed*" among the interest groups across the Wards (p-value= 0.0006 < 0.1). In Ward 1, the mean response level for 14 year old boys was lowest compared to that for female youth out of school which was the highest (Table 3.6). There were no significant differences (p-value ≥.1784) in the mean response levels for 14 year old boys, 10 year old boys, male youth in school, women, female youth in school, 14 year old girls, 10 year old girls and male youth out of school. A similar pattern was observed regarding the mean response levels for 10 year old girls, male youth out of school, men and leaders (p-value ≥.1009) although these were lower than those for female youth out of school (p-value ≥.3231).

In Ward 29, community leaders' mean response level was lower than that for any other interest group. The mean response level for 14 year old boys was the highest. There were no significant differences in the mean response levels for the perceptions of leaders, female youth out of school, women, female youth in school 10 year old girls and men (p-value ≥.1004). In addition to the above, the perceptions of women, female youth in school, 10 year old girls, men, 14 year old girls, 10 year old boys and male youth out of school were similar (p-value ≥.1540).

This was also the case with the perceptions of 10 year old girls, men, 14 year old girls, 10 year old boys, male youth out of school, male youth in school and 14 year old boys (p-value ≥. 1176).

In Ward 37, although the mean response level for the perceptions of male youth out of school was the lowest, it was similar to those for male youth out of school, 14 year old boys, female youth out of school, men, male youth in school, 14 year old girls, leaders, 10 year old boys and girls (p-value ≥.2171). A similar trend was observed with the mean response levels for men, male youth in school, 14 year old girls, leaders, 10 year old boys and girls, female youth in school and women (p-value ≥.1061). Also similar were the mean response levels for 10 year old girls, female youth in school and women (p-value ≥.1720).



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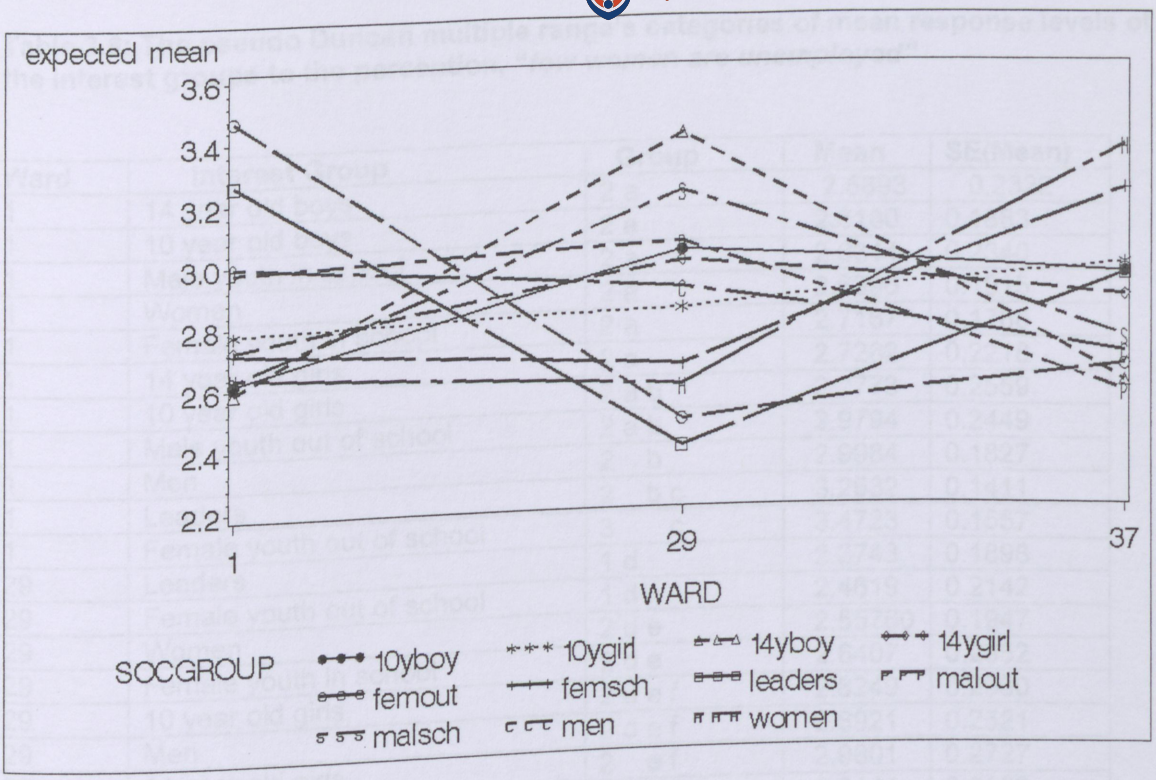



**Figure 3.6: Mean response levels to the perception, *"few women are unemployed"* versus Ward for each interest group (SOCGROUP)**

**femsch** = female youth in school; **femout** = female youth out of school; **malsch** = male youth in school; **maleout** = male youth out of school; **10yboy** = 10 year old boys; **10ygirl** = 10 year old girls; **14ygirl** = 14 year old girls; **14yboy** = 14 year old boys



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**Table 3.6: The pseudo Duncan multiple range's categories of mean response levels of the interest groups to the perception, "*few women are unemployed*"**

| Ward | Interest Group | Group | Mean | SE(Mean) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 14 year old boys | 2 a | 2.5893 | 0.2322 |
| 1 | 10 year old boys | 2 a | 2.6180 | 0.1883 |
| 1 | Male youth in school | 2 a | 2.6314 | 0.2340 |
| 1 | Women | 2 a | 2.6396 | 0.1915 |
| 1 | Female youth in school | 2 a | 2.7167 | 0.1788 |
| 1 | 14 year old girls | 2 a | 2.7282 | 0.2218 |
| 1 | 10 year old girls | 2 a b | 2.7773 | 0.2559 |
| 1 | Male youth out of school | 2 a b | 2.9794 | 0.2449 |
| 1 | Men | 2 b | 2.9984 | 0.1827 |
| 1 | Leaders | 2 b c | 3.2632 | 0.1411 |
| 1 | Female youth out of school | 3 c | 3.4723 | 0.1557 |
| 29 | Leaders | 1 d | 2.3743 | 0.1898 |
| 29 | Female youth out of school | 1 d | 2.4619 | 0.2142 |
| 29 | Women | 2 d e | 2.55760 | 0.1947 |
| 29 | Female youth in school | 2 d e | 2.6407 | 0.2352 |
| 29 | 10 year old girls | 2 d e f | 2.8249 | 0.2530 |
| 29 | Men | 2 d e f | 2.8921 | 0.2521 |
| 29 | 14 year old girls | 2 e f | 2.9801 | 0.2727 |
| 29 | 10 year old boys | 2 e f | 3.0144 | 0.2193 |
| 29 | Male youth out of school | 2 e f | 3.0413 | 0.2485 |
| 29 | Male youth in school | 3 f | 3.2102 | 0.1844 |
| 29 | 14 year old boys | 3 f | 3.3981 | 0.2387 |
| 37 | Male youth out of school | 2 g | 2.5467 | 0.2383 |
| 37 | 14 year old boys | 2 g | 2.5801 | 0.1981 |
| 37 | Female youth out of school | 2 g | 2.6332 | 0.1823 |
| 37 | Men | 2 g h | 2.6769 | 0.2475 |
| 37 | Male youth in school | 2 g h | 2.7258 | 0.2114 |
| 37 | 14 year old girls | 2 g h | 2.8590 | 0.2230 |
| 37 | Leaders | 2 g h | 2.9299 | 0.1173 |
| 37 | 10 year old boys | 2 g h | 2.9351 | 0.1655 |
| 37 | 10 year old girls | 2 g h i | 2.9653 | 0.2221 |
| 37 | Female youth in school | 3 h i | 3.2100 | 0.2057 |
| 37 | Women | 3 h i | 3.3519 | 0.1672 |

a: p – value $\geq$ .1784; b: p – value $\geq$ .1009; c: p – value $\geq$ .3231 d: p – value $\geq$ .1004; e: p – value $\geq$ .1540; f: p – value $\geq$ .1176; g: p – value $\geq$ .2171; h: p – value $\geq$ .1061; i: p – value $\geq$ .1720.
*Same lower case letter implies that the Interest Group means are not significantly different

**Key:** Overall mean= 2.8558; **Group =1:** Interest group mean significantly less than the overall mean (Interest group effect < 0, p-value<0.1); **Group 2:** Interest group mean insignificantly different from the overall mean (Interest group effect = 0, p-value >= 0.1); **Group 3:** Interest group mean significantly greater than the overall mean (Interest group effect > 0, p-value < 0 .1)



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**Significance of differences of perceptions on "women have access to life improvement opportunities"**

Highly significant differences in the perception, "*women have access to life improvement opportunities"* were observed among interest groups (p-value 0.0001< 0.1). However, Figure 3.7 shows that the people in Wards 1, 29 and 37 in Makhado Municipality had the same perceptions on this factor of women empowerment.

Table 3.7 shows that the mean response level for the perceptions of women was the lowest whilst that of the 14 year old girls was the highest. The mean response levels for the perceptions of women; female youth in school and men (p-value ≥.1765) were the same. A similar pattern was detected for the mean response levels for female youth in school, men, 10 year old girls, leaders, male youth in and out of school and 10 year old boys (p-value ≥.1092).
Also having similar perceptions were 10 year old girls and boys, leaders, male youth in and out of school, and female youth out of school (p-value ≥.1994). Lastly, the mean response levels of male youth in and out of school, 10 year old boys, female youth out of school and the 14 year old boys and girls were the same (p-value ≥.1373).

**Significance of differences of perceptions on "women have easy access to business opportunities"**

Significant differences were detected among the interest groups with respect to the perception that "*women have easy access to business opportunities* (p-value 0.0877 < 0.1). Figure 3.8 shows that the differences in mean response levels for the perceptions of interest groups on "*women have easy access to business opportunities"* varied across Wards.

Specifically, in Ward 1, the mean response level for the perceptions of 10 year old girls was the lowest and that for 14 year old boys was the highest (Table 3.8). However, there were no significant differences in the mean response levels for the perceptions of 10 year old girls, women, male youth in school, leaders, 14 year old girls and female youth in and out of school (p-value ≥. 1158). Similarly, the mean response levels of women, male youth in school, leaders, 14 year old girls and boys, female youth in and out of school, 10 year old boys men and male youth out of school were the same (p-value ≥. 1216).



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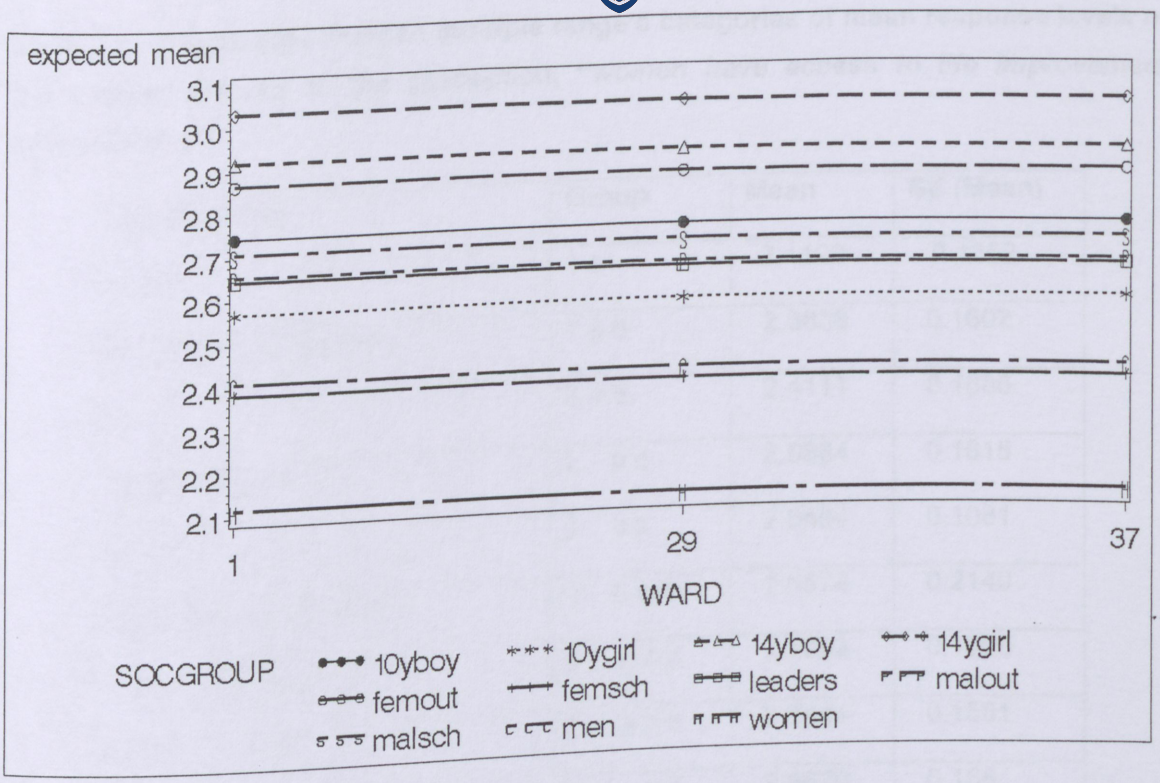



**Figure 3.7: Mean response levels for the perception that "*women have access to life improvement opportunities*" versus Ward for each interest group (SOCGROUP)**

**femsch** = female youth in school; **femout** = female youth out of school; **malsch** = male youth in school; **maleout** = male youth out of school; **10yboy** = 10 year old boys; **10ygirl** = 10 year old girls; **14ygirl** = 14 year old girls; **14yboy** = 14 year old boys



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**Table 3.7: The pseudo Duncan multiple range's categories of mean response levels of the interest groups to the perception, *"women have access to life improvement opportunities"***

| Interest group | Group | Mean | SE (Mean) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Women | 1 a | 2.1190 | 0.1352 |
| Female youth in school | 1 a b | 2.3838 | 0.1602 |
| Men | 2 a b | 2.4111 | 0.1686 |
| 10 year old girls | 2 b c | 2.5684 | 0.1615 |
| Leaders | 2 b c | 2.6454 | 0.1081 |
| Male youth out of school | 2 b c d | 2.6574 | 0.2140 |
| Male youth in school | 2 b c d | 2.7093 | 0.1699 |
| 10 year old boys | 2 b c d | 2.7444 | 0.1581 |
| Female youth out of school | 2 c d | 2.8670 | 0.168 |
| 14 year old boys | 3 d | 2.9204 | 0.1234 |
| 14 year old girls | 3 d | 3.0341 | 0.1360 |

a: p – value ≥ .1765; b: p – value ≥ .1092 c: p – value ≥ .1994 d: p – value ≥ .1373
*Same lower case letter implies that the Interest Group means are not significantly different

**Key:** Overall mean= 2.6418; **Group =1:** Interest group mean significantly less than the overall mean (Interest group effect < 0, p-value<0.1); **Group 2:** Interest group mean insignificantly different from the overall mean (Interest group effect = 0, p-value >= 0.1); **Group 3:** Interest group mean significantly greater than the overall mean (Interest group effect > 0, p-value < 0 .1)



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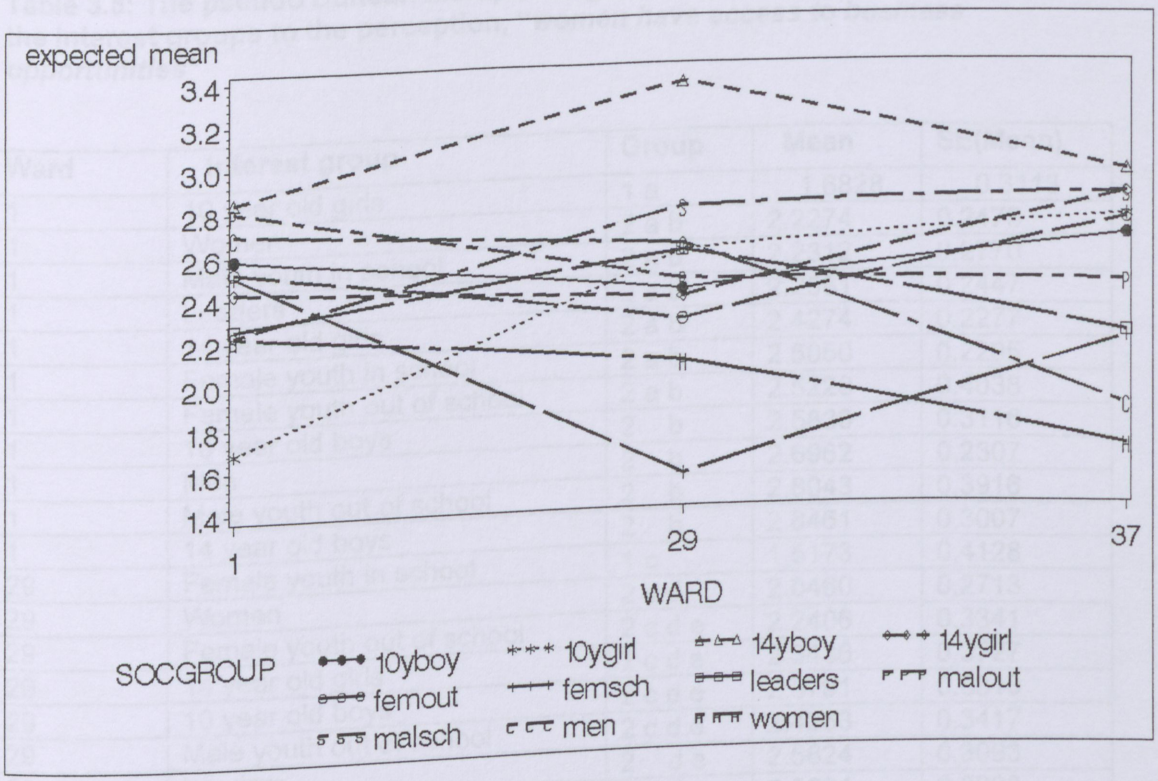



**Figure 3.8: Mean response levels to the perception that *"women have access to business opportunities"* versus Ward for each interest group (SOCGROUP)**

**femsch** = female youth in school; **femout** = female youth out of school; **malsch** = male youth in school; **maleout** = male youth out of school; **10yboy** = 10 year old boys; **10ygirl** = 10 year old girls; **14ygirl** = 14 year old girls; **14yboy** = 14 year old boys



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**Table 3.8: The pseudo Duncan multiple range's categories of mean response levels of the interest groups to the perception, "*women have access to business opportunities*"**

| Ward | Interest group | Group | Mean | SE(Mean) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 10 year old girls | 1 a | 1.6828 | 0.3113 |
| 1 | Women | 2 a b | 2.2274 | 0.2475 |
| 1 | Male youth in school | 2 a b | 2.2312 | 0.2770 |
| 1 | Leaders | 2 a b | 2.2581 | 0.2447 |
| 1 | 14 year old girls | 2 a b | 2.4274 | 0.2277 |
| 1 | Female youth in school | 2 a b | 2.5050 | 0.2295 |
| 1 | Female youth out of school | 2 a b | 2.5228 | 0.4038 |
| 1 | 10 year old boys | 2 b | 2.5830 | 0.3116 |
| 1 | Men | 2 b | 2.6962 | 0.2307 |
| 1 | Male youth out of school | 2 b | 2.8043 | 0.3916 |
| 1 | 14 year old boys | 2 b | 2.8461 | 0.3007 |
| 29 | Female youth in school | 1 c | 1.5173 | 0.4128 |
| 29 | Women | 2 c d | 2.0460 | 0.2713 |
| 29 | Female youth out of school | 2 c d e | 2.2406 | 0.3341 |
| 29 | 14 year old girls | 2 c d e | 2.3436 | 0.3727 |
| 29 | 10 year old boys | 2 c d e | 2.3791 | 0.3313 |
| 29 | Male youth out of school | 2 c d e | 2.4263 | 0.3417 |
| 29 | Leaders | 2 d e | 2.5624 | 0.3093 |
| 29 | 10 year old girls | 2 d e | 2.5624 | 0.3093 |
| 29 | Men | 2 d e | 2.5908 | 0.2661 |
| 29 | Male youth in school | 2 e f | 2.7650 | 0.3171 |
| 29 | 14 year old boys | 3 f | 3.3509 | 0.2159 |
| 37 | Women | 1 g | 1.6381 | 0.1681 |
| 37 | Men | 1 g h | 1.8264 | 0.3261 |
| 37 | Female youth in school | 2 h i | 2.1426 | 0.2700 |
| 37 | Leaders | 2 h i | 2.1696 | 0.1792 |
| 37 | Male youth out of school | 2 h i j | 2.4076 | 0.3062 |
| 37 | 10 year old boys | 2 i j | 2.6249 | 0.2015 |
| 37 | Female youth out of school | 2 i j | 2.7004 | 0.3639 |
| 37 | 10 year old girls | 2 i j | 2.7122 | 0.2862 |
| 37 | 14 year old girls | 2 j | 2.8166 | 0.2628 |
| 37 | Male youth in school | 2 j | 2.8206 | 0.2912 |
| 37 | 14 year old boys | 3 j | 2.9253 | 0.1920 |

a: p – value ≥ .1158; b: p – value ≥ .1216; c: p – value ≥ .1058 d: p – value ≥ .1612; e: p – value ≥ .2716; f: p – value ≥ .1346; g: p – value ≥ .6142; h: p – value ≥ .2120; i: p – value ≥ .1601; j: p – value ≥ .1605.
*Same lower case letter implies that the Interest Group means are not significantly different

**Key:** Overall mean= 2.4349; **Group =1:** Interest group mean significantly less than the overall mean (Interest group effect < 0, p-value<0.1); **Group 2:** Interest group mean insignificantly different from the overall mean (Interest group effect = 0, p-value >= 0.1); **Group 3:** Interest group mean significantly greater than the overall mean (Interest group effect > 0, p-value < 0 .1)



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In Ward 29, the mean response level for female youth in school was the lowest and that for the 14 year old boys was highest. There were no differences in the mean response levels for the perceptions of female youth in and out of school, women, 14 year old girls, 10 year old boys and male youth out of school (p-value ≥.1058). Nor were significant differences detected in the perceptions of women, female youth out of school, 14 year old girls, 10 year old boys and girls, male youth out of school, leaders and men (p-value ≥.1612). This was also the case for the mean response levels for female and male youth out of school, 14 year old girls, 10 year old boys and girls, leaders, men and male youth in school (p-value ≥. 2716). Lastly, the mean response levels of male youth in school and 14 year old boys were also the same (p-value ≥.1346).

In Ward 37, the mean response level for women was the lowest whilst that for 14 year old boys was highest. Although, in numerical terms the mean response level for women was the lowest it was not significantly different from that for men (p-value ≥. 6142). A similar pattern was observed with respect to the mean response levels for men, female youth in school, leaders and male youth out of school (p-value ≥. 2120). The perceptions of female youth in and out of school, leaders, male youth out of school, 10 year old boys and girls were found to be the same (p-value ≥.1601). Insignificant differences were also detected in the mean response levels for male and female youth out of school, 10 year old boys and girls, 14 year old girls and boys and male youth in school (p-value ≥.1605). Throughout the three Wards the mean response levels for the perceptions of 14 year old boys were the highest.

**Significance of differences of perceptions on "*women are never overworked*"**

With respect to the perception, "*women are never overworked*", significant differences (p-value 0.0008 < 0.1) were observed among the interest groups. As shown in Figure 3.9 there were no significant inter-Ward differences. In Table 3.9, it is shown that the mean response level for women to the perception, *women are never overworked* was the lowest and that for female youth out of school was the highest. No significant differences were detected in the mean response levels for women; 14 year old boys and male youth out of school (p-value ≥.1996).



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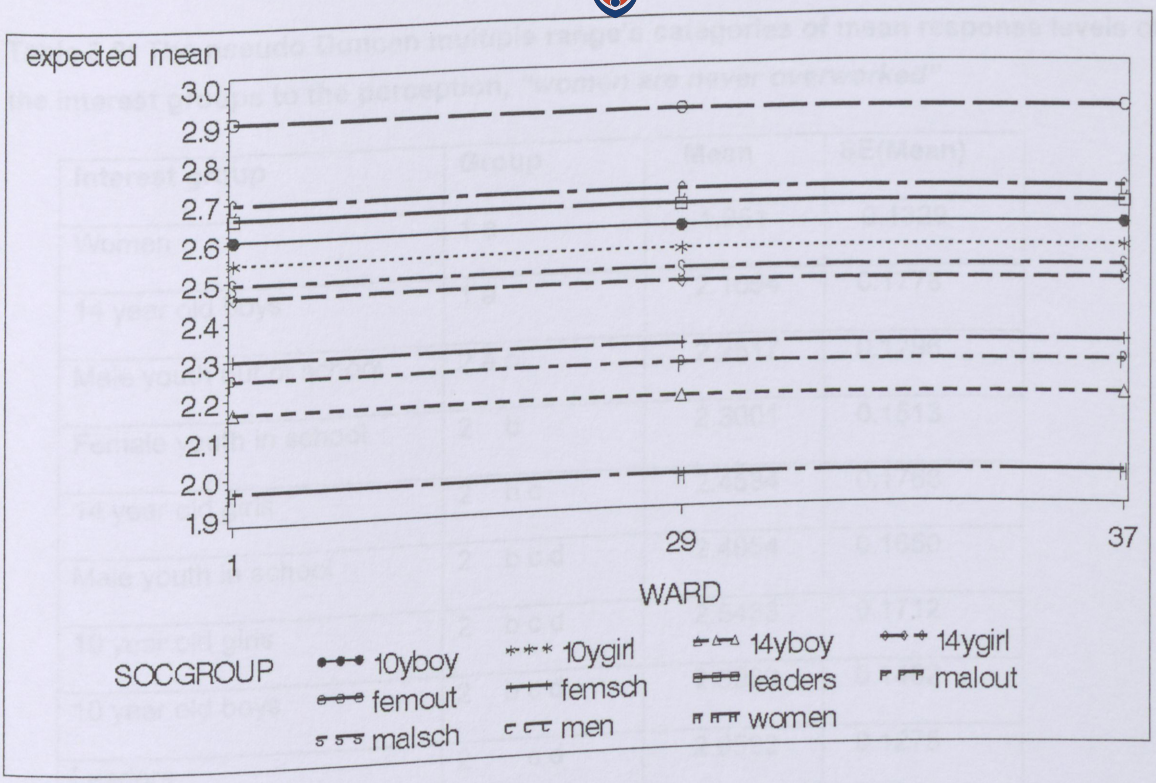



**Figure 3.9: Mean response levels to the perception that *"women are never overworked"* versus Ward for each interest group (SOCGROUP)**

**femsch** = female youth in school; **femout** = female youth out of school; **malsch** = male youth in school; **maleout** = male youth out of school; **10yboy** = 10 year old boys; **10ygirl** = 10 year old girls; **14ygirl** = 14 year old girls; **14yboy** = 14 year old boys



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**Table 3.9: The pseudo Duncan multiple range's categories of mean response levels of the interest groups to the perception, *"women are never overworked"***

| Interest group | Group | Mean | SE(Mean) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Women | 1 a | 1.951 | 0.1329 |
| 14 year old boys | 1 a | 2.1654 | 0.1778 |
| Male youth out of school | 2 a b | 2.2517 | 0.1796 |
| Female youth in school | 2 b | 2.3001 | 0.1513 |
| 14 year old girls | 2 b c | 2.4584 | 0.1768 |
| Male youth in school | 2 b c d | 2.4954 | 0.1650 |
| 10 year old girls | 2 b c d | 2.5433 | 0.1712 |
| 10 year old boys | 2 b c d | 2.6032 | 0.1482 |
| Leaders | 2 c d | 2.6592 | 0.1275 |
| Men | 2 c d | 2.6990 | 0.1549 |
| Female youth out of school | 3 d | 2.9062 | 0.1962 |

a: p – value ≥ .1996; b: p – value ≥ .1311 c: p – value ≥ .3060 d: p – value ≥ .1090

*Same lower case letter implies that the Interest Group means are not significantly different

**Key:** Overall mean= 2.4588; **Group =1:** Interest group mean significantly less than the overall mean (Interest group effect < 0, p-value<0.1); **Group 2:** Interest group mean insignificantly different from the overall mean (Interest group effect = 0, p-value >= 0.1); **Group 3:** Interest group mean significantly greater than the overall mean (Interest group effect > 0, p-value < 0 .1)



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Similarly, no significant differences in the mean response levels for the perceptions of male youth in and out of school, female youth in school, 14 year old girls, 10 year old girls and boys were detected (p-value ≥. 1311). Also, the mean response levels for 14 year old girls, male youth in school, 10 year old girls and boys, leaders and men were the same (p-value ≥.3060). A similar pattern was observed with the mean response levels of male youth in school, 10 year old girls and boys, leaders, men and female youth in school.

**Significance of differences of perceptions on "Women have a lot of time to do all the things they want"**

Significant Ward x interest group effect was detected with respect to the response levels for the perception, "*Women have a lot of time to do all the things they want*" (p-value 0.0859 <0.1). Figure 3.10 confirms that the differences in mean response levels for the perceptions of the interest groups varied among the three Wards.

Table 3.10, shows that in Ward 1, the mean response levels for 10 year old boys was the lowest mean response levels and the female youth out of school was highest. No significant differences were found in the mean response levels for the perceptions of 10 year old boys and girls, 14 year old boys and girls, female youth in school, leaders, male youth out of school, men and women (p-value ≥.1300). The same was true for the mean response levels for female youth in school and out of school, 14 year old girls, 10 year girls, leaders, men, women and male youth in and out of school (p-value ≥.1458).

In Ward 29, the lowest mean response level was that for female youth out of school with that of 14 year old girls being the highest. There were no significant differences in the mean response levels for female youth in and out of school, male youth in school and women (p-value ≥.1184). This pattern was exhibited in the mean response levels for female and male youth in school, women, leaders, men, 14 year old boys, 10 year old girls and male youth out of school (p-value ≥.2380). No significant differences were detected in the mean response levels for male youth in and out of school, women, leaders, men, 14 year old boys and 10 year old girls and boys. Also, the mean response levels for 14 year old boys and girls, 10 year old girls and boys and male youth out of school were not different from each other (p-value ≥.1160).



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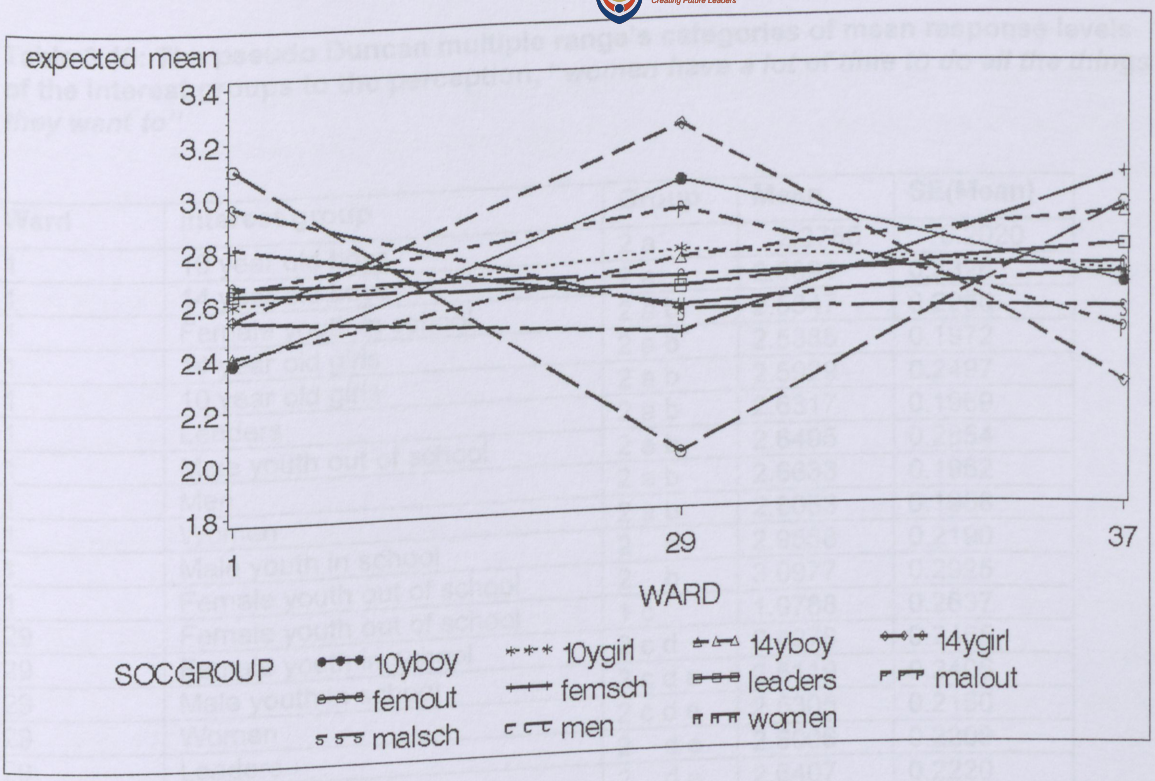



**Figure 3.10: Mean response levels to the perception that "*Women have a lot of time to do all the things they want*" versus Ward for each interest group (SOCGROUP)**

**femsch** = female youth in school; **femout** = female youth out of school; **malsch** = male youth in school; **maleout** = male youth out of school; **10yboy** = 10 year old boys; **10ygirl** = 10 year old girls; **14ygirl** = 14 year old girls; **14yboy** = 14 year old boys



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**Table 3.10: The pseudo Duncan multiple range's categories of mean response levels of the interest groups to the perception, *"women have a lot of time to do all the things they want to"***

| Ward | Interest group | Group | Mean | SE(Mean) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 10 year old boys | 2 a | 2.3750 | 0.2020 |
| 1 | 14 year old boys | 2 a | 2.3991 | 0.2326 |
| 1 | Female youth in school | 2 a b | 2.5347 | 0.2280 |
| 1 | 14 year old girls | 2 a b | 2.5385 | 0.1972 |
| 1 | 10 year old girls | 2 a b | 2.5929 | 0.2497 |
| 1 | Leaders | 2 a b | 2.6317 | 0.1969 |
| 1 | Male youth out of school | 2 a b | 2.6495 | 0.2854 |
| 1 | Men | 2 a b | 2.6633 | 0.1962 |
| 1 | Women | 2 a b | 2.8053 | 0.1958 |
| 1 | Male youth in school | 2 b | 2.9558 | 0.2190 |
| 1 | Female youth out of school | 2 b | 3.0977 | 0.2925 |
| 29 | Female youth out of school | 1 c | 1.9788 | 0.2637 |
| 29 | Female youth in school | 2 c d | 2.4278 | 0.2465 |
| 29 | Male youth in school | 2 c d e | 2.5119 | 0.2406 |
| 29 | Women | 2 c d e | 2.5305 | 0.2150 |
| 29 | Leaders | 2 d e | 2.6006 | 0.2209 |
| 29 | Men | 2 d e | 2.6407 | 0.2220 |
| 29 | 14 year old boys | 2 d e f | 2.7097 | 0.2676 |
| 29 | 10 year old girls | 2 d e f | 2.7388 | 0.2499 |
| 29 | Male youth out of school | 2 d e f | 2.8953 | 0.2871 |
| 29 | 10 year old boys | 3 e f | 2.9995 | 0.2125 |
| 29 | 14 year old girls | 3 f | 3.2098 | 0.1666 |
| 37 | 14 year old girls | 1 g | 2.2272 | 0.1856 |
| 37 | Male youth out of school | 2 g h | 2.4307 | 0.2213 |
| 37 | Male youth in school | 2 g h i | 2.5078 | 0.1956 |
| 37 | 10 year old boys | 2 g h i | 2.6010 | 0.1997 |
| 37 | Women | 2 g h i | 2.6397 | 0.2115 |
| 37 | 10 year old girls | 2 g h i | 2.6438 | 0.2491 |
| 37 | Men | 2 g h i | 2.6715 | 0.2197 |
| 37 | Leaders | 2 h i | 2.7432 | 0.1593 |
| 37 | 14 year old boys | 2 h i | 2.8667 | 0.1894 |
| 37 | Female youth out of school | 2 h i | 2.8990 | 0.2737 |
| 37 | Female youth in school | 2 i | 3.0130 | 0.2305 |

a: p – value ≥ .1300; b: p – value ≥ .1458; c: p – value ≥ .1184; d: p – value ≥ .2380; e: p – value ≥ .1335; f: p – value ≥ .1160; g: p – value ≥ .1212; h: p – value ≥ .2055; i: p – value ≥ .1022.

*Same lower case letter implies that the Interest Group means are not significantly different

**Key:** Overall mean= 2.6585; **Group =1:** Interest group mean significantly less than the overall mean (Interest group effect < 0, p-value<0.1); **Group 2:** Interest group mean insignificantly different from the overall mean (Interest group effect = 0, p-value >= 0.1); **Group 3:** Interest group mean significantly greater than the overall mean (Interest group effect > 0, p-value < 0 .1)



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It was observed that the mean response level for the perceptions of 14 year old girls in Ward 37 was the lowest whilst that for female youth in school was the highest. No significant differences were observed in the mean response levels for 14 year old girls, male youth in and out of school, 10 year old boys and girls, women and men (p-value ≥.1212). Also, male youth in and out of school, 10 year old boys and girls, women, men, leaders, 14 year old boys and female youth out of school were similar (p-value ≥.2055). The same observations were made with respect to the mean response levels for male youth in school, 10 year old boys and girls, women, men, leaders, 14 year old boys, female youth in and out of school (p-value ≥.1022).

**Significance of differences of perceptions on "*women have access to old age grant*"**

Another access to resources-related perception was "*women have easy and satisfactory access to old age grant*", for which significant interest group interaction effects were observed (p-value 0.0014 < 0.1). Figure 3.11 shows that there were no differences in perceptions regarding this issue among the Wards.

Table 3.11 reveals that the mean response level for the perceptions of women was the lowest and that for 14 year old boys was the highest. However, the mean response level for the perception of women was similar to that for female youth in school and men (p-value ≥.1735). Similar observations were made for the perceptions of female youth in and out of school, men, leaders, 14 year old girls and male youth in and out of school (p-value ≥.1627). Also, the mean response levels for male youth out of school, 10 year old boys and girls and 14 year old boys were not significantly different (p-value ≥.1461).

### 6.3.3 Summary of Results

Approximately 61 % of the respondents agreed with the perceptions relating to the control-related indicators and determinants of women empowerment. The hypothesis that *there are no differences in the perceptions among children, youth, women, men and community leaders on indicators and determinants of women empowerment* were rejected.



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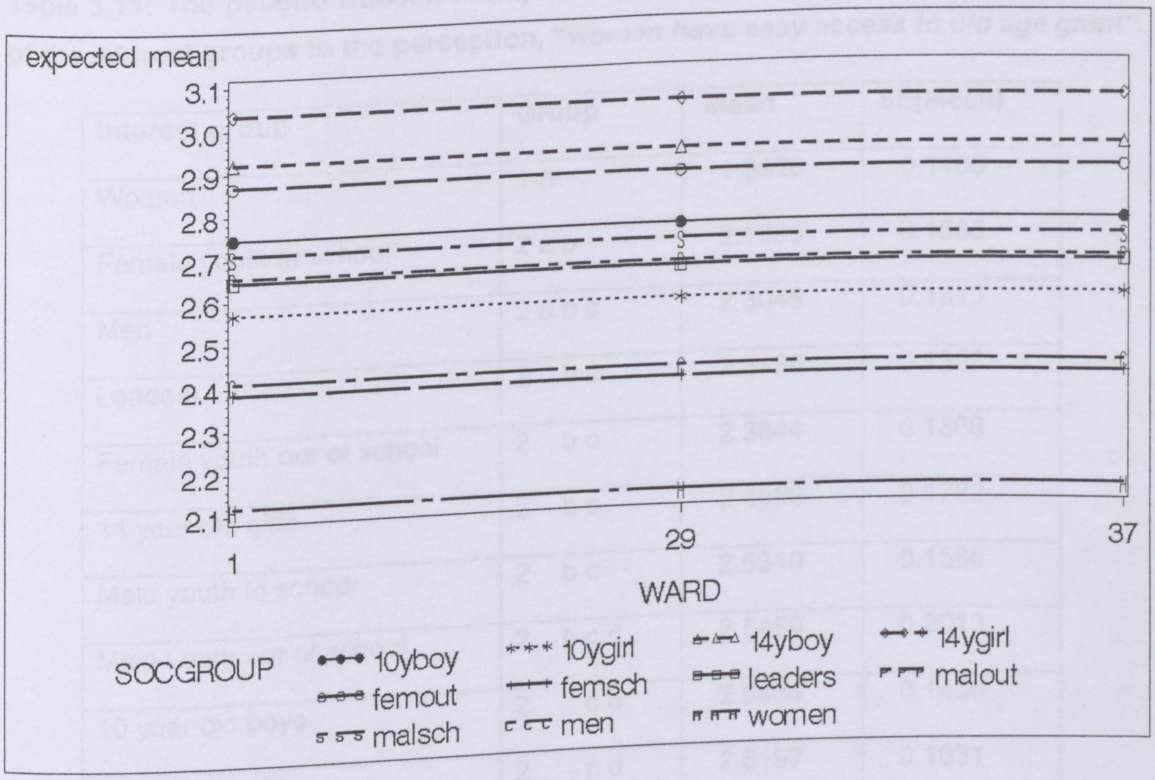



**Figure 3.11: Mean response levels to the perception that "*women have easy and satisfactory access to old age grant*" versus Ward for each interest group (SOCGROUP)**

**femsch** = female youth in school; **femout** = female youth out of school; **malsch** = male youth in school; **maleout** = male youth out of school; **10yboy** = 10 year old boys; **10ygirl** = 10 year old girls; **14ygirl** = 14 year old girls; **14yboy** = 14 year old boys



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**Table 3.11: The pseudo Duncan multiple range's categories of mean response levels of the interest groups to the perception, "*women have easy access to old age grant*"**

| Interest group | Group | Mean | SE(Mean) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Women | 1 a | 1.9920 | 0.1408 |
| Female youth in school | 2 a b | 2.1900 | 0.1565 |
| Men | 2 a b c | 2.3045 | 0.1813 |
| Leaders | 2 b c | 2.3199 | 0.1303 |
| Female youth out of school | 2 b c | 2.3844 | 0.1866 |
| 14 year old girls | 2 b c | 2.4559 | 0.1782 |
| Male youth in school | 2 b c | 2.5310 | 0.1586 |
| Male youth out of school | 2 b c d | 2.5459 | 0.2013 |
| 10 year old boys | 2 c d | 2.5484 | 0.1450 |
| 10 year old girls | 2 c d | 2.6197 | 0.1631 |
| 14 year old boys | 3 d | 2.8944 | 0.1303 |

a: p – value ≥ .1735; b: p – value ≥ .1627 c: p – value ≥ .1961

d: p – value ≥ .1461

*Same lower case letter implies that the Interest Group means are not significantly different

**Key:** Overall mean= 2. 4351; **Group1**: Interest group mean significantly less than the overall mean (Interest group effect < 0, p-value<0.1); **Group 2:** Interest group mean insignificantly different from the overall mean (Interest group effect = 0, p-value >= 0.1); **Group 3:** Interest group mean significantly greater than the overall mean (Interest group effect > 0, p-value < 0 .1)



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Pertaining to the other hypothesis, *the perceptions of children, youth, women, men and community leaders with respect to the indicators and determinants of women empowerment are the same in all the municipal Wards and amongst community-level interest groups in Makhado Municipality;* the current study revealed that there were significant differences in the mean response levels of interest groups with respect to the perceptions, *women are financially independent; women have power and ability to develop their communities* and *women are respected when they become leaders.* Inter-Ward differences were observed among the interest groups in the mean response levels to the perception that *most women are excellent role models for children and youth.* There were overlapping of opinions among the interest groups within and across the Wards of the studied Wards of Makhado Municipality. The mean response levels for all the perceptions were mainly clustered around the insignificant level (2), which indicated that the participants were not so satisfied with the extent of women empowerment. Based on the results of this study, the aforementioned hypothesis was rejected.

Regarding the 2rd hypothesis, the current study brought to light the following results: that there were significant intra-interest group differences for the perceptions, *women can read and write; women have access to life improvement opportunities; women are never overworked* and *women have easy access to old age grant* ($p < 0.1$). For all these perceptions, the mean response levels for women were the lowest compared to the other interest groups. Also, opinions of the members of the various interest groups with respect to all the access to resources-related indicators and determinants of women empowerment were overlapping. In addition, it was observed that the interest groups' response levels for most of access to resources-related perceptions were clustered around the insignificant level (2), showing that the participants were not satisfied with the extent of women empowerment. The hypothesis that *the perceptions of children, youth, women, men and community leaders with respect to the indicators and determinants of women empowerment are the same in all the municipal Wards and cohorts of community interest groups of Makhado Municipality* was rejected.

Significant inter-Ward differences in mean response levels ($p < 0.1$) were observed for the following perceptions: *women are multi-skilled and talented; women know their rights and exercise the rights responsibly and freely; few women are unemployed; women have access to business opportunities* and *women have a lot of time to do all the things they want.* Again, it was observed that the interest groups' response levels to most of the perceptions on access to resources as a factor of women empowerment were scattered around the insignificant level. The hypothesis that *the perceptions of children, youth, women, men,* and



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*community leaders with respect to the indicators and determinants of women empowerment are the same in all the municipal Wards and cohorts of interest groups of Makhado Municipality* was also rejected.

### 3.7 Discussion

Access to resources is a vital component in the women empowerment process. All the perceptions considered in this study relate to this issue. For example, the perceptions that *most women can read and write*; *women are multi-skilled and talented* and *women know their rights and exercise the rights responsibly and freely* relate to education and training. On the other hand, the perceptions that *few women are unemployed; women have easy access to life improvement opportunities; women have easy access to business opportunities; women are never overworked; women have a lot of time to do all the things they want;* and *women have easy access to old age grant* are socio-economic in nature. Kabeer (1999) argues that resources are a precondition for the empowerment of women. Malhotra, Schuler and Boender (2002) support this argument when they refer to resources as "enabling factors or catalysts" to the empowerment process. The following sections present explanations for the results of the perceptions on access to resources as a factor of women empowerment. Each perception is treated independently.

The high mean response levels for interest groups with respect to *most women can read and write* could be due to the availability of adult learning centres within the communities where this study was carried out. Women were likely to have used the facilities to improve their levels of literacy. Chaudhry and Nosheen (2009: 224) reinforce this argument when they point out that "education can play a vital role in bringing about the desirable behavioural changes among women and make them well-equipped in terms of knowledge, competence and capacity to deal with socio-economic problems." Also, Kongolo and Bamgose (2002: 87) reveal that "literacy is a mechanism that can transform and boost women's participation in development because it can stimulate and enhance individual initiative." When women are given the requisite education, relevant to their needs and environment, they are likely to become more visible and recognized in the mainstream of activities both at home and in society at large (Olakulein and Ojo, 2006). Education is likely to enhance development in the communities where women come from since they become able to comprehend issues. Thus, education is likely to increase women's awareness of issues that affect their well-being.

The low mean response levels observed for the perceptions of women and leaders regarding *most women can read and write* could be attributed to various factors. For



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example, women as the people affected by the problem of illiteracy and leaders as custodians of power in the communities were in a better position to express their views concerning the issue at hand. It is possible that women might have lacked the time to attend adult learning classes due to the heavy workloads linked to their triple roles of producers, reproducers and community workers that they play in both the social and economic spheres. Chant (2008: 186) concurs with this view by saying that "rather than finding themselves 'empowered' to strike new deals within their households, many women simply end up burdened with more obligations." In addition to their numerous roles, women in rural areas serve as *de jure* heads of households owing to the migration of men to urban areas in search of jobs and better living conditions (Kongolo and Bamgose, 2002). Therefore, it is crucial to ensure that women have the opportunity and space needed for them to advance their capabilities. When this happens, they contribute meaningfully to their own growth and also to that of their communities.

Most interest groups' agreement with the perception that *women are multi-skilled and talented* endorses the importance of knowledge and skills in both human and economic development, both of which help to unlock one's potential. When women are adequately equipped with the necessary skills, they are able to contribute more positively towards their personal growth and that of the communities they reside in. Agbalajobi (2008) agrees with this view and believes that education arms the individual with the skills needed for survival, social interactions and also contribution to societal development. The high mean response level for the perceptions of male youth out of school might be attributed to the fact that they had a clear understanding of what went on in the lives of women within their communities. In this regard, they might have understood that women multi-tasked within and outside their homes and that the work they did involved the deployment of a lot of skill and talent. As already argued earlier, adequate knowledge and skills help women to engage in meaningful activities which might in turn create jobs for their immediate families and other community members. Shilubane (2007) shares these sentiments and alludes to the fact that education helps bring out rural women's productive potential and enables them to participate more equitably in the growth process of the country.

Low mean response levels were observed for the perceptions of 10 year old girls and 14 year old boys regarding *women are multi-skilled and talented*. This might have been due to the children's own interpretation of the terms *skill* and *talent*, which was most likely to be different from the other interest groups. It is possible that they believed that the work that women did at home and in their communities was routine and thus did not require much skill and talent. Also, presumably they associated skills and talent with the jobs that men often do



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outside the home which often translates into income for the family. These views are consistent with those of Veeran (2003) who argues that although women perform numerous tasks within and outside their homes, low value is accorded to their work. Chant (2008) also asserts that the work that women do tends to go unacknowledged, robbing them of personal gains, prestige or satisfaction. Because of this problem, it is important that efforts are made to ensure that the work that women do receive the recognition that it deserves. Only when this happens will the meaningful roles that women play in community development be appreciated better.

*Women know their rights and exercise the rights responsibly and freely*. The high mean response levels for the perceptions of 10 year old boys in Ward 29, female youth in school in Ward 37 and male youth out of school in Ward 1 might have resulted from the experiences within their communities. They might have witnessed women exercising their rights freely. When women are afforded the chance to exercise their rights, they tend to make better decisions regarding their welfare (Gupta and Malhotra, 2006). The results of the current study showed that women were able to deliberate freely on issues regarding their well-being, suggesting that they were in a better position to chart the course of their destinies. The low mean response levels for the perceptions of 10 year old boys in Ward 1, 14 year old girls in Ward 37 and the male youth out of school in Ward 29 with respect to *women know their rights and exercise the rights responsibly and freely* could be attributed to the fact that they saw men violating women's rights. It is also possible that they noticed that quite often women sought men's approval whenever they made decisions. Wherever this happens, it creates the impression that the rights of women are more limited compared to men.

Most respondents within and across the three Wards agreed with the perception that *few women are unemployed.* The high mean response levels for the perceptions of the 14 year old boys in Ward 29 could be due to the fact that they often saw women engaged in various income-generating activities within and outside their homes. Seeing women bring in money for family use might have made them believe that women were employed. The high mean response levels for the perceptions of female youth out of school and women might be attributed to the value they attached to the work they did in and outside their homes. They might have been involved in self-employment activities which enabled them to contribute to their family needs. Anunobi (2003) points out that the key to improving women's status is to ensure that they have greater influence on social, economic and political issues especially in areas that are of particular concern to them. In that way women will ensure that their interests are safeguarded.



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The low mean response level for the perceptions of 14 year old boys might have arisen as a result of their different interpretation of the term "employment". Probably, the 14 year old boys in Ward 1 understood *employment* to mean working for somebody who at the end of the week or month paid the worker a wage or salary. This study did not try to establish what the residents of the Wards regarded as employment. Future studies that attempt to clarify this concept within the contexts of the interest groups are crucial because they help build a much clearer understanding. It is possible that the low mean response levels for the perceptions of community leaders and male youth out of school highlighted the patriarchal mindset that accords low status to the work done by women. This is a gender issue which is often accompanied by the view that work that women carry out outside the home is simply an extension of the roles they are normally expected to play. As Quan-Baffour (2008) points out, although rural women are overburdened with domestic chores, these are often linked to work outside the home. Also, Anunobi (2003) contends that by failing to address gender bias that discounts the contribution that women make, many development policies and programmes meant to lessen poverty end up worsening the problem. The results of this study seem to confirm the views expressed by Quan-Baffour (2008) and Anunobi (2003) that the patriarchal mindset towards the work done should change in order for women to realise their empowerment goals.

Regarding the perception that *women have access to life improvement opportunities*, most of the interest groups were of the view that women had adequate access. The high mean response levels for the perceptions of 14 year old girls might have been due to the fact that they saw and worked closely with women within and outside their homes. Thus, their views were likely to be based on experience and exposure to the practical reality on the ground. Most likely, they took women's involvement as a sign that they were benefitting meaningfully from the activities in question.

The low mean response level for the perceptions of women might reflect real failure to access life improvement opportunities. This problem might have been emanating from the heavy burden placed on them in their rural areas and the socio-cultural barriers that prevented them from actively participating in community development. Fonjong (2001) believes that women's work is too involving and time consuming, which leaves them with very little time and energy to benefit from training, education or employment opportunities alongside men. Although Fonjong (2001) was referring specifically to the situation in Cameroon, this is common throughout sub-Saharan Africa (Gueye, 2000; Dlodlo, 2009).



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With respect to the perception that *women have easy access to business opportunities*, the high mean response levels for perceptions of 14 year old boys in all the three Wards might be attributed to the fact that at that age they were still closer to their mothers and hence were in a position to interact and observe what was going on in the lives of their mothers. It was possible that they saw women involved in numerous activities which convinced them that women had access to business opportunities. For example, activities such as selling food stuffs and other merchandise, working as farm labourers and some domestic work might have been construed as worthwhile job opportunities for women. When women have access to business opportunities, they can generate income to cater for their own needs and those of their families (Umashankar, 2006). This makes it possible for them to create employment for other community members and thus contribute to the development of rural areas.

Probably, the low mean response levels of the perceptions of 10 year old girls, female youth in school and women might have arisen from the fact that they felt that women were not exposed to as many economic opportunities in comparison to men. The Office on the Status of Women (OSW, 2000) alludes to the fact that women's employment is largely confined to domestic and farming sectors where they are usually employed as casual workers.

The high mean response level for the perceptions of the 14 year old boys regarding *women have easy access to old age grant* might have been brought about by the fact they saw their mothers and grandmothers going to collect old age grants. As a result, they might have assumed that all was in order. In contrast, the low mean response level of perceptions of women might have resulted from the hassles that those in rural areas had to deal with in a bid to access the old age grant. Examples of these impediments could be lack of proper documentation, the distance they had travel to get to grant pay points, grants stopped without any notice or explanation being given, lack of information on how to apply for the funds and illiteracy among many other obstacles (Mpedi, 2008; Madonsela, 2010).

Another perception was *women have a lot of time to do the things they want to*. The high mean response levels for the perceptions of 14 year old girls, female youth in school and female youth out of school could be due to the fact that most of the work that women performed had no time restrictions. Thus, this compelled the young people to conclude that women had enough time to do whatever they wanted to. As opposed to the situation with formal employment, the women were at liberty to set their own timetables.



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The low mean response levels for the perceptions of 10 year old boys, 14 year old girls and female youth out of school regarding *women have a lot of time to do the things they want to* might have been due to them having ample information pertaining to women's workloads and thus were not convinced that women had a lot of time to do what they wanted to. This seems to be in line with the arguments of Fonjong (2001) who asserts that owing to their multiple tasks, women especially those in rural areas, find themselves pressured for time to participate in developmental activities.

Regarding the perception that *women are never overworked*, the high mean response level for the perceptions of female youth out of school could be a reflection of the view that women were free to do whatever work they wanted without adhering to any time restrictions. In contrast to the situation projected above, the low mean response level for women might have been due to their heavy workloads. Women in rural areas are involved in numerous activities at home, in agricultural production and in the communities. According to Gueye (2000), most women in rural Africa are over-burdened with a wide range of activities and tasks in agriculture and animal husbandry as well as in the household. Excessive workload negatively impacts on women's ability to engage in development activities and deprives them of valuable time to advance their human capabilities.

### 3.8 Conclusion

The current study showed that the participants' perceptions regarding the access to resources-related indicators and determinants of women empowerment differed among the interest groups within and across Wards 1, 29 and 37 of Makhado Municipality. Intra-interest group and inter-Ward differences in the extent to which the interest groups believed each perception was factor of women empowerment were detected, suggesting that there were interest group and Ward-specific issues that influenced the respondents' assessments. In addition to this, there were overlapping opinions among the interest groups, indicating that there were common issues across the respondents. Also, the results showed that the participants' responses were mostly clustered around the insignificant level (level 2) which signalled that the participants were not fully convinced with the extent of women's empowerment.

Furthermore, this study brought to light the fact that community members had adequate information about their communities and they knew what worked for them. It is therefore crucial that policy makers directly involve all community members irrespective of their age, sex; positions of leadership held in that community and the Wards they come from, in



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planning and implementation of programmes dealing with issues affecting their livelihoods. Through such processes, communities become accountable and also learn to appreciate all the development within their communities. Such community involvement is likely to bring change that is sustainable and also promote social cohesion.

There is need to carry out a similar study involving a much larger and more representative sample of Makhado Municipality or Vhembe District. Such a study should create space for the interest groups to clarify certain aspects related to their responses. The results obtained through such studies would be useful in devising programmes that address the real needs of the communities.



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# CHAPTER 4: PERCEPTIONS OF GRASSROOTS COMMUNITIES ON THE EXTENT TO WHICH AWARENESS RAISING AFFECTS WOMEN EMPOWERMENT IN RURAL AREAS OF MAKHADO MUNICIPALITY

## 4.1 Introduction

Worldwide, women encounter numerous challenges that deprive them opportunities of reaching their full potential. They face formidable social, economic and political barriers (Anunobi, 2003; Moagi, 2008). The barriers include physical and psychological abuse, lack of resources and decision-making as well as political participation (Makofane, 2001; Oberhauser and Pratt, 2004; Losindilo, Mussa and Akarro, 2010; Sultana, 2010). Closely linked to this situation is the belief of Freire (1972) that 'conscientisation' is the only plausible remedy that can free oppressed people from the challenges they confront. Conscientisation or awareness-raising enables disadvantaged people, women in particular, to identify the structures and institutions that subordinate them. Such knowledge is useful when formulating practical strategies for overcoming the injustices. Fonjong (2001: 230) extends this argument, saying "women's empowerment requires that the population in general as well as women themselves, know the extent of their problems, so that proper strategies can be adopted to reverse the situation."

The preceding arguments highlight the fact that women should be aware of the challenges that militate against their advancement and must also contribute to formulating appropriate solutions. Only when they acknowledge this fact would it be possible for them to mobilise themselves in order to collectively overcome the issues blocking their empowerment. Their efforts are likely to yield sustainable results when other members of their communities believe and contribute to solutions to the challenges. This suggests that men, young people and community leaders must have a say in strategies that are adopted to empower women. Thus, this study took this view into account and investigated the extent to which children, youth, women, men and community leaders in the villages constituting Wards 1, 29 and 37 of Makhado Municipality in South Africa agreed with some perceptions relating to awareness raising as a factor of women empowerment. The study followed up on the recommendations that Mathaulula (2008) made after undertaking an exploratory investigation of women empowerment in the same Wards of Makhado Municipality.

## 4.2 Research Methodology



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The research methodology used in this study is the same as that described in Chapter 3 (sections 3.2.1 to 3.3). A total of 5 924 participants from the 41 villages in Wards 1, 29 and 37 of Makhado Municipality voluntarily participated in the data collection-focused reflection circles from which non-parametric data were collected using questionnaires that required answers on a Likert-type scale of responses. The sources of data were 7-10 year old boys and girls; 11-14 year old boys and girls; male and female youth in and out of school; women; men and community leaders. They were invited through open invitations sent out through commonly used channels such as schools, churches and local leaders to participate in the village-level research workshops.

**Data Management and Analysis**

The data were appropriately coded before being stored in a computer as a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet. Thereafter, the data were imported into the Statistical Package for Social Scientists: SPSS (Wagner, 2010) and Statistical Analysis Systems (SAS, 2005) version 9.1.3, for analysis.

Pearson's correlations were computed in order to establish the strength of the relationships that existed among all the perceptions. Because there were weak linear relationships among them, the data were then analysed using univariate methods. The variables were individually modelled as functions of the main and interaction effects of Ward and interest groups.

The Categorical Data Modelling (CATMOD) procedure of SAS (2005) version 9.1.3, for fitting linear models with ordinal response variables was used to investigate the effects of Ward and interest groups. Perceptions of awareness raising as a factor of women empowerment were considered one at a time. Posthoc tests were carried out using the pseudo-Duncan multiple range procedure (Miller, 2004).

**4.3 Results**

The following section presents the findings of the study whose aim was to investigate the extent to which awareness raising affected women empowerment. Results for each perception are covered one after the other. It is worth noting that apart from the Mathaulula (2008) study which was exploratory, there is no evidence of similar studies in Limpopo Province and beyond.



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### 4.3.1 Extent to which awareness raising affects women empowerment

Overall, 54 % of the respondents from the three Wards agreed with the perceptions that defined the dimensions of "awareness raising" as a factor of women empowerment (Table 4.1). In Ward 1, the proportions varied from 48 % for the perception that *women are aware of all government and private sector opportunities for their empowerment* to 56 % for *women are rarely physically, emotionally and sexually abused by men*. In Ward 29, the proportions extended from 51 % for *women are aware of all government and private sector opportunities for their empowerment* to 59 % for the perception that *women are rarely physically, emotionally and sexually abused by men*. Lastly, 51 % of the residents of Ward 37 believed that *women are aware of all government and private sector opportunities for their empowerment* as opposed to 56 % who thought that *women are rarely physically, emotionally and sexually abused by men*. Also, the correlation between the perceptions, *women are aware of all government and private sector opportunities for their empowerment* versus *women are rarely physically, emotionally and sexually abused by men* ($r = 0.35$) was weak.

### 4.3.2 Differences in perceptions of interest groups with respect to "awareness raising" as a factor of women empowerment

There were no significant Ward and Ward x Interest (community) group effects regarding "*women are rarely physically, emotionally and sexually abused by men*". However, significant differences (p-value = 0.0014 < 0.1) were observed among the interest groups. Further evidence relating to the observation that the differences in mean response levels to the perception that "*women are rarely physically, emotionally and sexually abused by men*" did not depend on the Ward is presented in Figure 4.1. In Table 4.2, it is shown that the mean response level for women to the perception, *women are rarely physically, emotionally and sexually abused by men* was the lowest among all the interest groups with that of male youth out of school being the highest. Although the mean response level for women was similar to that of female youth out of school (p-value ≥.3322), it was lower compared to those of all the other interest groups.

There were no statistically significant differences in mean response levels of the perceptions of female youth out of school, men, male and female youth in school, community leaders and 10 year old girls (p-value ≥.1318). A similar pattern was observed in the mean response levels of male and female youth in school; community leaders; 10 year old boys and girls and 14 year old boys and girls (p-value ≥.1182).



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**Table 4.1: Extent of agreement with "awareness raising" as a factor of women empowerment in Wards 1, 29 and 37 of Makhado Municipality, South Africa**

| Perception | Name of Ward | *Proportion of respondents (%) n = 5 924 | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Not true | Somewhat true | True | Very true |
| Women are rarely physically, emotionally and sexually abused by men | 1 | 29 | 15 | 38 | 18 |
| | 29 | 32 | 9 | 32 | 27 |
| | 37 | 30 | 14 | 36 | 20 |
| Women are aware of all government and private sector opportunities for their empowerment | 1 | 27 | 25 | 29 | 19 |
| | 29 | 29 | 20 | 33 | 18 |
| | 37 | 29 | 20 | 32 | 19 |

**n** = number of research participants across all the Wards



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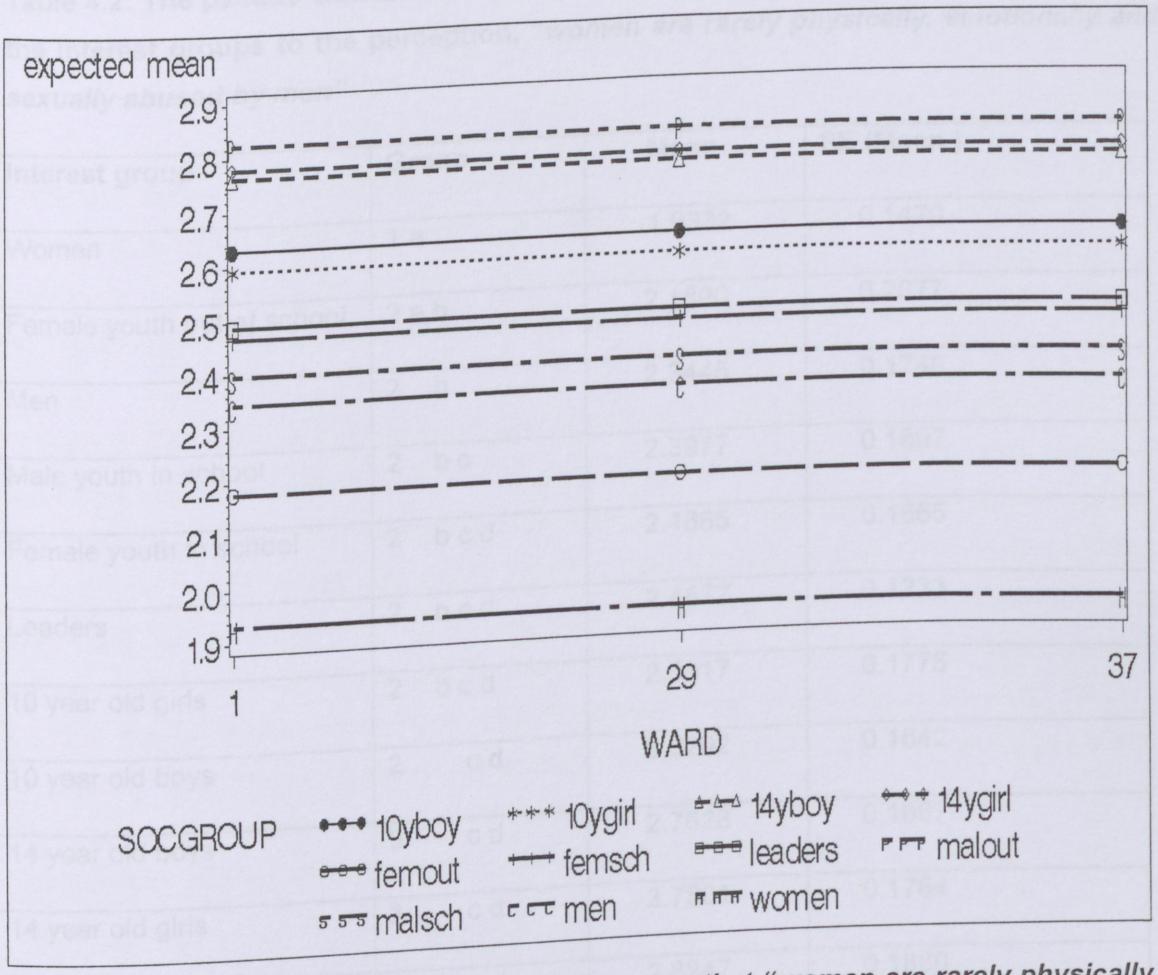



**Figure: 4.1 Mean response levels to the perception that "*women are rarely physically, emotionally and sexually abused by men*" versus Ward for each Interest group (SOCGROUP)**

**femsch** = female youth in school; **femout** = female youth out of school; **malsch** = male youth in school; **maleout** = male youth out of school; **10yboy** = 10 year old boys; **10ygirl** = 10 year old girls; **14ygirl** = 14 year old girls; **14yboy** = 14 year old boys



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**Table 4.2: The pseudo Duncan multiple range's categories of mean response levels of the interest groups to the perception, *"women are rarely physically, emotionally and sexually abused by men"***

| Interest group | Group | Mean | SE (Mean ) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Women | 1 a | 1.9332 | 0.1470 |
| Female youth out of school | 2 a b | 2.1800 | 0.2077 |
| Men | 2 b | 2.3445 | 0.1740 |
| Male youth in school | 2 b c | 2.3977 | 0.1697 |
| Female youth in school | 2 b c d | 2.4665 | 0.1665 |
| Leaders | 2 b c d | 2.4877 | 0.1233 |
| 10 year old girls | 2 b c d | 2.5917 | 0.1776 |
| 10 year old boys | 2 c d | 2.6292 | 0.1642 |
| 14 year old boys | 3 c d | 2.7628 | 0.1667 |
| 14 year old girls | 3 c d | 2.7801 | 0.1764 |
| Male youth out of school | 3 d | 2.8247 | 0.1880 |

a: p – value ≥ .3322; b: p – value ≥ .1318; c: p – value ≥ .1182; d: p – value ≥ .1537.

*Same lower case letter implies that the Interest Group means are not significantly different

**Key:** Overall mean= 2.4431; **Group =1:** Interest group mean significantly less than the overall mean (Interest group effect < 0, p-value<0.1); **Group 2:** Interest group mean insignificantly different from the overall mean (Interest group effect = 0, p-value >= 0.1); **Group 3:** Interest group mean significantly greater than the overall mean (Interest group effect > 0, p-value < 0 .1)



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Lastly, the mean response levels for the perceptions of female youth in school; community leaders; 10 year old girls and boys; 14 year old boys and girls and male youth out of school were the same (p-value ≥.1537).

Pertaining to the perception that "*women are aware of all government and private sector opportunities for their empowerment*", the Ward and Ward x Interest group effects were not significant (Figure 4.2). Although this was the case, there were significant Interest group effects on the mean response levels to this perception (p-value = 0.0004 < 0.1).

In Table 4.3, it is shown that the mean response level for the perceptions of women was the same as those for female youth in school and community leaders (p-value ≥.1170) but lower than those for all the other interest groups. Although the mean response levels for female youth in and out of school; community leaders; male youth in school; 10 year old girls and men were similar (p-value ≥.1105), they were lower than those for female youth out of school; male youth out of school; 10 year old boys; 14 year old girls and boys (p-value ≥.1363). No significant differences were detected in the mean response levels for the perceptions of community leaders; male youth in school; 10 year old girls; men; female and male youth out of school (p-value ≥.1342). However, these mean response levels were lower than those for 10 year old boys and 14 year old girls (p-value ≥.1614).

### 4.3.3 Summary of results

Almost half of respondents (46 %) disagreed with the perceptions, *women are rarely physically, emotionally and sexually abused by men* and *women are aware of all government and private sector opportunities for their empowerment*. There were differences in opinions among the interest groups. The hypothesis that *there are no differences in the perceptions of children, youth, women, men* and *community leaders on the indicators and determinants of women empowerment* was rejected.

The other hypothesis of this study was that *the perceptions of children, youth, women, men and community leaders with respect to the indicators and determinants of women empowerment are the same in all the municipal Wards and amongst village-level interest groups in Makhado Municipality*. The study revealed that there were significant interest group differences and thus this hypothesis was rejected. Overlaps in opinions were observed in the responses of the various interest groups. For example women and female youth out of school shared similar perceptions.



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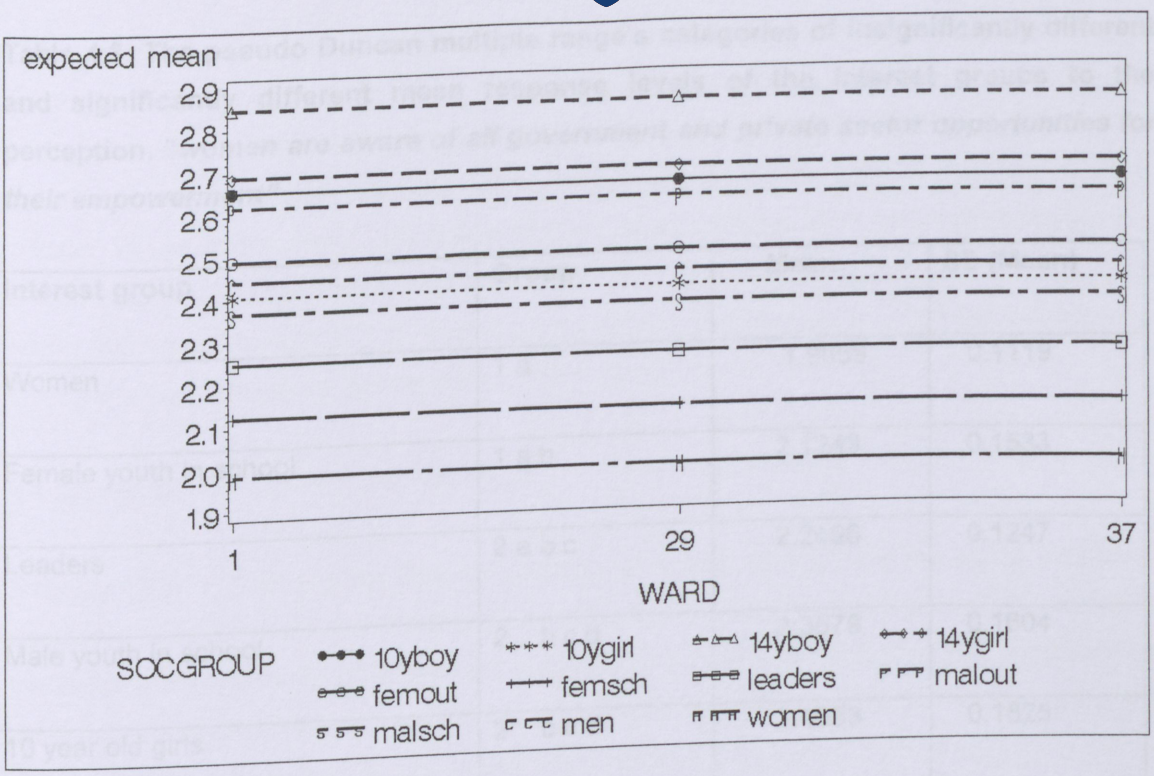



**Figure 4.2: Mean response levels for the perception that *"women are aware of all government and private sector opportunities for their empowerment"* versus Ward for each interest group (SOCGROUP)**

**femsch** = female youth in school; **femout** = female youth out of school; **malsch** = male youth in school; **maleout** = male youth out of school; **10yboy** = 10 year old boys; **10ygirl** = 10 year old girls; **14ygirl** = 14 year old girls; **14yboy** = 14 year old boys



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**Table 4.3: The pseudo Duncan multiple range's categories of insignificantly different and significantly different mean response levels of the interest groups to the perception, "*women are aware of all government and private sector opportunities for their empowerment*"**

| Interest group | Group | Mean | SE (Mean) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Women | 1 a | 1.9869 | 0.1119 |
| Female youth in school | 1 a b | 2.1243 | 0.1533 |
| Leaders | 2 a b c | 2.2496 | 0.1247 |
| Male youth in school | 2 b c d | 2.3679 | 0.1604 |
| 10 year old girls | 2 b c d | 2.4053 | 0.1825 |
| Men | 2 b c d | 2.4422 | 0.1730 |
| Female youth out of school | 2 b c d e | 2.4912 | 0.1713 |
| Male youth out of school | 2 c d e | 2.66171 | 0.2113 |
| 10 year old boys | 2 d e | 2.6534 | 0.1783 |
| 14 year old girls | 2 d e | 2.66881 | 0.1630 |
| 14 year old boys | 3 e | 2.8486 | 0.1680 |

a: p –value ≥.1170; b: p –value ≥.1105; c: p –value ≥ .1342; d: p –value ≥ .1614;
e: p –value ≥ .1363
*Same lower case letter implies that the Interest Group means are not significantly different

**Key:** Overall mean= 2.4431; **Group =1:** Interest group mean significantly less than the overall mean (Interest group effect < 0, p-value<0.1); **Group 2:** Interest group mean insignificantly different from the overall mean (Interest group effect = 0, p-value > = 0.1); **Group 3:** Interest group mean significantly greater than the overall mean (Interest group effect > 0, p-value < 0 .1)



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However, the perceptions of female youth out of school were similar to those of men; male youth in school; leaders and 10 year old girls. Another observation was that the participants' responses were mostly clustered around the insignificant level (level 2), which showed that the community members were not satisfied with the level of women's empowerment. In addition to the above, this study revealed that the awareness raising related indicators and determinants of women empowerment did not vary from one geographical location (Ward within Makhado Municipality) to another. The absence of Ward x interest group interaction effects on the participants' perceptions confirmed this.

### 4.4 Discussion

Fonjong (2001: 224) argues that "awareness provides women with the basic actions to overcome and dismantle the obstacles which are holding them back". This statement highlights the importance of awareness raising as a crucial component of the empowerment process. Awareness raising enables disadvantaged segments of society to recognise the structures that impede their progress and helps to devise corrective measures.

#### 4.4.1 Differences in perceptions of interest groups with respect to "awareness raising" as a factor of women empowerment

This study revealed that the various interest groups believed to different extents that *women are rarely physically, emotionally and sexually abused by men*. It is possible that this perception originated from differences in the levels of awareness of the extent to which women were subjected to various forms of abuse. Because the community members did not provide information on the parameters they considered when assessing this perception, it is crucial to investigate what these were. Such an exercise would help build a clearer understanding of the differences in perceptions.

The low mean response levels observed for the perceptions of women compared to all the other interest groups might have been due to the fact that as the directly affected group, they were simply expressing their personal experiences. Female youth out of school also held a similar view point to that of women. Presumably, all this meant that women were subjected to abuse in their daily lives, a viewpoint that the Office on the Status of Women (OSW, 2000) also expresses. Setswe, Nkomo, Friedman, Magezi, Nyuswa and Majola (2009) reveal that South Africa is one of the countries with the highest levels of violence against women and the inter-related HIV and AIDS epidemic compounds the problem. The Bill of Rights of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act 108 of 1996 indicates that violence against



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women directly infringes on their rights. Failure to observe women's rights impacts negatively on their empowerment. Penzhorn (2005) points out that violence against women reflects unequal power relations. Such abuse is prevalent among women in rural areas because they depend, to a large extent, on their husbands for upkeep (Oberhauser and Pratt, 2004; Adegoroye and Adegoroye, 2008). Also, usually, they are usually not aware of their rights (Makofane, 2001). Chant (2008) points out that most of the violence within families goes unnoticed because the family is regarded as a private institution far from state interference.

Gender-based violence impacts negatively on economic development and ultimately affects the growth of communities. This occurs through the reduction of women's participation in the labour market, which invariably leads to decreased productivity and also lower earnings and investment (International Centre for Research on Women: ICRW, 2005). In addition to this, it puts a strain on personal relationships and quality of life. Abused women often find themselves socially isolated, which prevents them from participating in income-generating activities. Makofane (2001) supports this argument and states that violence against women suppresses their creative potential and precipitates low self-esteem.

In this study, the high mean response levels for the perceptions of male youth out of school might have arisen from the fact that most often they perpetrate the violence (OSW, 2000; Makofane, 2001: Izugbara, 2004; Chant, 2008). Thus, they might not have realized the seriousness of the issue. Since the Wards where this study was carried out were patriarchal societies, wife beating might have been regarded as a normal and expected societal norm. This is consistent with the observations of Makofane (2001) and Umashankar (2006), who allude to the fact that traditional mindsets towards women keep the violence alive. Also, these authors further state that the myth that no one should interfere in the domestic affairs of a man and his wife worsens the problem. Because of this situation, the challenge continues to breed in silence and also find legitimacy through cultural norms and beliefs.

Possibly, the high mean response levels for the perceptions of 14 year old boys and girls might have resulted from the children's lack of awareness of the negative impact of gender-based violence on women's livelihoods. This means that the 14 year old boys and girls might have had a superficial understanding of what abuse actually was. Often, some people limit abuse to wife beating or rape only, not knowing that there are various forms of abuse (Vetten, 2005; Ashimolowo and Akinbile, 2007; Sultana, 2010).



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With respect to *women are aware of all government and private sector opportunities for their empowerment*, the low mean response levels for the perceptions of women might have been influenced by their failure to access some information on government and private sector opportunities that would help promote their empowerment. Female youth in school had similar opinions as women. The views of women and female youth in school were in harmony with those expressed during the study that Oberhauser and Pratt (2004) conducted in Limpopo Province. In the latter study, women revealed that they were unaware of the credit programmes at their disposal. Thus, they could not take advantage of the opportunities at their disposal to facilitate their own empowerment. The women indicated that lack of information on viable markets for their products constrained their empowerment. Knowledge is power and failure to get hold of it hampers individual growth and that of the society in general. Clearly, there is need for carrying out awareness campaigns aiming to educate women about where to access the crucial information they need. Such information can be disseminated through seminars, workshops, properly packaged materials such as pamphlets as well as other print and electronic media, among others.

Probably, the superior mean response levels for the perceptions of 14 year old boys obtained in this study was influenced by the fact that they saw women carrying out various activities within and outside their homes. As a result, it is possible that this might have made them believe that women had a lot of knowledge relating to their empowerment.

### 4.5 Conclusion

The current study showed that the majority of the interest groups within the villages of Wards 1, 29 and 37 of Makhado Municipality agreed to different extents that awareness raising affected women empowerment. However, for both perceptions on awareness raising that were investigated in this study, the mean response levels for the perceptions of women were the lowest, confirming that they were not satisfied with the extent of their own empowerment. Also, it was revealed that community members had deep knowledge about the situation in their villages and knew what was supposed to be done. It is vital to harness such knowledge and use it to develop interventions that address the real needs of the people within the communities in question. This study demonstrated that men, community leaders, women, youth and children could be engaged in a participatory manner when attempting to understand an issue of common interest. In addition, the various interest groups within villages held views that should not be ignored when developing programmes for women empowerment. Most notable in this study was the inclusion of people at least seven years old to contribute their views on issues affecting their villages. Adoption of this approach as a



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way of programming development interventions could significantly alter the way communities view this generation.

This study distilled the perceptions of community members in three Wards of Makhado Municipality only. It seems imperative, resources permitting, to carry out a similar study covering a more representative area of Makhado Municipality or even Vhembe District. The results of such a study would be useful when mounting more comprehensive, long-term women empowerment programmes.



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# CHAPTER 5 EXTENT TO WHICH RURAL COMMUNITIES PERCEIVEPARTICIPATION AS A FACTOR OF WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

## 5.1 Introduction

Participation of people directly affected by an issue is a fundamental pillar of governance in development practice. As Bowen (2008: 65) puts it, "genuine participation requires that special attention be paid to involving all constituent groups in the local community, including the poor people, in strategic planning and decision-making." In the same vein, Khan (2005) regards community participation as an active process by which beneficiary/client groups influence the direction and execution of a project. Through their inclusion, the affected groups, women in particular, are able to influence and at the same time safeguard their interests by making decisions pertaining to their well-being. In this way, they become agents of their own development (Mbeki, 2006; Bartlett, 2008). Oakley (1991) agrees with this view and states that participation increases people's sense of control over issues affecting them, helps them to learn how to plan and implement and, on a broader front, prepares them for participation at regional and national levels. Furthermore, Oakley (1991) argues that development should be scrutinized in terms of the tangible results and interests of the rural people themselves. Bartlett (2008) alludes to the fact that if properly handled, participation can bring immense benefits to rural people and lay the foundation for genuine self-determination.

The arguments presented above suggest that it is crucial to allow grassroots communities to take centre stage in issues of their own development. Through such processes they chart the course of their destinies. It is in light of this that this study was carried out with the aim of assessing the extent to which children, youth, women, men and community leaders within villages in Wards 1, 29 and 37 of Makhado Municipality in Limpopo Province of South Africa perceived participation to be a factor of empowerment.

## 5.2 Research Methodology

The same research methodology as described in sections 3.2.1 to 3.3 of Chapter 3 was applied in this study. A total of 5 924 participants from the 41 villages in Wards 1, 29 and 37 of Makhado Municipality voluntarily participated in the data collection-focused reflection circles. The participants who comprised 7-10 year old boys and girls; 11-14 year old boys and girls; male and female youth in and out of school; women; men and leaders were



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mobilised through open invitations sent out through channels such as schools, churches and local leaders. No attempt was made to dictate the number of people who represented each category of community groups for reasons that Francis, Dube, Mokganyetji and Chitapa (2010) explained.

**Data Analysis**

The data were appropriately coded before being stored in a computer as a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet. Thereafter, the data were imported into the Statistical Package for Social Scientists (Wagner, 2010) and Statistical Analysis Systems (SAS, 2005) version 9.1.3 for analysis.

As was done in Chapter 3, Pearson's correlations were computed to determine the relationships among all the perceptions. Weak linear relationships were observed amongst the perceptions, which necessitated use of univariate methods of data analysis. Each perception was individually modelled as a function of the main and interaction effects of Ward and interest group. The Categorical Data Modelling (CATMOD) procedure of the Statistical Analysis Systems (SAS, 2005) version 9.1.3 with linear models ordinal response variables was used to investigate the effects of Ward and interest groups on each women empowerment-related perception. Further, conclusive tests were carried out using the pseudo-Duncan multiple range procedure of SAS (2005).

## 5.3 Results

The results of the study whose aim was to assess the extent to which participation affects women empowerment are presented in the following sections. Each perception is treated separately, taking into account the hypotheses tested in the study.

### 5.3.1 Extent of agreement with perceptions on participation as a factor of empowerment

As shown in Table 5.1, approximately 56 % of the respondents agreed with the perceptions relating to participation as a factor of empowerment. In Ward 1, the proportions ranged from 55 % for the perception, *women are always given the chance to make firm decisions at home and in the communities* to 58 % for *women are not undermined by men and society in general*.



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**Table 5.1: Extent of agreement with perceptions relating to "participation" as a factor of women empowerment in Wards 1, 29 and 37**

| Perception | Name of Ward | Proportion of respondents (%) n = 5 924 | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Not true | Somewhat true | True | Very true |
| Women occupy powerful leadership positions such as Principals and Ward Councillors | 1 | 29 | 14 | 38 | 19 |
| | 29 | 25 | 16 | 36 | 23 |
| | 37 | 25 | 13 | 45 | 17 |
| Women are always given the chance to make firm decisions at home and in the communities | 1 | 31 | 14 | 37 | 18 |
| | 29 | 28 | 18 | 36 | 18 |
| | 37 | 32 | 17 | 35 | 16 |
| Women are not undermined by men and society in general | 1 | 25 | 17 | 33 | 25 |
| | 29 | 33 | 15 | 32 | 20 |
| | 37 | 33 | 13 | 37 | 17 |

**n** = number of research participants across all the Wards



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On the other hand, the proportions for Ward 29 ranged from approximately 52 % for *women are not undermined by men and society in general* to 59 % for the perception *women occupy powerful leadership positions such as Principals and Ward Councillors.*

In Ward 37, the proportions ranged from about 51 % for *women are always given the chance to make firm decisions at home and in the communities* to 62 % for the perception, *women occupy powerful leadership positions such as Principals and Ward Councillors.*

### 5.3.2 Differences in perceptions of interest groups with respect to "participation" as a factor of women empowerment

There was a significant Ward x interest group interaction effect (p-value = 0.0257) on the response levels relating to the perception, "*women occupy powerful leadership positions such as Principals and Ward Councillors.*" Figure 5.1 shows that the differences in means for the perceptions of the interest groups varied among the three Wards.

Table 5.2 shows that in Ward 1, the mean response level for the perceptions of 10 year old girls was the lowest, with that for women being the highest. The mean response level for women was not significantly different from that of leaders; female youth in and out of school; men; male youth in and out of school and 14 year old boys (p-value ≥.1163).

In Ward 29, the lowest mean response level was that of 10 year old boys with that of male youth out of school being the highest. Although the mean response level 10 year old boys was the lowest, it was the same as that for 14 year old boys and girls; female youth in and out of school; women; leaders; male youth in school and men (p-value ≥.1546). The mean response level for 10 year old girls was not significantly different from that of 14 year old boys and girls; female youth in and out of school; women; leaders; male youth in school and men (p-value ≥. 1265). There was no difference in mean response levels for female and male youth in school; women; leaders; men; 10 year old girls and male youth out of school (p-value ≥.1072).

In Ward 37, although the mean score for the perceptions for women was the lowest compared to the other interest groups, it was similar to those for male youth in and out of school; 14 year old girls and men (p-value ≥. 1211). A similar pattern was observed for the mean response levels for male youth out of school; 14 year old girls and boys; male youth in school; men; leaders; 14 year old boys and 10 year old girls (p-value ≥. 1324).



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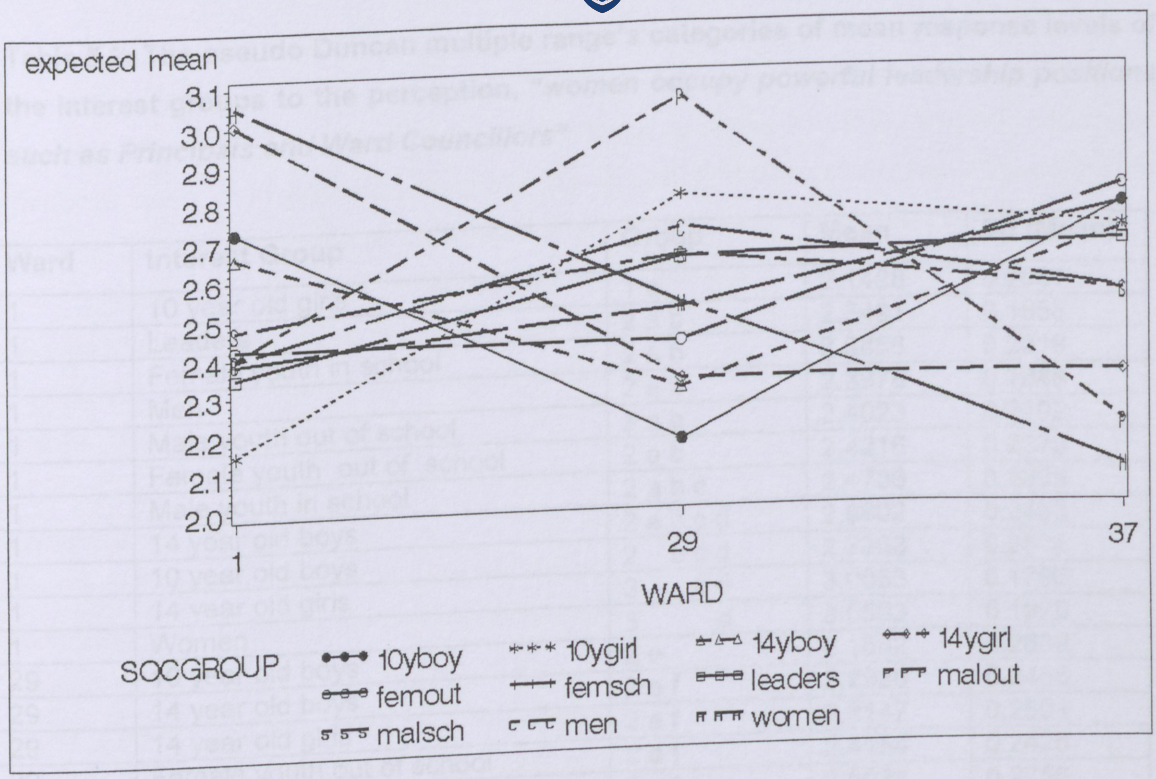



**Figure: 5.1 Mean response levels for the perception that *"women occupy powerful leadership positions such as Principals and Ward Councillors"* versus Ward for each Interest group (SOCGROUP)**

**femsch** = female youth in school; **femout** = female youth out of school; **malsch** = male youth in school; **maleout** = male youth out of school; **10yboy** = 10 year old boys; **10ygirl** = 10 year old girls; **14ygirl** = 14 year old girls; **14yboy** = 14 year old boys



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**Table 5.2: The pseudo Duncan multiple range's categories of mean response levels of the interest groups to the perception, *"women occupy powerful leadership positions such as Principals and Ward Councillors"***

| Ward | Interest Group | Group | Mean | SE (Mean) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 10 year old girls | 1 a | 2.1488 | 0.2061 |
| 1 | Leaders | 2 a b | 2.3491 | 0.1958 |
| 1 | Female youth in school | 2 a b | 2.3858 | 0.2219 |
| 1 | Men | 2 a b | 2.3978 | 0.2048 |
| 1 | Male youth out of school | 2 a b | 2.4023 | 0.2192 |
| 1 | Female youth out of school | 2 a b | 2.4216 | 0.2370 |
| 1 | Male youth in school | 2 a b c | 2.4736 | 0.2839 |
| 1 | 14 year old boys | 2 a b c d | 2.6602 | 0.2453 |
| 1 | 10 year old boys | 2 b c d | 2.7263 | 0.2574 |
| 1 | 14 year old girls | 3 c d | 3.0053 | 0.1796 |
| 1 | Women | 3 d | 3.0503 | 0.1929 |
| 29 | 10 year old boys | 2 e | 2.1582 | 0.2639 |
| 29 | 14 year old boys | 2 e f | 2.2926 | 0.2458 |
| 29 | 14 year old girls | 2 e f | 2.3147 | 0.2501 |
| 29 | Female youth out of school | 2 e f | 2.4154 | 0.2425 |
| 29 | Female youth in school | 2 e f g | 2.5021 | 0.2756 |
| 29 | Women | 2 e f g | 2.5139 | 0.2019 |
| 29 | Leaders | 2 e f g | 2.6316 | 0.2052 |
| 29 | Male youth in school | 2 e f g | 2.6393 | 0.3063 |
| 29 | Men | 2 e f g | 2.7102 | 0.2661 |
| 29 | 10 year old girls | 2 f g | 2.7938 | 0.2056 |
| 29 | Male youth out of school | 3 g | 3.0495 | 0.1847 |
| 37 | Women | 1 h | 2.0780 | 0.1761 |
| 37 | Male youth out of school | 2 h i | 2.1904 | 0.2397 |
| 37 | 14 year old girls | 2 h i j | 2.3221 | 0.2359 |
| 37 | Male youth in school | 2 h i j | 2.5293 | 0.2492 |
| 37 | Men | 2 h i j | 2.5341 | 0.2307 |
| 37 | Leaders | 2 i j | 2.6615 | 0.1620 |
| 37 | 14 year old boys | 2 i j | 2.6893 | 0.1945 |
| 37 | 10 year old girls | 2 i j | 2.6995 | 0.2389 |
| 37 | Female youth in school | 2 j | 2.7543 | 0.2260 |
| 37 | 10 year old boys | 2 j | 2.7576 | 0.2311 |
| 37 | female youth out of school | 2 j | 2.8051 | 0.2457 |

a: p – value ≥ .1163; b: p – value ≥ .2481; c: p – value ≥ .1250; d: p – value ≥ .2125; e: p – value ≥ .1546; f: p – value ≥ .1265; g: p – value ≥ .1072; h: p – value ≥ .1211; i: p – value ≥ .1324; j: p – value ≥ .1664

*Same lower case letter implies that the Interest Group means are not significantly different

**Key:** Overall mean= 2.5474; **Group =1:** Interest group mean significantly less than the overall mean (Interest group effect < 0, p-value<0.1); **Group 2:** Interest group mean insignificantly different from the overall mean (Interest group effect = 0, p-value >= 0.1); **Group 3:** Interest group mean significantly greater than the overall mean (Interest group effect > 0, p-value < 0 .1).



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The mean response levels for the following interest groups: 14 year old girls and boys; male and female youth in school; men; leaders; 10 year old girls and boys and female youth in and out of school were not significantly different (p-value ≥ .1664).However, the mean response levels of 14 year old girls and boys; 10 year old boys and women were superior to those of other interest groups (p-value ≥.2125). Significant differences in response levels were observed among the interest groups with respect to *"women are always given the chance to make firm decisions at home and in communities* (p-value = 0.0832 < 0.1). Figure 5.2 shows that the differences in mean response levels to the perceptions of the interest groups differed across Wards.

Table 5.3 shows that in Ward 1, the mean response level for the perceptions of women regarding *"women are always given the chance to make firm decisions at home and in communities* was the lowest compared to those of the other interest groups. Although the mean response level for the perception was the lowest it was not significantly different from those of leaders; female youth in school; 14 year old boys and male youth out of school (p-value ≥ .1222). No significant differences were detected in the mean response levels of leaders; female youth in and out of school; 14 year old boys and girls; male youth out of school; men and 10 year old girls and boys (p-value ≥ .2220). Lastly, the mean response levels for male youth out of school; men; 10 year old girls and boys; 14 year old girls; female youth out of school and male youth in school were similar (p-value ≥ .2284).

In Ward 29, the mean response level for the perceptions of female youth out of school with respect to *"women are always given the chance to make firm decisions at home and in communities* was the lowest. Although this was the case, it was similar to that for 10 year old girls and boys; leaders; 14 year old girls; male youth in school and men (p-value ≥.1093). However, the mean response level for the female youth out of school was significantly lower than that of 14 year old boys; male youth out of school; women and female youth in school (p-value ≥ .1201).

For Ward 37, the lowest mean response level for the perception, *"women are always given the chance to make firm decisions at home and in communities* was that for male youth in school. The highest mean response level was that for women. There were no significant differences in the mean response levels for the perceptions of male and female youth in school; male youth out of school, 14 year old boys and girls; men and 10 year old boys (p-value ≥ .1439). A similar trend was observed in the mean response levels for female youth in school; male youth out of school; 14 year old boys and girls; men; 10 year old boys and girls and leaders (p-value ≥ .1588).



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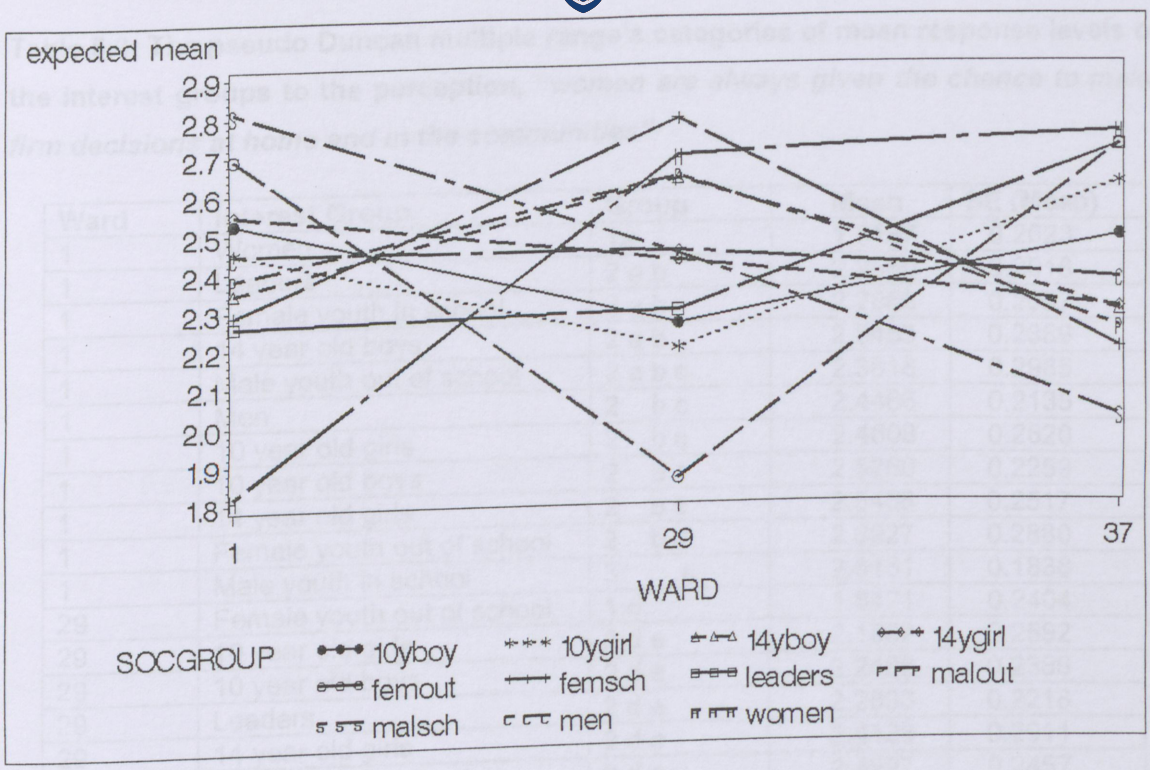



**Figure 5.2: Mean response levels for the perception that "*women are always given the chance to make firm decisions at home and in communities*" versus Ward for each interest group (SOCGROUP)**

**femsch** = female youth in school; **femout** = female youth out of school; **malsch** = male youth in school; **maleout** = male youth out of school; **10yboy** = 10 year old boys; **10ygirl** = 10 year old girls; **14ygirl** = 14 year old girls; **14yboy** = 14 year old boys



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**Table 5.3: The pseudo Duncan multiple range's categories of mean response levels of the interest groups to the perception, *"women are always given the chance to make firm decisions at home and in the communities"***

| Ward | Interest Group | Group | Mean | SE (Mean) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Women | 1a | 1.8187 | 0.2023 |
| 1 | Leaders | 2 a b | 2.2580 | 0.2018 |
| 1 | Female youth in school | 2 a b | 2.2863 | 0.2097 |
| 1 | 14 year old boys | 2 a b | 2.3453 | 0.2389 |
| 1 | Male youth out of school | 2 a b c | 2.3818 | 0.2985 |
| 1 | Men | 2 b c | 2.4466 | 0.2135 |
| 1 | 10 year old girls | 2 b c | 2.4508 | 0.2820 |
| 1 | 10 year old boys | 2 b c | 2.5260 | 0.2259 |
| 1 | 14 year old girls | 2 b c | 2.5488 | 0.2517 |
| 1 | Female youth out of school | 2 b c | 2.6927 | 0.2880 |
| 1 | Male youth in school | 3 c | 2.8131 | 0.1838 |
| 29 | Female youth out of school | 1 d | 1.8471 | 0.2404 |
| 29 | 10 year old girls | 2 d e | 2.1862 | 0.2592 |
| 29 | 10 year old boys | 2 d e | 2.2486 | 0.2386 |
| 29 | Leaders | 2 d e | 2.2833 | 0.2218 |
| 29 | 14 year old girls | 2 d e | 2.4128 | 0.2911 |
| 29 | Male youth in school | 2 d e | 2.4297 | 0.2457 |
| 29 | Men | 2 d e | 2.4386 | 0.2594 |
| 29 | 14 year old boys | 2 e | 2.6254 | 0.2800 |
| 29 | Male youth out of school | 2 e | 2.6312 | 0.2287 |
| 29 | Women | 2 e | 2.6849 | 0.1969 |
| 29 | Female youth in school | 2 e | 2.7803 | 0.2609 |
| 37 | Male youth in school | 1 f | 2.0030 | 0.2320 |
| 37 | Female youth in school | 2 f g | 2.1792 | 0.2242 |
| 37 | Male youth out of school | 2 f g h | 2.2328 | 0.2796 |
| 37 | 14 year old boys | 2 f g h | 2.2752 | 0.1894 |
| 37 | 10 year old girls | 2 f g h | 2.2842 | 0.1969 |
| 37 | Men | 2 f g h | 2.3607 | 0.2641 |
| 37 | 10 year old boys | 2 f g h | 2.4712 | 0.2163 |
| 37 | 10 year old girls | 2 g h | 2.6088 | 0.2721 |
| 37 | Leaders | 3 g h | 2.7046 | 0.1495 |
| 37 | Female youth out of school | 3 h | 2.7060 | 0.2867 |
| 37 | Women | 3 h | 2.7422 | 0.1970 |

a: p - value ≥ .1222; b: p – value ≥ .2220; c: p – value ≥ .2284 d: p – value ≥ .1093; e: p – value ≥ .1201; f: p – value ≥ .1439; g: p – value ≥ .1588; h: p – value ≥ .1428;
*Same lower case letter implies that the Interest Group means are not significantly different

**Key:** Overall mean= 2.4153; **Group =1:** Interest group mean significantly less than the overall mean (Interest group effect < 0, p-value<0.1); **Group 2:** Interest group mean insignificantly different from the overall mean (Interest group effect = 0, p-value >= 0.1); **Group 3:** Interest group mean significantly greater than the overall mean (Interest group effect > 0, p-value < 0 .1)



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Lastly, the mean response levels for the following interest groups: male youth out of school; 14 year old boys and girls; men; 10 year old boys and girls; leaders; female youth out of school and women were not significantly different (p-value ≥.1428).

Significant differences were observed among interest group mean response levels with respect to the perception that *"women are not undermined by men and society in general* (p-value = 0.0359 < 0.1). As shown in Figure 5.3, the differences in mean response levels for the perceptions of interest groups varied across Wards.

Table 5.4 shows that in Ward 1, the mean response level for the perceptions of women was the lowest with that of female youth in school being the highest. The mean response levels for the perceptions of women; male youth out of school and female youth out of school were not significantly different from each other (p-value ≥.2773). However, these were significantly lower than those of the other interest groups (p-value ≥.1616).

In Ward 29, the mean response level for the perceptions of community leaders was the lowest compared to those of the other interest groups. There were no significant differences in the mean response levels for leaders and those of 10 year old girls and boys; female youth in and out of school and women (p-value ≥.1737). Also, no significant differences were observed among the mean response levels for the following interest groups: female youth in and out of school; 10 year old boys; women; male youth in and out of school; men and 14 year old boys (p-value ≥. 1254). A similar pattern was observed with the mean response levels for 10 year old boys; female youth in school; male youth in and out of school; men and 14 year old boys and girls (p-value ≥ .1775). There were no significant differences in the mean response levels for leaders and those of 10 year old girls and boys; female youth in and out of school and women (p-value ≥ .1737). Furthermore, no the mean response levels for the following interest groups: female youth in and out of school; 10 year old boys; women; male youth in and out of school; men and 14 year old boys (p-value ≥. 1254) were the same. A similar pattern was observed for the mean response levels for 10 year old boys; female youth in school; male youth in and out of school; men and 14 year old boys and girls (p-value ≥.1775).

In Ward 37, the mean response level for women's perceptions was lowest and that for female youth out of school was the highest. The mean response levels for the perceptions of women; female youth in school; men and male youth out of school were the same (p-value ≥.3491).



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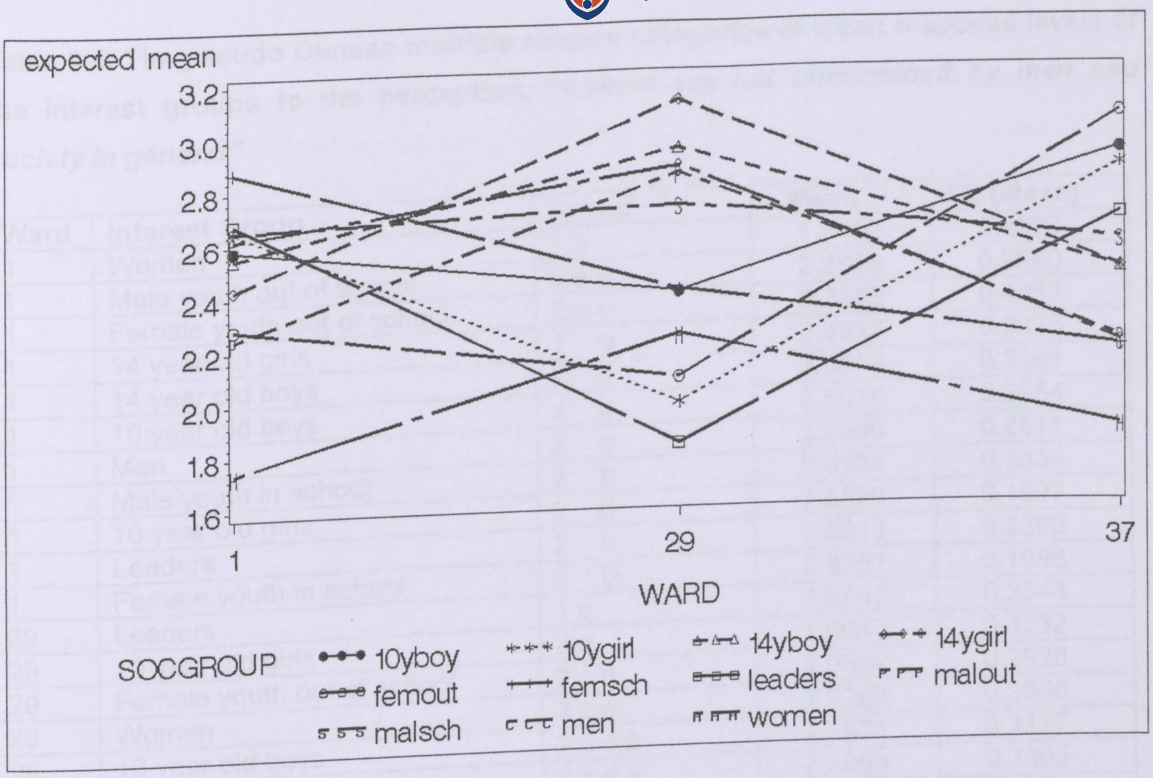



**Figure: 5.3: Mean response levels for the perception that "women are not undermined by men and society in general" versus Ward for each Interest Group (SOCGROUP)**

**femsch** = female youth in school; **femout** = female youth out of school; **malsch** = male youth in school; **maleout** = male youth out of school; **10yboy** = 10 year old boys; **10ygirl** = 10 year old girls; **14ygirl** = 14 year old girls; **14yboy** = 14 year old boys



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**Table 5.4: The pseudo Duncan multiple range's categories of mean response levels of the interest groups to the perception, *"women are not undermined by men and society in general"***

| Ward | Interest Group | Group | Mean | SE (Mean) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Women | 1 a | 1.7422 | 0.2598 |
| 1 | Male youth out of school | 2 a b | 2.2429 | 0.3940 |
| 1 | Female youth out of school | 2 a b | 2.2848 | 0.4053 |
| 1 | 14 year old girls | 2 b | 2.4327 | 0.2375 |
| 1 | 14 year old boys | 2 b | 2.5512 | 0.3361 |
| 1 | 10 year old boys | 2 b | 2.5816 | 0.2654 |
| 1 | Men | 2 b | 2.6200 | 0.2511 |
| 1 | Male youth in school | 2 b | 2.6524 | 0.2834 |
| 1 | 10 year old girls | 2 b | 2.6529 | 0.1997 |
| 1 | Leaders | 2 b | 2.6813 | 0.2399 |
| 1 | Female youth in school | 3 b | 2.8761 | 0.1996 |
| 29 | Leaders | 1 c | 1.8142 | 0.2543 |
| 29 | 10 year old girls | 2 c | 1.9683 | 0.3232 |
| 29 | Female youth out of school | 2 c d | 2.0652 | 0.2928 |
| 29 | Women | 2 c d | 2.2266 | 0.2800 |
| 29 | 10 year old boys | 2 c d e | 2.3871 | 0.3127 |
| 29 | Female youth in school | 2 c d e | 2.3953 | 0.3305 |
| 29 | Male youth in school | 2 d e | 2.7165 | 0.3313 |
| 29 | Male youth out of school | 2 d e | 2.8364 | 0.4068 |
| 29 | Men | 2 d e | 2.8646 | 0.2848 |
| 29 | 14 year old boys | 2 d e | 2.9315 | 0.4570 |
| 29 | 14 year old girls | 2 e | 3.1125 | 0.4127 |
| 37 | Women | 1 f | 1.8576 | 0.2144 |
| 37 | Female youth in school | 2 f g | 2.1573 | 0.2513 |
| 37 | Men | 2 f g h | 2.1720 | 0.3317 |
| 37 | Male youth out of school | 2 f g h | 2.1865 | 0.2691 |
| 37 | 14 year old boys | 2 g h | 2.4537 | 0.2298 |
| 37 | 14 year old girls | 2 g h | 2.4565 | 0.2843 |
| 37 | Male youth in school | 2 g h | 2.5669 | 0.2579 |
| 37 | Leaders | 2 h | 2.6622 | 0.1665 |
| 37 | 10 year old girls | 2 h | 2.8515 | 0.3202 |
| 37 | 10 year old boys | 2 h i | 2.9076 | 0.3001 |
| 37 | Female youth out of school | 3 i | 3.0462 | 0.3184 |

a: p – value ≥ .2773; b: p – value ≥ .1616; c: p – value ≥ .1737 d: p – value ≥ .1254; e: p – value ≥ .1775; f: p – value ≥ .3491; g: p – value ≥ .2669; h: p – value ≥ .1136; i: p – value ≥ .7601.

*Same lower case letter implies that the Interest Group means are not significantly different

**Key:** Overall mean= 2.4835; **Group =1:** Interest group mean significantly less than the overall mean (Interest group effect < 0, p-value<0.1); **Group 2:** Interest group mean insignificantly different from the overall mean (Interest group effect = 0, p-value >= 0.1); **Group 3:** Interest group mean significantly greater than the overall mean (Interest group effect > 0, p-value < 0 .1)



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No significant differences were detected in the mean response levels female and male youth in school; men; male youth out of school and 14 year old boys and girls (p-value ≥.2669). A similar trend was observed in the mean response levels for men; male youth in and out of school; 14 year old boys and girls; leaders and 10 year old girls and boys (p-value ≥ .1136). Lastly, no significant differences were observed in the mean response levels for the 10 year old boys and girls (p-value ≥ .7601).

### 5.3.3 Summary of results

This study tested the following hypotheses tested:

$H_{O1}$: There are no differences in the perceptions of children, youth, women, men and community leaders with respect to the indicators and determinants of women empowerment;

$H_{O2}$: The perceptions of children, youth, women, men and community leaders with respect to the indicators and determinants of women empowerment are the same in all the municipal Wards and amongst community-level interest groups in Makhado Municipality.

The results of the study showed that although about 62 % of the respondents agreed with the perceptions on participation as an indicator and determinant of women empowerment, a considerable number of interviewees (38 %) were opposed. Subsequent tests of perceptions indicated that the hypotheses that *there are no differences in perceptions among children, youth, women, men and community leaders on indicators and determinants of women empowerment* should be rejected.

Inter-Ward differences were detected in the mean response levels of the interest group for all the perceptions, namely *women occupy powerful leadership positions such as Principals and Ward Councillors; women are always given the chance to make firm decisions at home and in communities;* and *women are not undermined by men and society in general.* There were overlapping opinions among the various interest groups. For example in Ward 1, 10 year old girls expressed perceptions similar to those of leaders; female youth in and out of school; men; female and male youth out of school and 14 year old boys. Although the 10 year old girls' mean response level was similar to that of the leaders, the leaders' mean response level was also similar to that of the 10 year old boys.

Another observation made was that the respondents' response levels were mostly clustered around the insignificant level (2). This showed that the interest groups were not satisfied with



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the extent of empowerment of women in study areas. Hence the hypothesis that *the perceptions of children, youth, women, men* and *community leaders with respect to the indicators and determinants of women empowerment are the same in all the municipal Wards and interest groups of Makhado Municipality are the same* was rejected.

## 5.4 Discussion

Participation of disadvantaged and marginalized people in solving issues hampering their empowerment is of paramount importance because it affords them the opportunity to define their own destiny. Oakley (1991) supports this view and points out that participation increases people's sense of control over issues which affect their lives, helps them learn how to plan and implement them. The following sections are devoted to a detailed discussion of the results of the study pertaining to participation as a factor of women empowerment.

### 5.4.1 Inter-Ward differences in 'participation' as a factor of women empowerment

The positive mean response levels for the perception that *women occupy powerful leadership positions such as Principals and Ward Councillors* might have been influenced by the fact that following South Africa's attainment of democracy in 1994, women in general were finding their way into leadership positions (Dlamini-Zuma, 2007). This is so even though at times this development is met with some resistance, especially in the rural areas (Kanjere, 2008). Kanjere (2008: 2) argues that "women in leadership positions in the rural areas are hard hit by prejudices because most men in such areas are the staunch custodians of culture." Cultural expectations especially in patriarchal societies are that women should play a subordinate role and leave issues of leadership to men. Women's roles are restricted to the home, rearing children and cooking (Bari, 2005; Nna and Nyeke, 2005; Dlamini-Zuma, 2007). The patriarchal belief that men are born leaders is still strongly upheld especially in rural areas (Dlamini-Zuma, 2007; Kanjere, 2008).

Women in Ward 1, male youth out of school in Ward 29 and the female youth out of school in Ward 37 might have thought that women were adequately represented in leadership positions and hence the high mean response levels for their perceptions. What was not clear from this study was whether by occupying leadership positions women fully exercised their authority or were mere figure heads with power residing elsewhere. This study did not clarify the leadership roles that women performed. This information would have helped shed some light on the issue. Oxaal and Baden (1997) reveal that increasing the number of women in



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decision-making positions in formal political processes not in itself translate to greater empowerment for women. Also, these authors state that measures taken to improve the quality of participation must lead to an increase in the number of women representatives. Therefore, these arguments highlight the fact that quality of participation is more important than mere numbers.

The low mean response levels for the perceptions of the 10 year old girls in Ward 1, 10 year old boys in Ward 29 and women in Ward 37 might have been due to the fact that in most rural areas leadership was classified as a preserve for men. As a result, very few women found their way up the ladder of social and political leadership. Power is concentrated in men-dominated leadership positions or politics. Studies carried out on School Principals in Limpopo Province of South Africa (Kanjere, 2008) reveal that the prevailing public sphere does not encourage rural women to occupy leadership positions. This state of affairs emanates from entrenched socio-cultural stereotypes and prejudices that often help to undermine women leadership.

Another perception that this study investigated was *women are always given the chance to make firm decisions at home and in communities.* The high mean response levels for the perceptions of male youth in school, female youth in school and women in Wards 1, 29 and 37 might have arisen from the conviction that women were actually given the chance to make firm decisions at home and in local communities. These findings contradict the results of studies that Aderinto (2001) and Izugbara (2004) undertook. In these studies, women participants in the studies believed that decision-making was a male domain. In the current study, establishing the type of decisions the women made, including the decision-making processes, would have helped clarify whether they had real power or not.

Mean response levels for the perceptions of women, female youth out of school and male youth in school from Wards 1, 29 and 37, respectively, were low. These perceptions might have resulted from the belief that women were not given the chance to make firm decisions at home and in their communities. According to Aderinto (2001 and Fonjong (2001), decision-making in most patriarchal societies is a preserve for males since women mainly come in to implement what has been decided before hand by their male counterparts.

With respect to the perception that *women are not undermined by men and society in general,* the high mean response levels for the perceptions of female youth in school, 14 year old girls and female youth out of school could be attributable to the fact that they did not believe that men and society undermined women. A better understanding of this belief could



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have been obtained through inviting the various interest groups to reveal what they considered when they awarded scores to signify the extent to which they agreed with the perception, *women are not undermined by men and society in general*.

The low mean response levels for the perceptions of women and community leaders might have been informed by the low status accorded to women in patriarchal societies. According to Kanjere (2008), women in South Africa were subjected to double oppression, namely under the apartheid system and also by their patriarchal communities. Agbalajobi (2008) supports these views and argue that religion, myths, norms, values, education and the process of socialisation, all of which originate from patriarchy, reinforce cultural prejudices against women. Collectively, these factors picture women stereotypically as the 'weaker sex' (Oraegbunam, 2006; Dlamini-Zuma, 2007) and 'working mothers' (Kongolo and Bamgose, 2002; Oberhauser and Pratt, 2004; Oglethorpe and Gelman, 2008),' saddled with procreation and confined to the 'private sphere' (Aderinto, 2006; Agbalajobi, 2008). Undermining women negatively impacts on their ability to contribute meaningfully to building their communities. Unless this issue is addressed, women empowerment and development will continue to be a pipedream.

## 5.5 Conclusion

The current study showed that the research respondents' perceptions regarding the participation-based indicators and determinants of women empowerment differed across Wards 1, 29 and 37 of Makhado Municipality. Inter-Ward differences in the extent to which the interest groups believed each perception was factor of women empowerment were also detected, suggesting that there were Ward-specific issues that influenced the respondents' assessments of the local state of women empowerment. In addition to this, there were overlapping of opinions among the interest groups. Also, the results showed that the interest groups' responses were mostly clustered around the insignificant level (level 2) which signalled suggested that they were not satisfied with the extent of women's empowerment. Lastly, the current study highlighted the need for carrying out a similar study in the other Wards of Makhado Municipality.

This study revealed that community members were knowledgeable about the challenges that were confronting women within their communities and what needed to be done to address the issues. This implies that development practitioners and policy makers need to meaningfully harness such knowledge when developing intervention strategies. Such an approach is likely to result in community-owned and sustainable social change initiatives.



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Also, this study showed that age, sex and leadership positions that individuals held did not influence people's perceptions on women empowerment. However, because of the overlap of views that did not reveal a clear pattern, suggested that the current trend of soliciting the inputs of community leaders on development issues might not be appropriate. It is important to engage all the interest groups so that they interrogate women empowerment issues.



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# CHAPTER 6: PERCEPTIONS OF GRASSROOTS RURAL COMMUNITIES ON CONTROL AS A FACTOR OF WOMEN EMPOWERMENT IN MAKHADO MUNICIPALITY

## 6.1 Introduction

The "control" stage is the ultimate goal of the empowerment process. It determines whether or not the disadvantaged group, women in particular, have achieved their empowerment goals. According to Fonjong (2001), at this stage, the disadvantaged members of society are able to direct or influence events making sure that their interests are catered for and safeguarded. Fonjong (2001) also believes that only when women have control over themselves, resources, factors of production and decision-making at home and in the public arena can it be concluded that they have achieved real empowerment. At this level, control of resources and the benefits thereof by both men and women are of paramount importance. Longwe (2000) adds weight to this discourse by arguing that empowerment must be defined and measured in terms of women's control over resources and not merely accessing them. In the same vein, Cheston and Kuhn (2002) argue that for women to be empowered they should access resources and also have the ability to use the resources to meet their developmental goals.

Given the foregoing facts as well as the socio-cultural and political complexities existing in the communities they come from, there is need to establish whether women have total control of resources at their disposal. Thus, this study was designed to assess what interest groups in rural community members perceived to be the extent to which women in Wards 1, 29 and 37 of Makhado Municipality were empowered, based on control of resources. The perceptions of children, youth, men, women and community leaders were investigated.

## 6.2 Research Methodology

As is the case with Chapters 4 and 5, the research methodology used in this study is the same as that described in sections 3.2.1 to 3.3 of Chapter 3. A total of 5 924 participants from the 41 villages in the three Wards of Makhado Municipality voluntarily participated in the data collection-focused reflection circles. Non-parametric data were collected using questionnaires that required responses on Likert-type scale. The participants who comprised 7-10 year old boys and girls; 11-14 year old boys and girls; male and female youth in and out of school; women; men and leaders were mobilized through open invitations that were sent out through schools, churches and community leaders.



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**Data Analysis**

The data were appropriately coded and stored in a computer as a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet. Thereafter, the data were imported into the Statistical Package for Social Scientists (Wagner, 2010) and also Statistical Analysis Systems (SAS, 2005) version 9.1.3 for analysis.

Pearson's correlations were computed in order to establish the strength of relationships among all the perceptions. Because weak linear relationships existed between the perceptions, *women are financially independent; women have power and ability to develop communities; most women are excellent role models for children* and *women are well respected when they become leaders*, the data were analysed using univariate methods. The perceptions were individually modelled as functions of the main and interaction effects of Ward and interest group.

The Categorical Data Modelling (CATMOD) procedure (Miller and Miller, 2004) of the Statistical Analysis Systems (SAS, 2005) version 9.1.3, with linear models ordinal response variables was used to investigate the effects of Ward and interest group. Each perception of control as a factor of women empowerment was considered at a time. Posthoc tests were carried out using the pseudo-Duncan multiple range procedure (Miller, 2005).

## 6.3 Results

In this section, the results are presented, taking into account the fact that the aim was to assess the extent to which control affected women empowerment. The results for each perception are presented one after the other.

### 6.3.1 Extent to which 'control' affected women empowerment

About 61 % of the participants from the three Wards agreed with the perceptions of "control" as a factor of women empowerment (Table 6.1). In Ward 1, the extent of agreement ranged from approximately 41 % for the perception, *women are financially independent* to 70 % for *most women are excellent role models for children and youth*. In Ward 29, approximately 73 % of the people believed that *women are well respected when they become leaders* while 51 % argued that *women have power and ability to develop their communities.*



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**Table 6.1: Extent of agreement with perceptions on "control" as a factor of women empowerment in Wards 1, 29 and 37 of Makhado Municipality**

| Perception | Name of Ward | Proportion of respondents (%) n = 5 924 | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Not true | Somewhat true | True | Very true |
| Women are financially independent | 1 | 39 | 20 | 20 | 21 |
| | 29 | 24 | 17 | 34 | 25 |
| | 37 | 29 | 15 | 40 | 16 |
| Women have power and ability to develop their communities | 1 | 32 | 11 | 38 | 19 |
| | 29 | 36 | 13 | 28 | 23 |
| | 37 | 31 | 18 | 33 | 18 |
| Most women are excellent role models for children and youth | 1 | 18 | 12 | 44 | 26 |
| | 29 | 20 | 16 | 33 | 31 |
| | 37 | 17 | 12 | 45 | 26 |
| Women are well respected when they become leaders | 1 | 20 | 12 | 43 | 25 |
| | 29 | 18 | 9 | 46 | 27 |
| | 37 | 17 | 13 | 46 | 24 |

n = number of research participants across all the Wards



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Almost 71% of the respondents in Ward 37 indicated that *most women are excellent role models for children and youth* compared to 51 % who believed that *women have power and ability to develop their communities.*

### 6.3.2 Differences in perceptions of interest groups with respect to "control" as a factor of women empowerment

Significant interest group effects were observed in the mean response levels for the perception, "*women are financially independent.*" However, there were no Ward and Ward x interest group effects (p-value = 0.0319 < 0.1). Figure 6.1 shows that the differences among the interest group mean response levels to "*women are financially independent*" did not depend on the Ward of residence of the interest groups.

Table 6.2 shows that the mean response level for the perceptions of men was the lowest in comparison to that of all the other interest groups. Despite this, it was not significantly different from those of 10 year old girls; leaders and male youth in school (p-value ≥ .2767). The mean response levels for 10 year old girls and boys; leaders; male youth and female youth in school and male youth out of school were not significantly different from each other (p-value ≥ .1173). A similar pattern was observed for the mean response levels for male and female youth in school; male youth out of school; 10 year old boys; 14 year old boys and girls; women and female youth out of school (p-value ≥ .1283).

With respect to the perception that "*women have power and ability to develop their communities",* significant differences were observed (p-value = 0.0800< 0.1) in the mean response levels for the interest groups. As shown in Figure 6.2, there were no Wards in the mean response levels.

Table 6.3 shows that the mean response level for the perceptions of female youth out of school was lowest compared to those for the rest of the interest groups. Despite having the lowest mean response level, female youth out of school's mean response level was not significantly different to those of the other interest groups (p-value ≥.1507) except 10 year old boys (p-value ≥ .1069). The 10 year old boys' mean response level was not significantly different from those of women; 14 year old girls and 10 year girls (p-value ≥.1069). There were significant (p-value = 0.0484 < 0.1) Ward x interest group interaction effects on the mean response levels for the perception, "*most women are excellent role models for children and youth.*"



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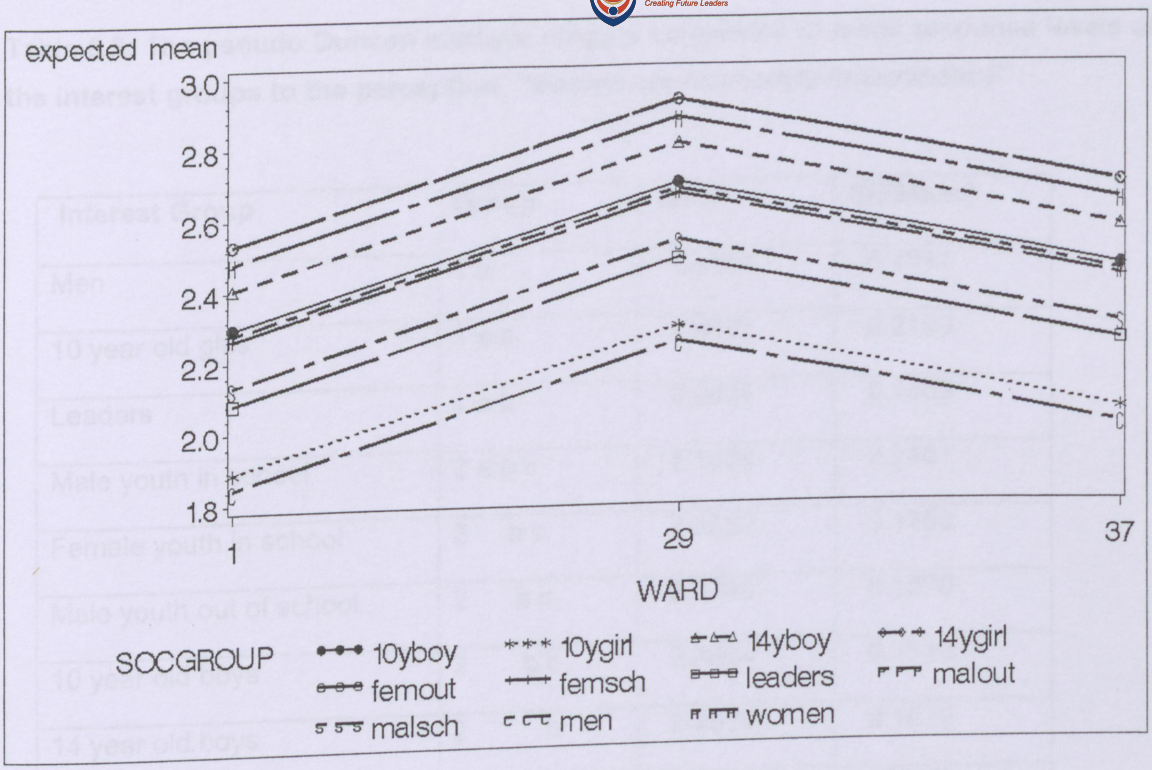



**Figure 6.1: Mean response levels for the perception that *"women are financially independent"* per Ward for each interest group (SOCGROUP)**

**femsch** = female youth in school; **femout** = female youth out of school; **malsch** = male youth in school; **maleout** = male youth out of school; **10yboy** = 10 year old boys; **10ygirl** = 10 year old girls; **14ygirl** = 14 year old girls; **14yboy** = 14 year old boys



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**Table 6.2: The pseudo Duncan multiple range's categories of mean response levels of the interest groups to the perception, "*women are financially independent*"**

| Interest Group | Group | Mean | SE(Mean) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Men | 1 a | 1.8459 | 0.1841 |
| 10 year old girls | 1 a b | 1.8892 | 0.2190 |
| Leaders | 2 a b | 2.0826 | 0.1509 |
| Male youth in school | 2 a b c | 2.1334 | 0.2101 |
| Female youth in school | 2 b c | 2.2650 | 0.1750 |
| Male youth out of school | 2 b c | 2.2798 | 0.1870 |
| 10 year old boys | 2 b c | 2.2964 | 0.1740 |
| 14 year old boys | 2 c | 2.4074 | 0.1578 |
| Women | 2 c | 2.4812 | 0.1703 |
| 14 year old girls | 3 c | 2.5307 | 0.1772 |
| Female youth out of school | 3 c | 2.5313 | 0.1946 |

a: p – value ≥ .2767; b: p – value ≥ .1173; c: p – value ≥ .1283

*Same lower case letter implies that the Interest Group means are not significantly different

**Key:** Overall mean= 2.4314; **Group =1:** Interest group mean significantly less than the overall mean (Interest group effect < 0, p-value<0.1); **Group 2:** Interest group mean insignificantly different from the overall mean (Interest group effect = 0, p-value >= 0.1); **Group 3:** Interest group mean significantly greater than the overall mean (Interest group effect > 0, p-value < 0 .1)



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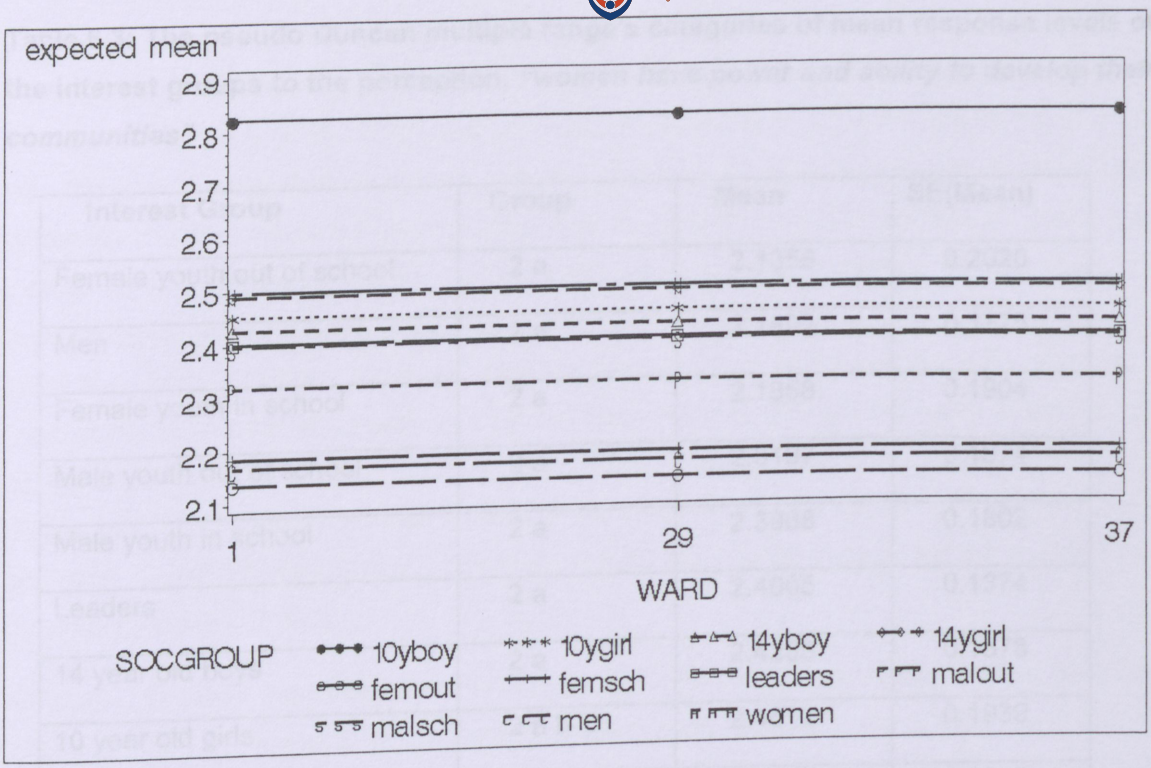



**Figure 6.2: Mean response levels to the perception that *"women have power and ability to develop their communities"* versus Ward for each Interest Group (SOCGROUP)**

**femsch** = female youth in school; **femout** = female youth out of school; **malsch** = male youth in school; **maleout** = male youth out of school; **10yboy** = 10 year old boys; **10ygirl** = 10 year old girls; **14ygirl** = 14 year old girls; **14yboy** = 14 year old boys



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**Table 6.3: The pseudo Duncan multiple range's categories of mean response levels of the interest groups to the perception, *"women have power and ability to develop their communities"***

| Interest Group | Group | Mean | SE(Mean) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Female youth out of school | 2 a | 2.1358 | 0.2020 |
| Men | 2 a | 2.1692 | 0.1775 |
| Female youth in school | 2 a | 2.1858 | 0.1904 |
| Male youth out of school | 2 a | 2.3197 | 0.1874 |
| Male youth in school | 2 a | 2.3968 | 0.1802 |
| Leaders | 2 a | 2.4005 | 0.1374 |
| 14 year old boys | 2 a | 2.4265 | 0.1578 |
| 10 year old girls | 2 a b | 2.4512 | 0.1939 |
| 14 year old girls | 2 a b | 2.4902 | 0.1842 |
| Women | 2 a b | 2.4988 | 0.1517 |
| 10 year old boys | 3 b | 2.8215 | 0.1232 |

a: p – value ≥ .1507; b: p – value ≥ .1069.

*Same lower case letter implies that the Interest Group means are not significantly different

**Key:** Overall mean= 2.3905; **Group =1:** Interest group mean significantly less than the overall mean (Interest group effect < 0, p-value<0.1); **Group 2:** Interest group mean insignificantly different from the overall mean (Interest group effect = 0, p-value >= 0.1); **Group 3:** Interest group mean significantly greater than the overall mean (Interest group effect > 0, p-value < 0 .1)



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Figure 6.3 shows that the differences in means for the perceptions of the interest groups varied across the three Wards. Table 6.4 it is shown that the mean response level for women in Ward 1 regarding *most women are excellent role models for children and youth* was the lowest while that for the 10 year old girls was highest. There were no significant differences in the mean response levels with respect to *most women are excellent role models for children and youth* for women; men; 14 year old girls, male youth in school; 10 year old boys; leaders; male youth out of school and female youth in and out of school (p-value ≥ . 1248). Similarly, the mean response levels for men; 14 year old girls and boys; male youth in and out of school; 10 year old boys; leaders and female youth in and out of school were not different from each other (p-value ≥ .1529). Also, there were no significant differences in the mean response levels for the following interest groups: 10 year old boys and girls; leaders; male youth out of school; female youth in and out of school and 14 year old boys (p-value ≥ .3390).

Although the mean response level for the perceptions of the community leaders was the lowest in Ward 29, it was not significantly different from those of male and female youth in school; male youth out of school; men; 10 year old boys and women (p-value ≥ .1042). A similar trend was observed in the mean response levels for male youth in and out of school; men; 10 year old boys and girls; female youth in school and women (p-value ≥ .1226). Also, there were no significant differences in the mean response levels of male youth out of school; men; 10 year old boys and girls; female youth in and out of school and women (p-value ≥ . 2927). Lastly, the mean response levels for 10 year old girls; female youth out of school and 14 year old girls and boys were not the same (p-value ≥.2144).

The mean response level for Ward 37 men's perceptions on *most women are excellent role models for children and youth* were the lowest, with those for female youth out of school being the highest. Even though the mean response level for men was the lowest, it was not significantly different from those of the other interest groups (p-value ≥. 2471). There were significant interest group effects (p-value = 0.0035 < 0.1) regarding the mean response levels for the perception, "*women are well respected when they become leaders*" Ward and Ward x interest group effects were insignificant. Figure 6.4 shows that the differences among the interest group mean response levels relating to "*women are well respected when they become leaders*" did not depend on the Ward.



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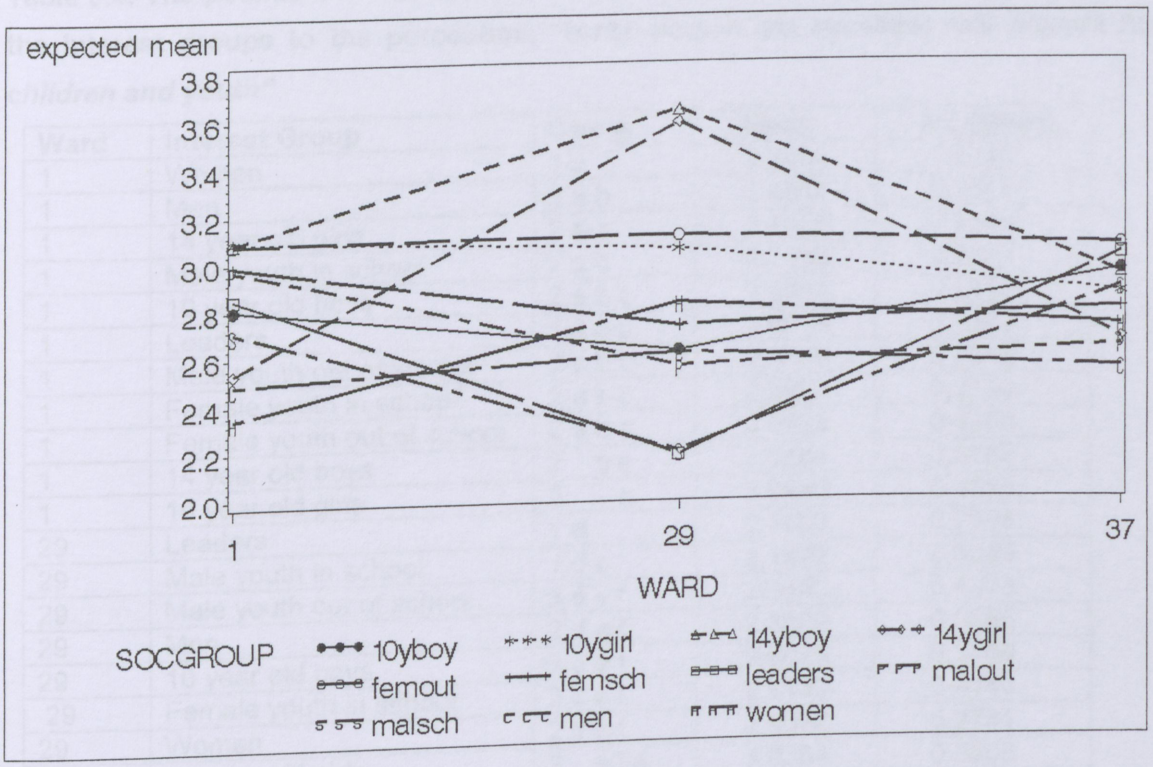



**Figure 6.3: Mean response levels to the perception that "*most women are excellent role models for children and youths*" versus Ward for each interest group (SOCGROUP)**

**femsch** = female youth in school; **femout** = female youth out of school; **malsch** = male youth in school; **maleout** = male youth out of school; **10yboy** = 10 year old boys; **10ygirl** = 10 year old girls; **14ygirl** = 14 year old girls; **14yboy** = 14 year old boys



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**Table 6.4: The pseudo Duncan multiple range's categories of mean response levels of the interest groups to the perception, *"most women are excellent role models for children and youth"***

| Ward | Interest Group | Group | Mean | SE (Mean) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Women | 1 a | 2.3430 | 0.2154 |
| 1 | Men | 2 a b | 2.4856 | 0.2566 |
| 1 | 14 year old girls | 2 a b | 2.5374 | 0.1949 |
| 1 | Male youth in school | 2 a b | 2.7098 | 0.2813 |
| 1 | 10 year old boys | 2 a b c | 2.8051 | 0.2455 |
| 1 | Leaders | 2 a b c | 2.8514 | 0.2379 |
| 1 | Male youth out of school | 2 a b c | 2.9746 | 0.3345 |
| 1 | Female youth in school | 2 a b c | 2.9902 | 0.2139 |
| 1 | Female youth out of school | 2 a b c | 3.0833 | 0.4155 |
| 1 | 14 year old boys | 2 b c | 3.0884 | 0.3182 |
| 1 | 10 year old girls | 2 c | 3.0940 | 0.1685 |
| 29 | Leaders | 1 d | 2.1653 | 0.2698 |
| 29 | Male youth in school | 1 d e | 2.1822 | 0.3689 |
| 29 | Male youth out of school | 2 d e f | 2.5403 | 0.4078 |
| 29 | Men | 2 d e f | 2.5990 | 0.3686 |
| 29 | 10 year old boys | 2 d e f | 2.6075 | 0.3468 |
| 29 | Female youth in school | 2 d e f | 2.7123 | 0.4140 |
| 29 | Women | 2 d e f | 2.8092 | 0.2781 |
| 29 | 10 year old girls | 2 e f g | 3.0384 | 0.3808 |
| 29 | Female youth out of school | 2 f g | 3.0976 | 0.3060 |
| 29 | 14 year old girls | 3 g | 3.5781 | 0.2161 |
| 29 | 14 year old boys | 3 g | 3.6328 | 0.2665 |
| 37 | Men | 2 h | 2.5283 | 0.3394 |
| 37 | Male youth out of school | 2 h | 2.6217 | 0.2680 |
| 37 | 14 year old girls | 2 h | 2.6520 | 0.2720 |
| 37 | Women | 2 h | 2.7118 | 0.2544 |
| 37 | Female youth in school | 2 h | 2.7833 | 0.2671 |
| 37 | 10 year old girls | 2 h | 2.8490 | 0.3320 |
| 37 | Male youth in school | 2 h | 2.8725 | 0.3586 |
| 37 | 14 year old boys | 2 h | 2.9296 | 0.2077 |
| 37 | 10 year old boys | 2 h | 2.9454 | 0.2829 |
| 37 | Leaders | 2 h | 3.0149 | 0.1488 |
| 37 | Female youth out of school | 2 h | 3.0542 | 0.2776 |

a: p – value ≥ .1248; b: p – value ≥ .1529; c: p – value ≥ .3390 d: p – value ≥ .1042; e: p – value ≥ .1226; f: p – value ≥ .2927; g: p – value ≥ .2144; h: p – value ≥ .2471
*Same lower case letter implies that the Interest Group means are not significantly different

**Key:** Overall mean= 2.8148; **Group =1:** Interest group mean significantly less than the overall mean (Interest group effect < 0, p-value<0.1); **Group 2:** Interest group mean insignificantly different from the overall mean (Interest group effect = 0, p-value >= 0.1); **Group 3:** Interest group mean significantly greater than the overall mean (Interest group effect > 0, p-value < 0 .1)



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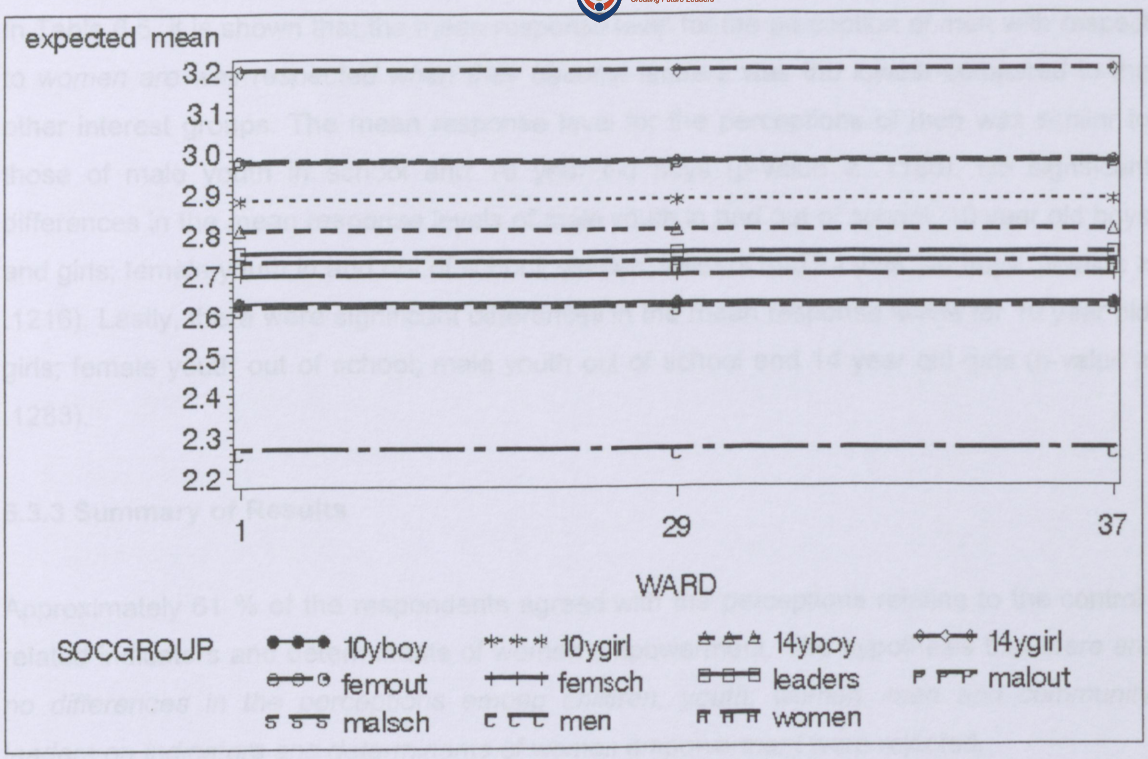



**Figure 6.4: Mean response levels for the perception that *"women are respected when they become leaders"* versus Ward for each interest group (SOCGROUP)**

**femsch** = female youth in school; **femout** = female youth out of school; **malsch** = male youth in school; **maleout** = male youth out of school; **10yboy** = 10 year old boys; **10ygirl** = 10 year old girls; **14ygirl** = 14 year old girls; **14yboy** = 14 year old boys



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In Table 6.5, it is shown that the mean response level for the perception of men with respect to *women are well respected when they become leaders* was the lowest compared to the other interest groups. The mean response level for the perceptions of men was similar to those of male youth in school and 10 year old boys (p-value ≥ .1180). No significant differences in the mean response levels of male youth in and out of school; 10 year old boys and girls; female youth in and out of school; women; leaders and 14 year old boys (p-value ≥ .1216). Lastly, there were significant differences in the mean response levels for 10 year old girls; female youth out of school; male youth out of school and 14 year old girls (p-value ≥ .1283).

### 6.3.3 Summary of Results

Approximately 61 % of the respondents agreed with the perceptions relating to the control-related indicators and determinants of women empowerment. The hypothesis that *there are no differences in the perceptions among children, youth, women, men and community leaders on indicators and determinants of women empowerment* were rejected.

Pertaining to the other hypothesis, *the perceptions of children, youth, women, men and community leaders with respect to the indicators and determinants of women empowerment are the same in all the municipal Wards and amongst community-level interest groups in Makhado Municipality;* the current study revealed that there were significant differences in the mean response levels of interest groups with respect to the perceptions, *women are financially independent; women have power and ability to develop their communities* and *women are respected when they become leaders.* Inter-Ward differences were observed among the interest groups in the mean response levels to the perception that *most women are excellent role models for children and youth.* There were overlapping of opinions among the interest groups within and across the Wards of the studied Wards of Makhado Municipality. The mean response levels for all the perceptions were mainly clustered around the insignificant level (2), which indicated that the participants were not so satisfied with the extent of women empowerment. Based on the results of this study, the aforementioned hypothesis was rejected.



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**Table 6.5: The pseudo Duncan multiple range's categories of mean response levels of the interest groups to the perception, "*women are well respected when they become leaders*"**

| Interest Group | Group | Mean | SE (Mean) |
|---|---|---|---|
| men | 1 a | 2.2640 | 0.1562 |
| male youth in school | 2 a b | 2.6171 | 0.1688 |
| 10 year old boys | 2 a b | 2.6230 | 0.1688 |
| female youth in school | 2 b | 2.6954 | 0.1564 |
| women | 2 b | 2.7256 | 0.1300 |
| leaders | 2 b | 2.7511 | 0.1199 |
| 14 year old boys | 2 b | 2.8065 | 0.1498 |
| 10 year old girls | 2 b c | 2.8787 | 0.1641 |
| female youth out of school | 2 b c | 2.9726 | 0.2021 |
| male youth out of school | 2 b c | 2.9749 | 0.1580 |
| 14 year old girls | 3 c | 3.1985 | 0.1315 |

a: p – value ≥ .1248; b: p – value ≥ .1529; c: p – value ≥ .3390 d: p – value ≥ .1042;
*Same lower case letter implies that the Interest Group means are not significantly different

**Key:** Overall mean= 2.7734 **Group =1:** Interest group mean significantly less than the overall mean (Interest group effect < 0, p-value<0.1); **Group 2:** Interest group mean insignificantly different from the overall mean (Interest group effect = 0, p-value >= 0.1); **Group 3:** Interest group mean significantly greater than the overall mean (Interest group effect > 0, p-value < 0 .1)



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## 6.4 Discussion

As already alluded to, control is a critical pillar of the empowerment process. When this level is reached, women are able to exercise *agency* in a bid to improve their livelihoods and those of their families. The following section gives a detailed discussion of the communities' perceptions on dimensions of 'control' as a factor of empowering women.

### 6.4.1 Differences in perceptions of interest groups with respect to "control" as a factor of women empowerment

Most residents of Wards 1, 29 and 37 of Makhado Municipality agreed, albeit to varying extents, with the perception that *women are financially independent*. The positive mean response levels are possibly attributable to the fact that women engaged in various forms of informal jobs. This might have made research participants to conclude that women were financially stable. In most African countries, women are engaged in various income generating activities which are mostly in the informal sector (Gueye, 2000; Anunobi, 2003; Oberhauser and Pratt, 2004). With reference to the informal work in Vhembe District, Oberhauser and Pratt (2004) alludes to the fact that women participate in activities such as brewing beer, construction, vegetable gardening and the selling of fuel wood.

The affirmative views expressed in this study contrasted those of women participants in the Oberhauser and Pratt (2004), which revealed that shortage of financial resources militated against women empowerment. Also, lack of finances acted as a hindrance to women accessing information communication technologies (ICT) education material (Dlodlo, 2009). Women's failure to access finances hampers their participation in personal and community development.

Conversely, the low mean response levels for men might have arisen from observing the difficult conditions under which rural women earned a living. In most rural parts of South Africa, most women rely on remittances from their husbands and children who work in urban areas (Kongolo and Bamgose, 2002; Oberhauser and Pratt, 2004). Also, the women receive state assistance in the form of social grants to augment the remittances although these are not enough to meet their own daily needs and those of their families (Office on the Status of Women: OSW, 2000). The views expressed by men in the current study supported those expressed in the Kongolo and Bamgose (2002) study. The interviewees acknowledged women's dependence on incomes of their spouses for upkeep. This dependence on men for survival exacerbates women's subordinate positions (Adegoroye and Adegoroye, 2008).



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Regarding the perception, *women have power and ability to develop their communities*, the high mean response level for 10 year old boys could be attributed to them having observed women carrying out various activities at home and in the communities which might have led them to assume that women had the power and ability to develop their communities. The ability to develop communities mainly depends on the availability of financial and human capital resources (Fonjong, 2001; Kongolo and Bamgose, 2002; Oberhauser and Pratt, 2004; Adegoroye and Adegoroye, 2008). Community development will never be achieved if resource constraints exist. The criteria that the 10 year old boys used to determine whether women in their communities were indeed capable of developing their communities were not clear.

Presumably, the low mean response level for female youth out of school originated from the fact that rural women had problems in accessing resources such as knowledge and skills, funding and assets. Moagi (2008) supports this view and posits that in most cases women lack control over resources such as land. Thus, it becomes difficult for them to make decisions that can improve family income. Furthermore, Moagi (2008) states that lack of access to land threatens women's security and leaves them vulnerable to poverty. This is due to the fact that land is a crucial resource that shapes the direction and pace of development in most rural communities. Failure to access the resources puts a strain on women's ability to develop themselves and their communities. Khan (2005) argues that without the active participation of women at the decision-making level in society, socio-economic development cannot be fully achieved. It is important to note that culture and traditions make it difficult for women to finance economic activities because they lack the skills and finances to do so (Adegoroye and Adegoroye, 2008).

The high mean response levels for 10 year old girls and 14 year old boys with respect to might have been due to the fact that children at that age are often closer to their mothers and hence look upon them as their role models. Female youth out of school are current and future mothers who might have been fully convinced that they were good role models for children and youth to emulate. These findings are in line with the views expressed by (Dimandja, 2004), who points out that as mothers and educators, women lead their sons and daughters on the road to a good life. This dictates that they should lead exemplary lives for children and society to emulate.

The low mean response level for women might have resulted from their low self-esteem whose roots are in the subordinate roles they play in most patriarchal societies. Socialisation and discrimination have all contributed to women's low self-esteem. It is possible that most



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women especially in the rural areas are not fully aware of their capabilities and rights. Unless this potential is unearthed, women will continue to view themselves as lesser beings that are there to serve the interest of men and those in positions of power. These findings are in line with the views that women who participated in the Acharya, Yoshino, Jimba and Wakai (2007) study expressed. In the latter study, women supported their subordinate positions and saw no need for challenging the status quo. The low mean response levels for community leaders and men might have originated from their experiences regarding the low status accorded to women in most patriarchal societies. Dlamini-Zuma (2007) and Agbalajobi (2008) reveal that cultural prejudices against women have all combined to picture women stereotypically as the 'weaker sex'. Failure to value the contributions that women make in society impacts negatively on their personal growth and as well as that of the communities they come from.

The high mean response level for 14 year old girls on the perception, *women are well respected when they become leaders* might have arisen from the fact that they might have seen women leading various organisations, social clubs and projects such as money lending clubs (stokvels) and burial societies, among other social organisations. Probably, this led them to conclude that women were respected leaders. According to Kanjere (2008), women principals find themselves fully accepted as leaders in the communities they work with after a lot of hard work and sacrifices. This suggests that women have to prove what they are capable of achieving before being accepted as leaders of social structures.

The low mean response level for men can be attributed to the socio-cultural prejudices regarding women leadership. As already alluded to in the preceding chapters, in most patriarchal societies leadership is a male domain. Women who defy the odds and assume positions of authority often meet fierce resistance from the male folk. Kanjere (2008: 2) strengthens this argument, stating that "women in leadership positions in the rural areas are hard hit by prejudices because most men in such areas are the custodians of culture." Because men undermine them, women leaders are deterred from reaching their full potential and also contributing meaningfully towards the development of their communities.

### 6.5 Conclusion

This study has shown that the participants' perceptions on: *women are financially independent; women have power and ability to develop their communities* and *women are respected when they become leaders* the various dimensions of control as indicators and determinants of women empowerment did not vary from one Ward to another. However,



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differences in participants' perceptions relating to the dimension: *most women are excellent role models for children and youth,* were detected across the three Wards of Makhado Municipality.

The study revealed that children, youth, women, men and community leaders had considerable knowledge about issues of concern in their communities. Therefore, it is important to ensure that such knowledge is properly utilised in order to come up with interventions that directly address women empowerment. Also, there is potential that creating platforms where children, youth, men, women and leaders can deliberate on societal problems would lead to improved social cohesion besides bringing sustainable social change. The need for policy makers to meaningfully engage community members irrespective of their ages and sexes on issues that affect their livelihoods was confirmed.



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# CHAPTER 7: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

## 7.1 Introduction

Empowerment as an essential strategy of poverty alleviation seeks to provide the marginalised groups of people, rural women in particular, the power to change their present circumstances through making informed decisions on issues pertaining to their wellbeing. Bowen (2008) argues that "genuine participation requires that special attention be paid to involving all constituent groups in the local community, including the poor people, in strategic planning and decision-making." Through their active participation, the disadvantaged grassroots community members, in this case rural women, would be in a vantage position to influence and safeguard their interests (Fonjong, 2001). However, quite often the views of women and those of other grassroots community members have very little influence on policy making and development programming. Excluding grassroots communities from taking part in issues relating to their development goes against the principles and philosophy of participatory democracy as espoused by Freire (1972) and Chambers (1994), which encourages the utilisation of the local people's knowledge. This reality influenced the conduct of the current study, which sought to address the aforementioned issues. This chapter restates the objectives before presenting the summary, conclusions, contribution of the study to the body of knowledge, value of the current study in building community-university partnerships and recommendations for further research.

The main objective of this study was to analyse the perceptions of rural communities in Limpopo Province of South Africa with respect to the indicators and determinants of women empowerment. This was achieved through the following specific objectives:

a) To establish whether children, youth, women, men and community leaders in rural communities have similar perceptions on the indicators and determinants of women empowerment;
b) To determine whether the indicators and determinants of women empowerment differ among Wards and community interest groups; and
c) To propose a potential strategy for empowering women in some rural areas of Makhado Municipality.



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## 7.2 Summary of the Study

The main hypothesis that anchored this investigation was that the perceptions of community members of different ages and sexes on the indicators and determinants of women empowerment within rural communities in Makhado Municipality were the same. Specifically, the study tested the following hypotheses:

a) There are no differences in the perceptions of children, youth, women, men and community leaders with respect to the indicators and determinants of women empowerment; and

b) The perceptions of children, youth, women, men and community leaders with respect to the indicators and determinants of women empowerment are the same in all the municipal Wards and among community-level interest groups in Makhado Municipality.

### 7.2.1. Access to resources as an indicator or determinant of women empowerment

This study revealed that although approximately 62 % of the respondents agreed that women had access to resources that could enable them to become empowered, there was still considerable room for improvement. The hypothesis that *there are no differences in the perceptions among children, youth, women, men and community leaders on indicators and determinants of women empowerment* was rejected.

With respect to the second hypothesis, the current study revealed that there were significant differences among the interest groups in the mean response levels to the perceptions, *women can read and write; women have access to life improvement opportunities; women are never overworked* and *women have easy access to old age grant* (p-value < 0.1). For all these perceptions, women agreed to a much lesser extent than the other interest groups. Also, the various interest groups had overlapping views, which made it difficult to make definitive conclusions on the status quo. However, there was sufficient evidence generated in this study to reject the hypothesis that *the perceptions of children, youth, women, men and community leaders with respect to the indicators and determinants of women empowerment are the same in all the municipal Wards and community-level interest groups of Makhado Municipality*.

Another perception was *women are multi-skilled and talented; women know their rights and exercise the rights responsibly and freely; few women are unemployed; women have access*



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*to business opportunities* and *women have a lot of time to do all the things they want,* for which significant inter-Ward differences in mean response levels were detected. The hypothesis that *the perceptions of children, youth, women, men,* and *community leaders with respect to the indicators and determinants of women empowerment are the same in all the municipal Wards and community-level interest groups of Makhado Municipality* was also rejected.

### 7.2.2 Awareness-raising as a factor of women empowerment

In general, the proportion of reflection circles that disagreed with the perceptions, *women are rarely physically, emotionally and sexually abused by men* and *women are aware of all government and private sector opportunities for their empowerment* was quite huge (about 46 %). Further statistical tests carried revealed that there were significant differences in the mean response levels for the perceptions among the interest groups. Thus, the hypothesis that *there are no differences in the perceptions of children, youth, women, men* and *community leaders on the indicators and determinants of women empowerment* was rejected.

Significant differences ($p < 0.1$) were detected among the interest groups' mean response levels with respect to awareness raising-related indicators and determinants of women empowerment. The results obtained in this study compelled the rejection of the hypothesis that *the perceptions of children, youth, women, men and community leaders with respect to the indicators and determinants of women empowerment are the same in all the municipal Wards and community-level interest groups of Makhado Municipality.* Opinions overlapped among the various interest groups, an indication that there were shared perspectives. Also, this study revealed that the awareness raising- related indicators and determinants of women empowerment did not vary from one geographical location (Ward of Makhado Municipality in this case) to another.

### 7.2. 3 Participation as a factor of women empowerment

Approximately, 62 % of the reflection circles agreed that women participated actively in the various spheres of life, namely social, political and economic, which made it easy for them to become more empowered. However, a considerable number of participants (38 %) disagreed with the perceptions. With respect to the second hypothesis, significant inter-Ward differences existed in the interest groups' mean response levels the perceptions, *women occupy powerful leadership positions such as Principals and Ward Councillors; women are*



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*always given the chance to make firm decisions at home and in communities* and *women are not undermined by men and society in general.* Also, there were overlapping opinions among the different interest groups. The hypothesis that *the perceptions of children, youth, women, men* and *community leaders with respect to the indicators and determinants of women empowerment are the same in all the municipal Wards and interest groups of Makhado Municipality* was rejected.

### 7.2. 4 Control as a factor of women empowerment

On average, approximately 61 % of the respondents agreed with the perceptions on control-related indicators and determinants of women empowerment. There were significant interest group differences for the perceptions, *women are financially independent; women have power and ability to develop their communities* and *women are respected when they become leaders.* Also, significant inter-Ward differences among the interest groups' mean response levels were observed for the perception *most women are excellent role models for children and youth.* As was the case with the other interest groups, there were overlapping opinions among the interest groups within and across the Wards of the Municipality. Based on these results, the hypothesis that *the perceptions of children, youth, women, men* and *community leaders with respect to the indicators and determinants of women empowerment are the same in all the municipal Wards and interest groups of Makhado Municipality are the same* was rejected.

## 7.3 Conclusions

The first study showed that the participants' perceptions regarding access to resources-related indicators and determinants of women empowerment differed among the interest groups within and across Wards 1, 29 and 37 of Makhado Municipality. Significant interest group and inter-Ward differences in the extent to which the interest groups believed each perception was a factor of women empowerment were detected, suggesting that there were interest group and Ward-specific issues that influenced the respondents' assessments. It is worth noting that women had the lowest mean response levels for the following perceptions: *most women can read and write; women have access to life improvement opportunities; women are not overworked* and *women have access to old age grant.* These findings seem to suggest that women were not pleased with the extent to which they were empowered. In addition to this, the overlapping opinions among the research participants indicated that there were common issues across some interest groups. The lack of consensus on the various women empowerment dimensions made it difficult to know what the status quo was.



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The fact that this study did not obtain a detailed explanation of what each interest group considered when scoring each perception compounds this difficulty. Future qualitative and quantitative studies are needed that would help build this understanding.

This study confirmed the need for policy makers to directly involve all community members, irrespective of their age, sex, positions of leadership held in the community and the Wards they come from when planning and implementing programmes that deal with issues affecting their livelihoods. Through such processes, communities become accountable and also learn to appreciate the development work taking place within their communities. Such community involvement is likely to bring change that is sustainable and also promote social cohesion.

The results of the second study on *awareness raising-related indicators and determinants of women empowerment* showed that the majority of the research participants agreed to different extents that awareness raising affected women empowerment in the rural areas of Makhado Municipality. However, for both perceptions on awareness raising that were investigated, the mean response levels for women were the lowest, confirming that they were not satisfied with the current extent of their own empowerment. This revealed that the various interest groups within the villages in the three Wards where this study was carried out held views that should not be ignored during women empowerment programming. The study demonstrated that men, community leaders, women, youth and children could be engaged in a truly participatory manner when attempting to understand an issue of common interest.

The third study showed that the participants' perceptions on the *participation-related indicators and determinants of women empowerment* differed among Wards 1, 29 and 37 of Makhado Municipality. Inter-Ward differences in the extent to which the interest groups believed each perception was a factor of women empowerment were observed, also suggesting that there were Ward-specific issues that influenced the respondents' assessments. In addition to this, opinions overlapped among the reflection circles for the various interest groups. In general, many reflection circles of interest groups believed that women's empowerment was substandard. However, the overlap of views that did not reveal a clear pattern suggested that the current trend of soliciting the inputs of community leaders on development issues might not be appropriate. It is important to engage all the interest groups, including children, to interrogate women empowerment issues.

The last study showed that the participants' perceptions on the control related indicators and determinants of women empowerment did not vary from one Ward to another for the



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perceptions, *women are financially independent; women have power and ability to develop their communities* and *women are respected when they become leaders.* However, significant differences in the perceptions were observed among the three Wards of Makhado Municipality for *most women are excellent role models for children and youth.* The various interest groups had similar views on this issue.

The use of the UNICEF (1994) Women Empowerment Framework to analyse women empowerment perceptions was beneficial because it provided direction on how to systematically interrogate the Mathaulula (2008) views. This helped to build an improved understanding of the different stages through which women in Makhado Municipality could achieve their empowerment goals. Classifying the interest groups' perceptions under the different levels namely access to resources; awareness raising; participation and control, helped to establish the level of women empowerment, in addition to highlighting the areas that needed some improvement.

The current study added another dimension to the UNICEF (1994) framework, namely viewing the various dimensions of women empowerment through the lenses of children, youth, men, women and community leaders. This analysis deliberately infused age, sex and position held in community in an attempt to broaden understanding of women empowerment issues. This approach to research on women empowerment used was based on the premise that rural communities were heterogeneous in nature. As such, it was most likely that the broad range of community members influenced the way women made decisions on their empowerment. Taking these views into consideration, the different categories of interest groups were included in the study in order to get a balanced assessment of the issue at stake, which in this case was the empowerment of women.

### 7.4 Contribution of the study to the body of knowledge

That this study has expanded the frontiers of knowledge on women empowerment issues in rural areas of Makhado Municipality and beyond is not in question. Although some evidence on this matter is presented in earlier sections of this Chapter, the current study brought to light the fact that it is possible to engage community members as young as seven years old and unlock their views through establishing appropriate ventilation platforms such as reflection circles (see Figure 7.1). There is no evidence of literature on women empowerment or rural development that was generated through a similar approach. This implies that this study has made available an additional innovative approach (Figure 7.1) for engaging rural communities, in addition to generating literature on women empowerment.



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The democratic nature of facilitating the platforms at village level is particularly worth noting and appreciating as it gives meaning to public participation as enshrined in South Africa's Constitution of 1996, Municipal Structures Act of 1998 and also Municipal Systems Act of 2000. These pieces of legislation project the centrality of public participation. Thus, the approach used in this study is a crucial model that can be used to manage *imbizos* and other platforms established to genuinely solicit the perceptions of grassroots communities, taking into account the broad range of interest groups resident in them. In addition, most Municipalities find it difficult to harvest community views and use them to inform integrated development planning. The approach that this study proposes (Figure 7.1) is a viable proposition that Municipalities can use to deepen democracy and create a sense of ownership of community development initiatives. For Makhado Municipality, this is particularly significant considering the fact that the study developed the research capacities of 3-4 youth in each of the 41 villages that made up Wards 1, 29 and 37.

This critical mass of skilled people can be called upon at any time to play similar research-oriented roles. Thus, this study developed the capacities of both the individual "Foot Soldiers" in each village, the Wards and Makhado Municipality itself.

Establishment of village-level platforms where collective discussion of women empowerment took place was ground breaking because this was the first time that this issue occupied space in development discourse within the villages. Most importantly, children, youth, women, men and community leaders had an equal say on women empowerment. Thus, the amplification of community voices helped to expose the flaws in the current approaches, which always seek the inputs of community leaders on most community issues. The need for engaging the broad range of interest groups in each village when formulating development interventions was highlighted.

Fonjong (2001: 230) argues that "women's empowerment requires that the population in general as well as women themselves, know the extent of their problems, so that proper strategies can be adopted to reverse the situation." Also, Bowen (2008) posits that "genuine participation requires that special attention be paid to involving all constituent groups in the local community, including the poor people, in strategic planning and decision-making." However, apart from saying this none of the authors provided answers on how this could be realised in practice. This study has closed this gap in knowledge



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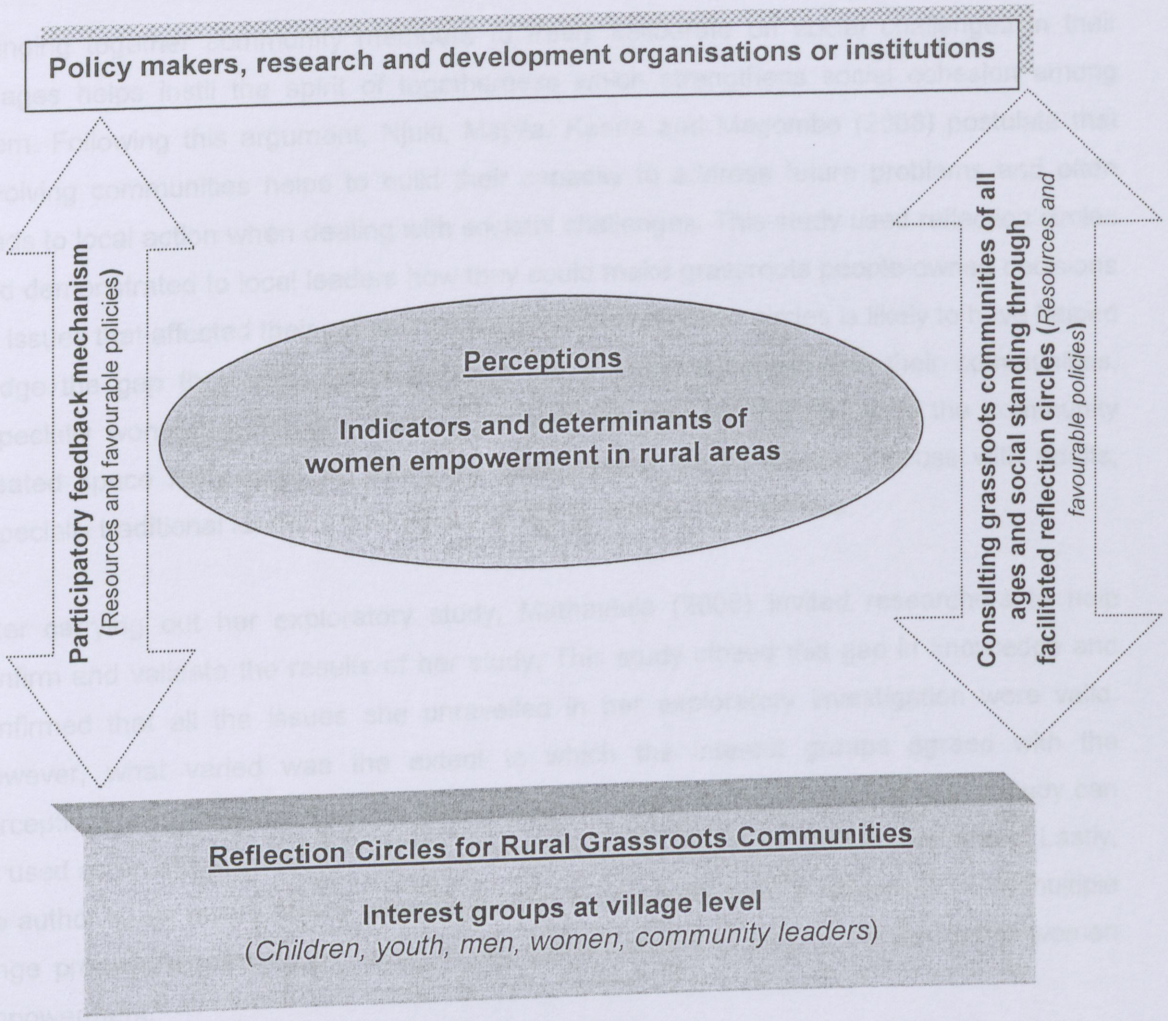



**Figure 7.1 Proposed community engagement strategy on women empowerment in Makhado Municipality of Limpopo Province**



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Bringing together community members to freely deliberate on social challenges in their villages helps instil the spirit of togetherness which strengthens social cohesion among them. Following this argument, Njuki, Mapila, Kaaria and Magombo (2008) postulate that involving communities helps to build their capacity to address future problems and often leads to local action when dealing with societal challenges. This study used reflection circles and demonstrated to local leaders how they could make grassroots people-owned decisions on issues that affected their communities. Use of the reflection circles is likely to have helped bridge the gap that often exists between the traditional leaders and their communities, especially women, youth and children. In this respect, for the first time the community created space for people as young as seven years old to sit and discuss with adults, especially traditional leaders, on issues that affected their communities.

After carrying out her exploratory study, Mathaulula (2008) invited researchers to help confirm and validate the results of her study. This study closed this gap in knowledge and confirmed that all the issues she unravelled in her exploratory investigation were valid. However, what varied was the extent to which the interest groups agreed with the perceptions in question. It must be pointed out that the questionnaire used in this study can be used as an assessment tool for the extent of women empowerment in rural areas. Lastly, the author is not aware of any other study that innovatively used a pseudo Duncan multiple range procedure (as was the case in the current study) to isolate the factors of women empowerment.

It is crucial for policy makers and development agencies to involve communities in issues pertaining to their livelihoods as they have enough knowledge about their communities and they know what works for them. Titterton and Smart (2008) believe that using the knowledge of community members can enhance implementation of development initiatives, apart from increasing ownership. This implies that development practitioners and policy makers need to meaningfully harness such knowledge when developing intervention strategies.

### 7.5 Importance of the Current Study in Building University-Community Partnerships

Universities as social institutions are expected to play a pivotal role not only in educating their citizens but also in facilitating development in rural communities. The construction of sustainable partnerships between universities and communities becomes a critical issue. Through such alliances, universities and communities are able to engage each other in addressing some fundamental social issues such as poverty alleviation, health, service



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delivery and women empowerment, among others. Also, through such processes, universities are in a better position to learn more about communities in their vicinity, exchange ideas and equip local people with the necessary skills that would enable them to address some life-related challenges. Armed with such knowledge and problem-solving skills, communities are in a better position to develop intervention strategies that might directly address their concerns. Knowledge is power and failure to access that power hinders development.

The current study sought to demonstrate that apart from providing leadership in knowledge generation, rural-based universities, University of Venda in this case, are also committed to promoting social dialogue and change in communities. Use of innovative ways of engaging various interest groups in a participatory manner was likely to have helped enhance working relationships between academics and community members. Considering the participatory engagement approach used in this study, it is possible that this community-based research demystified the role of a university in rural community development.

### 7.6 Recommendations for Further Research

Since this study obtained the perceptions of community members in three Wards of Makhado Municipality only, there is obvious merit in undertaking a similar study covering a larger geographical area such as Makhado Municipality. The results of such a study would be useful when developing and mounting more comprehensive, long-term women empowerment programmes.

In this confirmatory study, the issues that informed the interest groups' thinking as they ranked the perceptions from the Mathaulula (2008) study were not solicited. It has been shown in this study that this could have helped to obtain a deeper and better understanding of the issues at hand. Also linked to this is the need for seeking possible the reasons why in this study there more female participants in each interest group (except the 7-14 year old and community leaders' categories) across all the Wards. Could this be a reflection of apathy? If so, what are the implications for rural development considering the approaches that are currently used?



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## APPENDICES

### Appendix A: Covering letter

University of Venda
Centre for Rural Development and Poverty Alleviation
Private Bag X5050
Thohoyandou

Tel 015 962 8000

**Dear Respondents**

I am a PhD candidate registered with the Centre for Rural Development and Poverty Alleviation at the University of Venda. I am conducting a study focusing on the "Perceptions of Rural Communities on Indicators and Determinants of Women Empowerment: A Case Study of Makhado Municipality in Limpopo Province."

I kindly request you to take part in this study. You are in no way obliged to take part if you feel it is against your wish to do so. It is unfortunate that there will be no remuneration for taking part in this research.

Kindly indicate your willingness to be part of this study by signing in the slot at the bottom of this letter.

Thanking you in advance for your cooperation

C. S. Moyo (Mrs)

**Respondent's consent**

**Signature of the Respondent** **Date**

..... .....



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**Appendix B: Participants' Attendance Register**

**Date:** **Event:** Orientation Workshop for Village Verification Engagement **Venue:**

| Surname & Initials | Male/ Female | Youth/ Adult | Highest Educational level attained (Choose from)<br><br>1-None<br>2-Primary school<br>3-Secondary school but no Matric<br>4-Matric<br>5-Tertiary | Which community structure are you a member of? | Cell phone number | Email |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | | | | | | |
| 2. | | | | | | |
| 3. | | | | | | |
| 4. | | | | | | |
| 5. | | | | | | |
| 6. | | | | | | |
| 7. | | | | | | |
| 8. | | | | | | |
| 9. | | | | | | |
| 10. | | | | | | |



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**Appendix C: Women empowerment questionnaires for community members (Children, Youths, Women, Men, Ward Committee, Traditional leaders, Civic Society)**

Ward _____ Village _____ Interest group _____

Number of female participants in the group _____

| What do you think about the following statements as they relate to the lives of women in this village? | | Are you sure that this is true in this village (Place✓in the correct box) | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Do not agree | Not Sure | Agree | Strongly agree |
| **Indicators** | | | | | |
| **Access to Resources** | | | | | |
| 1. | Most women can read and write | | | | |
| 2. | Women know their rights and exercise the rights responsibly and freely | | | | |
| 3. | Few women are unemployed | | | | |
| 4. | Women have access to life improvement opportunities | | | | |
| 5. | Women have access to business opportunities | | | | |
| **Awareness-raising** | | | | | |
| 6. | Women are aware of all government and private sector opportunities for their empowerment | | | | |
| **Participation** | | | | | |
| 7. | Women occupy powerful leadership positions such as Principal, Councillors | | | | |
| **Control** | | | | | |
| 8. | Women are financially independent | | | | |
| 9. | Women have power and ability to develop their communities | | | | |
| 10. | Most women are excellent role models for children and youth | | | | |
| **Determinants** | | | | | |
| **Access to Resources** | | | | | |
| 11.. | Women are multi-skilled and talented | | | | |
| 12. | Women are never overworked | | | | |



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| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 13. | Women have a lot of time to do all the things they want to | | | | |
| 14. | Women have access to old age grant | | | | |
| **Awareness-raising** | | | | | |
| 15. | Women are rarely physically, emotionally and sexually abused by men | | | | |
| **Participation** | | | | | |
| 16. | Women are always given the chance to make decisions at home and in the communities | | | | |
| 17. | Women are not undermined by men and society in general | | | | |
| **Control** | | | | | |
| 18. | Women are well respected when they become leaders | | | | |



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