

**REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN IN THE LEADERSHIP STRUCTURES OF
POST-SETTLEMENT COMMUNITY PROPERTY ASSOCIATIONS (CPAs) IN
VHEMBE DISTRICT, LIMPOPO PROVINCE, SOUTH AFRICA**

by

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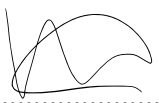
**REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN IN THE LEADERSHIP STRUCTURES OF
POST-SETTLEMENT COMMUNITY PROPERTY ASSOCIATIONS (CPAs)
IN VHEMBE DISTRICT, LIMPOPO PROVINCE, SOUTH AFRICA**

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I further declare that I have submitted the dissertation to originality checking software and that it falls within the accepted requirements for originality.

I further declare that I have not previously submitted this work, or part of it, for examination at Unisa for another qualification, or at any other higher education institution.

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.....

Signature

04 November 2021
.....

Date

DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my late aunt, Mmemuhulu Aifheli Nemutandani.

*What a year it has been. All the heartache, confusion, and anxiety, and yet
here we are. To God be the glory.*

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ABSTRACT

Various factors impact on the representation of women within community property association (CPA) leadership structures in the Vhembe district. Women's participation is generally low. To explore women's experiences within CPA committees, the researcher employed a mixed methods approach which was mostly qualitative with a quantitative analysis embedded into the design. Semi-structured questionnaires, a focus group discussion and key informant interviews revealed traditional and institutional dynamics that impact women and CPAs in several ways. Women's adherence to gender roles, societal perceptions and committee dynamics conceivably hinders their full participation within leadership and decision-making processes. Women's lack of resources, skills, capacitation, and lack of government support, all affect women's empowerment within CPAs. The research maintains that women's participation should be more than just being present within a structure. The findings reveal the need to evaluate whether women's participation adds value to women and CPAs, and how their participation can be enhanced.

Keywords: Gender equality, rural women, women's participation, women's empowerment, rural women's leadership, community property associations (CPAs), land restitution, rural organisations, rural land governance, gender roles, patriarchy, rural development, women in development

MAVHALA A NNGWE

Hu na zwithu zwinzhi zwi kwamaho u imelelwa ha vhafumakadzi kha zwigwada zwi lavhelesaho thundu dza vha dzulapo (CPA) kha vhurangaphanda ha zwiimiswa zwa Tshitiriki tsha Vhembe. Vhafumakadzi vha shelaho mulenzhe ndi vha tuka vhukuma. Uri hu wanuluswe tshenzhelo dza vhafumakadzi kha Komiti dza CPA, thodisiso yo itwaho yo shumiswa maitele a sa fani o livhisaho thogomelo kha vhuḁi ha tshithu kana u sa vha havhuḁi hatsho, ha itwa na dzimbalo-mbalo. Ho shumiswa dzimbudziso, ha haseledzwa na zwigwada na u vhudzisa vhathu vho khetheaho, zwenezwi zwo bvisela khagala uri mvelele na ndila ine zwenezwi zwiimiswa zwa tshimbidzwa ngayo zwi kwama vhafumakadzi na CPA nga ndila nnzhi. U farelela ha vhafumakadzi kha zwine vha lavhelelwa u zwi ita, ndila ine tshitshavha tsha dzhia ngayo vhafumakadzi na ndila ye komiti dza vhumbwa ngayo zwi vhonala zwi zwone zwi no khou thivhela u shela mulenzhe nga vhuḁalo havho kha vhurangaphanda ha zwiimiswa zwa CPA na kha u dzhia dzi phetho. Vhafumakadzi vha shaya tshomedzo, vhutsila, vhukoni na u sa tikedzwa nga muvhuso, zwothe hezwi zwi kwama u maandafhadzwa havho kha dzi CPA. Thodisiso yo farelela kha la uri, u shela mulenzhe ha vhafumakadzi hu tea u fhira u sokou u vha hone havho kha zwiimiswa. Mawaniwa a sumbedza uri hu tea u tolisiswa arali vhafumakadzi vha tshi khou shela mulenzhe nga ndila ine ya vha vhuyedza nga ho engedzeaho na dzi CPA, na ndila ine ha nga khwiniswa ngayo ndila ya u shela havho mulenzhe.

NKATSAKANYO LOWU ANTWSISIWEKE

Ku na swilo swo hambanahambana leswi khumbaka ku yimeriwa ka vavasati eka swiyenge swa vurhangeri bya nhlangano wa miako wa vaaki (CPA) exifundzenintsongo xa Vhembe. Hakanyingi vavasati a va ngheneleri hi xitalo. Leswaku ku kambisisiwa leswi vavasati va swi tokotaka endzeni ka tikomiti ta CPA, mulavisisi u tirhise tindlela to hambanahambana leti vunyingi bya tona ti fambelanaka ni nkambisiso lowu nga xiphemu xa endlelo. Loko a vutisa vanhu swivutiso leswi nga hleriwangiki, a burisana ni ntlawa ni ku burisana hi vuenti na vanhu lava tivaka leswi endlekaka emugangeni, u kume leswaku ku cinca eka ndhavuko ni minhlangano swi ve ni nsusumeto eka vavasati ni tiCPA hi tindlela to hlayanyana. Ku namarhela ka vavasati mahanyelo ya vona, ndlela leyi vanhu va ehleketaka ha yona ni ndlela leyi komiti yi tirhaka ha yona, swi endla leswaku vavasati va tsandzeka ku nghenelela hi xitalo eka vurhangeri ni le ka maendlelo yo teka xiboho. Ku pfumala ka vavasati switirhisiwa, vutshila, vuswikoti no pfumala nseketelo wa mfumo, hikwaswo swi khumba ku nyikiwa matimba ka vavasati eka tiCPA. Nkambisiso wu kandziyisa leswaku ku nghenelela ka vavasati ku fanele ku katsa leswi tlulaka vukona bya vona eka xiyenge. Leswi kumiweke swi paluxa leswaku swa laveka ku kambisisiwa loko ku nghenelela ka vavasati swi va vuyerisa ni ku vuyerisa tiCPA na ndlela leyi ku nghenelela ka vona swi nga antswisiwaka ha yona.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CPA	Community Property Association(s)
KIIs	Key Informant Interviews
FGD	Focus Group Discussions
PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

South Africa's land reform programme has uncharacteristically missed in its debate over the crucial issue of women's representation within leadership structures of post-settlement community property associations (CPAs). More specifically, the overall underrepresentation of women within rural governance is vast and concerning, even within development programmes such as land restitution. The assumption which this study makes is that women leadership within rural or community structures such as CPAs in post-apartheid South Africa has not received much attention within developmental discourse and sciences, and even more so, questioning whether representation within those structures is meaningful.

Research on women and leadership within rural contexts or within community structures such as CPAs in relation to land restitution is conspicuously rare if not totally absent. The exclusion from meaningful participation within land governance structures is a global issue, where rural women around the world share similar experiences (Imburgia, Osbahr, Cardey & Momsen 2020; Agarwal 2001; Tanwir & Safdar 2013).

This study wishes to add yet another voice, however, on the critical issue of representation and participation of women in leadership structures of post-settlement support CPAs.

1.2 BACKGROUND

Gender inequality and the subsequent discrimination against women in post-apartheid South Africa's land reform processes have been receiving much attention within developmental sciences in South Africa and elsewhere (Weideman 2006; Doss, Kovarik, Peterman, Quisumbing & van den Bold 2015; Moyo 2013; Pharoah 1999; Awofeso & Odeyemi 2014; Akinola 2018). As far as the 1990s, there has been growing academic interest on women, their ownership and access to land, patriarchy, and gender inequality in South Africa (Walker 1998; Kirk & Shutte 2004; Morrell, Jewkes & Lindegger 2012; Blom 2006; Bhengu 2010). The discussions are herein linked to the various factors impacting on the socio-economic and political participation of women within leadership structures of rural societies, particularly within post-settlement support CPAs amongst others.

1.2.1 WOMEN'S EQUITABLE REPRESENTATION WITHIN LEADERSHIP IN SOUTH AFRICA'S LAND GOVERNING STRUCTURES

Leadership has been a male concern within various sectors, even in the presence of equality (Eagly & Karau 2002:573) and more especially within rural communities that are governed by patriarchy and traditional hierarchies (Blom 2006:36). Such rural communities uphold many traditional practices that are not always gender equal. Women, like their male counterparts also need access to land, and subsequently managing its affairs. However, the inherent dynamics found within land governing bodies do not allow for women to be involved in a manner that is sufficient to significantly have an impact as they lack representation and meaningful participation within decision-making

processes (Pharoah 1999:4; Agarwal 2001:1645). There is limited information on women within land restitution CPA structures, and more specifically their equitable representation and whether their participation is meaningful. These have not received much attention. Unfortunately, there are instances where even when women participate or form part of leadership structures, they are merely figureheads who are dismally excluded from real decision-making processes (Lama, Kharel & Ghale 2017:266; Pharoah 1999:4; Tanwir & Safdar 2013:210).

Underrepresentation and token representation (Mindzie 2015:16) might perpetuate inequalities of gender, while further marginalizing women from the stake and benefits of land reform programmes. “Since men and women are not likely to participate in the CPAs on equal terms, land given to CPAs could possibly set existing gender roles in stone for many years to come” (Blom 2006:37).

Amongst others, gender roles have perpetuated the stereotype that makes women unfavourable for leadership roles (Eagly & Karau 2002:576). Leadership is considered a generally masculine discipline (Eagly & Karau 2002:576), this alongside patriarchal beliefs of male superiority and female inferiority (Ojakorotu & Olaopa 2018; Sultana 2010; Akinola 2018; Chan & Mbogoh 2016) is to the detriment of meaningful participation and empowerment of women. The further “power” goes unshared and the disassociation of women with leadership persists, the further and deeper gender inequality will strengthen.

1.2.2 SOUTH AFRICA'S LAND REFORM PROGRAMME WITHIN INHERENTLY PATRIARCHAL RURAL COMMUNITIES

Upon gaining democracy in 1994, South Africa's Black population was significantly poor, landless, and disheartened (Moyo 2013:5395). So much so that the post-apartheid South African ANC led government singled out land reform as one of its priority areas (Moyo 2013:5395). Fundamentally, the land reform programmes (land restitution, land redistribution and land tenure) were in response to landlessness as experienced by the black population of South Africa, as well as socio-economic inequalities between them and their counterpart whites (Kloppers & Pienaar 2014:677; Modise & Mtshiselwa 2013:1; Walker 1998:12). The land reform programme, however, did not directly focus on equal land distribution between genders within the various races (Qomfo 2020:7).

The Constitution defines land redistribution as government's position to legislate and make within its means, favourable conditions which enable its citizens to gain access to land in an equitable manner (SA Government 1996a:1253). Secondly, the Constitution defines land tenure as a mechanism to redress land insecurity in cases where past racially discriminatory laws caused persons or communities' land to be legally insecure (SA Government 1996a:1253). Lastly, land restitution is defined as governments' effort to redress the dispossession of persons or communities of their property after 19 June 1913 as a result of past racially discriminatory laws (SA Government 1996a:1253). Essentially, land was and still is considered "the cornerstone holding together all processes linked to development. It is the economic lifeline of the rural masses, mainly women, hence, the need for them to be directly

connected to all processes linked to land” (Moyo 2013:5395). Making the link between land, development and women’s inability to influence decisions regarding land considerably problematic.

Land restitution’s promise of land and overall socio-economic betterment, like any other programme, benefits some to the detriment of others. The possession of the “restituted” land is generally under the custodianship and benefit of male descendants, this due to patriarchal tendencies dominant in most post-apartheid communities in rural South Africa (Weideman 2006; Walker 1998; Ntwasa 2009; Moyo 2013; Blom 2006). Inevitably, this results in the marginalisation of women and girl children from this valuable inheritance (Awofeso & Odeyemi 2014; Lowe Morna, Dube & Makamure 2017; Oluwagbemi-Jacob & Uduma 2015; Jacobs 2004; Pharoah 1999). Simply put, men dominate post-settlement CPAs despite South Africa’s constitutional stance and efforts towards building a non-discriminatory and gender inclusive society where all have equal opportunity to participate in the socio-economic space (Walker 1998:13; Jacobs 2004:11; Bne Saad 2013:219; Lowe Morna *et al.* 2017:118; Akinola 2018:5; Weideman 2006:393; SA Government 1996b; Walker 1998:14).

1.2.3 GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

Women’s inability to lead, take decisions and participate freely within rural organisations is a grave and concerning barrier to rural women’s greater equality, which directly impacts their empowerment. While gender equality, empowerment, and poverty alleviation are highly desired, they have proven to be harder to attain. For instance, the Millennium Development Goals turned

Sustainable Development Goals, generally have good intentions with regard to gender equality in terms of the number of girls attaining an education, representation within politics and business (Kearney & Odusola 2011:29). However, this desire to advance gender equality still lacks amongst rural women. In fact, measuring gender equality should go beyond assessing the number of women holding office within business and political spaces, it should include whether that representation adds value and, if not, what should be done to enhance women's equality and empowerment. Nonetheless, there is a need to address and redress such imbalances within affected communities. This study intends to ask: *How do we, as a democratic and non-sexist society redress the unjust and unfair discrimination of women with regard to land control, ownership, and access patterns in post-apartheid South Africa?*

Gathering such perspectives and experiences of women is a vital undertaking in understanding the impact of such development programmes. Posing questions to these inequalities creates a powerful vantage point from which one can examine the effects of development programmes and strategies (Sen & Grown 1987:23). This determination of whether such strategies hit or miss the mark is lacking within many development programmes, especially if the goal of those programmes is to improve the standard of living, poverty eradication, access to decent employment and equality (all which land reforms seek to achieve directly and indirectly), then women should be first in line (Sen & Grown 1987:23). Justifiably, since women constitute the majority of the poor, the underemployed, the economically and socially disadvantaged, alongside existing gender-based hierarchies and subordination (Sen & Grown 1987:23). This perspective influences the narrative of this study, by building on the idea

that rural women, as a disadvantaged group, should become a focal point of various development programmes, including land restitution. Even the best of development programmes do not successfully promote the meaningful participation and empowerment of women as they hardly consider the hinderances rural women face (Tanwir & Safdar 2013:210). Therefore, their involvement and subsequent empowerment should be closely monitored if projects are to be considered successful or impactful.

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Studies around the globe have shown that women are not completely excluded from leadership and do hold some leadership positions (Kalekye, Koome & Gichuhi 2020:84). However, they do not fully participate in decision-making and policy making processes which, in turn, disempowers them in comparison to their male counterparts (Kalekye *et al.* 2020:85; Pharoah 1999:51). Land laws are gender neutral, which creates a grey area, where the obligation for women's representation in land governance is neither here nor there.

This is concerning as the extent of women's representation in land governance structures clearly has an impact on women's ability to influence the outcome of any land-related decisions (Chan & Mbogoh 2016:26). South Africa's land restitution has essentially been introduced into patriarchal contexts (Weideman 2006), which has perpetuated the domination of women by men regarding land ownership and access patterns (Lowe Morna *et al.* 2017). This denies women an opportunity to have a role and make a meaningful contribution within leadership structures of the majority of CPAs in some beneficiary communities. The bottom line is, men represent their families within society, this makes it

difficult for women to participate on equal terms and this is the reason why CPA's are male dominated (Blom 2006:32). Rural women are not only underrepresented within communal leadership structures, but they are also said to be hugely marginalised in terms of decision-making, with the main positions within those structures dominantly occupied by men (Flores, Evans, Larson, Pikile & Marchena 2016:2; Bne Saad 2013:219; Choudhury, Haque & Habib 2016:50). Where women are given positions such as treasurer – power and decision-making over finances are said to still be held by their male counterparts (Flores *et al.* 2016:2; Lama *et al.* 2017:266).

Although efforts to affirm women in the leadership of CPAs in particular are evident, there is much room for token representation (Mindzie 2015:16; Lama *et al.* 2017:266). Failure by rural women to not only be equally represented but have a voice in what goes on in these structures, means that their interests and rights are not safeguarded (Moyo 2013:5398). It is critical for policymakers and other stakeholders of land reform in South Africa – especially post-settlement support, to be provided with a road map to eradicating this unwarranted and unconstitutional conduct. This study speaks to this challenge with the purpose of identifying the complexities leading to this scenario, and to make recommendations on how best to address the challenge. The idea is to facilitate for a post-settlement support initiative of the CPAs which supports an affirmative model pursuing the objective of not only increased but meaningful women participation. This means that increased and meaningful participation for women within decision-making structures and systems of CPAs should be in line with the democratic nature of the South African constitution, its national policies, and the overall desire to achieve equitable development (SA

Government 1996b; Jacobs 2004; Esquivel 2016; Moyo 2013; Pharoah 1999:4).

1.4 RESEARCH PURPOSE, MAIN AIM AND SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

This sub-section presents the purpose of the study, the main aim, its specific objectives, and research questions.

1.4.1 PURPOSE

The main purpose of this study is to promote the spirit of gender equity in society – especially within rural communities where patriarchal tendencies continue to marginalise, exclude, and disadvantage women—this when compared to their counterpart males with regards to leadership, control, and socio-economic competence. The study will use a scenario developed from communities in the Vhembe district, Limpopo Province which form part of land restitution claimants and have organised themselves into CPAs. Such associations are post-settlement entities that represent their respective communities.

1.4.2 MAIN AIM

Thomas & Hodges (2010:38) defined a research aim as a broad and introductory sentence that briefly states the overarching purpose of a research project. Not only does the main aim set the tone for the reader, but it is also the driving force and motivator for why the research is taking place. Consequently, the main aim of this study was to explore the factors impacting on the representation of women in the leadership structures of post-settlement CPAs in Vhembe district, Limpopo Province, South Africa.

1.4.3 SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

As an extension of the main aim, research objectives are the specific and focused statements that indicate the key factors the research project plans to investigate (Thomas & Hodges 2010:39). Specifically, the study will:

- ❄ Characterise the socio-demographic factors of beneficiary women within leadership of CPAs in Vhembe district.
- ❄ Establish beneficiary women's contribution within the leadership structures.
- ❄ Establish women's influence on decision-making within CPA leadership structures.
- ❄ Develop an instrument which would facilitate for greater women representation in the leadership structures.
- ❄ Propose policy recommendations facilitating greater representation of women within CPA leadership structures.

1.4.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The study set out to answer the following questions:

1. What are the factors impacting on the representation of women in the leadership structures of CPAs in the Vhembe district?
2. What are the socio-demographic factors of women within leadership structures of CPAs in the Vhembe district?

3. What contribution do women make within CPAs leadership structures in the Vhembe district?
4. What influence do women have on decision-making within CPA leadership structures in the Vhembe district?
5. What should be done to facilitate greater participation on the part of women within the leadership structures?
6. What policy recommendations can be given to facilitate greater representation of women within CPA leadership structures?

1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The significance of this study in the discipline of development studies was directed in terms of methodological input, contribution to knowledge and development of a new theory in the land restitution and gender dynamics discourse of post-apartheid South Africa CPAs and other rural organisations elsewhere. Land reform and gender equality are both highly influential and discussed topics. The two have become prominent within various social, environmental, economic, and political debates. Many studies have been done around the issues of women's limited land ownership and whether rural women in general have benefited from land reforms under the general banner of women's empowerment and gender development. However, there is limited to no information that specifically addressed the issue of the representation and participation of women within rural land governing structures, *let alone* within land restitution CPAs. Furthermore, very little information exists regarding

whether women's participation (when women do participate) is essentially meaningful in a manner that has a positive impact on their lives socially, politically, economically or promotes their empowerment. Herein, the significance of the study is discussed under the following banners (Figure 1.1):

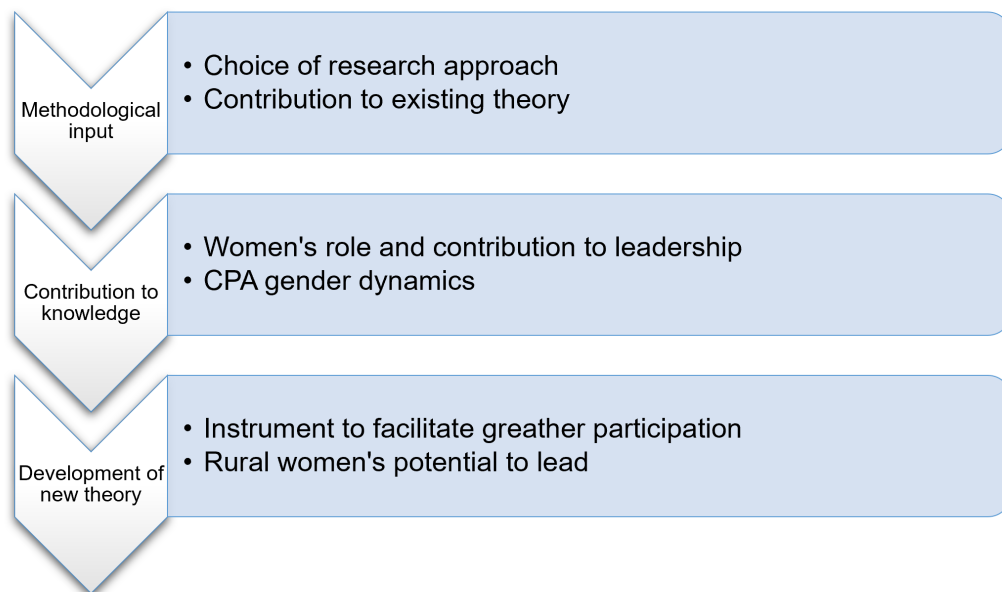


Figure 1.1: Significance of the study

1.5.1 METHODOLOGICAL INPUT

In the light of limited data on women's representation within CPA leadership structures, a predominantly qualitative approach was chosen. While much research exists within the area of rural women, the various socio-economic challenges they face, as well as land restitution in terms of its failures, successes, and challenges. There is limited to no information on the specific area of women's participation or representation within CPA leadership structures and what that looks like, thus necessitating an exploration of such a situation, a gathering of women's experience within such structures, what this

means to them and the various factors impacting on such involvement. Why is a qualitative approach best suited to gather experiences? According to Mohajan (2018:23) qualitative research investigates local knowledge and an understanding of a given programme, people's experiences, meanings and relationships, social processes and contextual factors that marginalise a group of people. More specifically, qualitative research seeks to understand the social realities of individuals by placing a spotlight on how people interpret or make sense of their specific experiences (Mohajan 2018:24).

In this case, how women make sense of their involvement within CPA structures, what contribution that makes, how they relate to other members, and so on. Mohajan (2018:24) further suggested that beyond describing these meanings, experiences, and social processes from the point of view of the population being studied, qualitative research generates new concepts and theories. Such new concepts will be discussed in an upcoming section. The study was mainly qualitative in its desire to interpret meaning and perceptions through face-to-face interviews that sought to hear as much as possible from women themselves. Additionally, the study employed tools such as key informant interviews (KIIs), focus group discussions (FGDs) and semi-structured questionnaires.

In the Vhembe district, Dafuleya (2020) conducted a study on a CPA pointing to the CPA's natural resource management, collected through interviews from management, workers, and community representatives, and documentation search (Dafuleya 2020:61). The community in question is like many CPAs within the district in terms of demographics, dynamics, and challenges. Nkuna

(2013) on the other hand made use of semi-structured questionnaires with a population sample that was based on a probability approach (stratified method) involving heads of households (male and female), the CPA committee, claimants involved in the farming project and the provincial Department of Agriculture and Land Affairs.

In a neighbouring district, Rathaha (2013:86) in a study of the land restitution process in a community in the Molemole local municipality, made use of questionnaires and FGDs. The researcher's approach was guided by the Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA), which sought to engage and involve the study community in the planning and collection of data on issues that concerned them (Rathaha 2013:87). This approach was found to be appropriate for the study considering that the study relied heavily on the knowledge of the community, this included mapping and diagrams, and timelines and historical transects in order to establish their dispossession and land restitution processes thereof (Rathaha 2013:94).

The current study was guided by the use of a mixed method. While mainly qualitative in its data collection and interpretation, a smaller portion was evaluated quantitatively. The mixed methods approach is synonymous with pragmatism, qualitative inquiry with interpretivism and efforts to remain somewhat neutral and aware of potential bias with post-positivism. The mixed methods design is in line with the assertion by Manenzhe (2015) on the use of multiple paradigms. As a result, the study made attempts to critique the power relations that exist within the CPAs studied. This was in order to establish the possible changes that need to take place for CPA committees to be considered

gender equal.

1.5.2 CONTRIBUTION TO KNOWLEDGE

Most of the research on land restitution and CPAs concerns itself with the land restitution processes or rather the overall participation within the CPA community. These mainly include all restitution beneficiaries, male and female. There is little information on CPA committees, *let alone* the involvement and experiences of women within such CPA committees. For instance, while there may be an acknowledgement of the underrepresentation of women (Dafuleya 2020:84), many studies do not mainly focus on women within CPAs, *let alone* CPA leadership structures.

As established, little to no information exists on the gender dynamics and role of women within CPA leadership structures. One can contend this as a lack of evidence on whether women are truly empowered within that context. The study contributes to the overall knowledge on the role and potential of women to lead rural organisations, particularly by adding a voice to rural women's leadership, women's involvement within land governance, their level of decision-making and overall power-sharing within these rural organisations, in order to determine the existence of gender equality within the context of land restitution and land reform as a whole. Raidimi (2014:12) is of the belief that rural women within disadvantaged areas hardly have opportunities to make themselves heard. In turn, the author sought to provide women this opportunity to share their knowledge and experiences, which the current study mainly focussed on. Therefore, the study not only provides a platform for rural women to share their experiences but works towards setting a foundation for future

research.

1.5.3 DEVELOPMENT OF NEW THEORY

As mentioned in Section 1.5.1, qualitative research is said to facilitate the generation of new concepts and theories (Mohajan 2018:24). The various experiences of women within CPA leadership structures as collected, analysed, and presented, revealed contexts and concepts concerning the study population. This led to a new understanding, a gendered perspective on land restitution CPAs and, as an extension, rural development. Based on the findings and issue of women's lack of capacitation, the researcher developed a tool to supplement efforts towards the facilitation for greater women representation by focusing on women's potential to lead and enhance those capabilities for women to be empowered within CPA structures. In cases where the exclusion of women may be because of their lack of formal education, training or work experience, the tool is envisioned to assist in assessing women's potential to lead and hold a variety of positions, hence, limiting possible discrimination while highlighting areas of dire need for capacity training.

1.6 SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study was conducted in the Vhembe district of Limpopo Province. Vhembe district is home to over a million people living in over two hundred and seventy thousand households (Vhembe District Municipality 2020), with four local municipalities and all hosting a majority of female residents (Vhembe District Municipality 2020). This rural economy relies principally on commercial

agriculture, forestry, and tourism, and hosts several restitution claims (Aliber, Maluleke, Manenzhe, Paradza & Cousins 2013:203). The study focused solely on the beneficiary women who form part of the CPA committee within selected restitution CPAs in the Vhembe district. In addition to these primary participants, the study engaged key informants. The researcher collected data from three of the four local municipalities within Vhembe district, namely Makhado, Thulamela and Collins Chabane as shown in Figure 1.2.



Figure 1.2: Map showing district municipalities in Limpopo Province.

Source: Wikipedia (2020)

The study does not represent the Vhembe district in its entirety, nor the many other CPAs operating in the district. The study specifically concerned itself with the context of the ‘representation of beneficiary women of land restitution in the leadership structures of CPAs and not all matters concerning CPAs. The study was confined to a smaller context because of limited resources and constraints of time. However, the results are expected to be reasonably generalizable,

despite this shortcoming.

1.7 CLARIFICATION OF KEY TERMS

The key terms concerning the study are presented hereunder. These are widely used and understood terms and therefore require clarification as to their meaning in the specific context of the current study. These are:

1.7.1 GENDER INEQUALITY

Gender inequality herein refers to the disempowerment of women through their limited representation within socio-economic and political institutions that mainly house men (Kumar 2011:26), as well as how that potentially shapes their experience of poverty (Bne Saad 2013:231; Fredman 2011:5), thus affecting women's acceptability within society (Kwena 2011:164), and potentially perpetuating token representation (Mindzie 2015:16; Lama *et al.* 2017:266). Building upon the understanding that women throughout the ages and in almost all cultures have never been considered equals to men, whether daughter, wife, mother, student, employee, in public and private sectors, in politics, women are marginalised and discriminated against (Awofeso & Odeyemi 2014:104).

1.7.2 PATRIARCHY

Within this proposal, patriarchy refers to male dominance, women's subordination (Ojakorotu & Olaopa 2018; Sultana 2010; Akinola 2018) and cultural norms that hold the belief that women are fundamentally inferior to men (Chan & Mbogoh 2016:30). While patriarchy originally meant the rule of the father or dominance through the male lineage, the concept here describes the

power relations between men and women (Sultana 2010:2), at a social, traditional, and rural level as it pertains to land.

1.7.3 COMMUNITY PROPERTY ASSOCIATIONS

Community Property Associations (CPAs) are governing bodies or legal entities that represent a claimant community (Beyers & Fay 2015:6), replacing individual and family land claims, for ease of administration (Beinart, Delius & Hay 2017:118). This collective effort sought to address community landlessness due to dispossession rather than isolated individual land needs, by forming structures that are essentially vehicles for collective decision-making throughout the land reform programme (Pharoah 1999:6).

1.7.4 RURAL WOMEN

Rural women, in this study, refers to women (research participants) of varying ages, education levels, marital status, financial standing who all reside within selected rural communities in the Vhembe district (study area). While the study specifically chooses to define rural women by residence within rural communities, it cannot be denied that many rural communities are characterised by poverty, illiteracy, and underdevelopment (Lekganyane 2008:11).

1.7.5 LAND RESTITUTION

Land restitution in this study refers to governments' effort to return land to communities for both socio-economic and political purposes. As a response to Black people's loss of land rights after 1913 (Dikgang & Muchapondwa 2015:2). This effort is used to redress the dispossession caused by various

historical land related injustices that have affected many Black communities (Lahiff 2008:2).

1.8 DISSERTATION LAYOUT

This dissertation has been presented in clearly structured chapters addressing different areas of focus, as detailed below:

1.8.1 CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

This chapter lays a foundation of what the research is about, by introducing the research and issues around the topic. The introduction briefly summarizes the study and its findings. Further information is provided in the topic background, problem statement, aim, objectives, research questions, scope, and importance of the study. The chapter gives a full account of the chosen topic and research problem, why the topic was selected and establishes why the research was conducted.

1.8.2 CHAPTER 2: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS AND EXISTING LITERATURE ON RURAL WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN NATURAL RESOURCE ORGANISATIONS AND LEADERSHIP

This chapter provides a backdrop for the study, by providing the available literature on the research, essentially providing an overview of all the matters relating to the study. Thereafter, the theoretical frameworks providing the direction of the study are discussed.

1.8.3 CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents the research approach, research design, sampling, data gathering, analysis, trustworthiness and credibility, and ethical considerations the study undertook, all in accordance with the research aim, objectives, and questions. These details are the account of how the research was conducted.

1.8.4 CHAPTER 4: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter provides the findings/results of the study through a detailed discussion on what the research revealed. The themes, categories and sub-categories of findings are discussed in detail.

1.8.5 CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter provides conclusions and recommendations for future research. The chapter allows a reflection on whether the research questions and objectives have been fulfilled. Opportunities for future research are provided based on the gaps found during the research process that require further attention.

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS AND EXISTING LITERATURE ON RURAL WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN NATURAL RESOURCE ORGANISATIONS AND LEADERSHIP

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The chapter herein identifies the existing literature on the variety of matters concerning the research topic, problem, questions, and objectives. Thereafter, the theoretical frameworks are discussed. These are the concepts and theories previously expressed by experts in related fields of study (development, gender, and leadership) that assist researchers in their pursuit to investigate research problems, analyse data, interpret findings, make recommendations, and conclusions (Kivunja 2018:46). The theoretical frameworks influencing the study are also presented.

2.2 LITERATURE REVIEW

Literature that specifically addresses women's experiences and observations on rural leadership dynamics in South Africa's post-apartheid era is scarce. However, the available literature provides a framework to the particularised dimension of women leadership in community-based or rural organisations such as the CPAs, because literature drawn specifically from this context is hard to come by. Published articles, books, organisational and government documents formed part of the pool of reviewed literature. In addition, the reviewed literature spans women's leadership within institutional structures, patriarchy, land reform and gender inequality.

2.2.1 LAND ACCESS, CONTROL, AND OWNERSHIP PATTERNS IN POST-APARTHEID SOUTH AFRICA

One cannot understand CPAs without addressing the context such land governing structures find themselves. CPAs are a result of challenges associated to a lack of land access, control, and ownership as experienced by many of the rural poor. Land hosts various important economic activities necessary for the survival of rural populations, this includes horticulture, mining, and tourism, all which are seen as vital to alleviate poverty as experienced by African people and more specifically rural women (Moyo 2013:5395).

The land reform programme was a politically contentious and highly advocated issue, to be resolved as an urgent task for the new democratic government in order to facilitate socio-economic advancements in relation to equity, employment, social cohesion, agriculture, food security, poverty reduction and sustainable development (Beinart *et al.* 2017:109; Dikgang & Muchapondwa 2015:4; Lahiff & Li 2012:3; Cousins 2016:142; Moyo 2013:5394). Furthermore, the land reform programme was an initiative to restore the dignity of those affected, based on the manner in which people were forcefully removed, lost their homes, livestock, and other household items (Beinart *et al.* 2017:113; Atuahene 2014:57).

Modise & Mtshiselwa (2013:3) opine that prior to 1913, only a small portion of black South Africans experienced poverty, which partly explains the motivation for land reforms as a mechanism to return the black population somewhat to its former glory. Where people had control over various aspects of their lives,

essentially being self-reliant. Land reforms becomes an empowerment strategy that not only corrects what was an unjust past, but also addresses present day poverty as well as a dependence on government. Nonetheless, some have criticised these reforms, suggesting the programmes have mainly been used for political purposes to manage unrest or relieve socio-political pressures by addressing land issues as a diversion instead of addressing development issues sustainably (Deininger 2001:5; Cousins 2016:145).

2.2.2 WOMEN AND LAND

Women- and girl-headed households, the unemployed youth, the elderly, people living with HIV/AIDS (Kepe & Cousins 2002:1; Beyers & Fay 2015:5) are some of the disadvantaged portions of the population that continue to be marginalised in terms of their right to land as intended by land reforms. Rural women are particularly disadvantaged, severely so with regard to ownership and control of land related assets (Tanwir & Safdar 2013:219). Of the aforementioned disadvantaged members of society, women can find themselves to be further disadvantaged by the fact that they are considered to be taken care of under the overall household land rights (Meinzen-Dick, Quisumbing, Doss & Theis 2017:1; Batisai 2018:78), making it unnecessary for women to seek individual rights to land.

Essentially, land restitution relies on key social relationships, making women's land rights highly dependent on the rights of men, as well as relationships that exist with traditional leaders, where people live, their ethnicity, race, religion, class, and socio-economic status (Beyers & Fay 2015:4; Hall & Kepe 2017:2; Cousins 2016:144). This is because land ownership is an important source of

power, both in the community and within the household, to which access to and control over land raises the status of the individual and creates personal autonomy while providing access to various opportunities such as acquiring skills, attending trainings and networking (Blom 2006:20; Tanwir & Safdar 2013:218; Imburgia *et al.* 2020:12). Often overlooked is that dispossession affected both men and women (Akinola 2018:4), yet cultural norms perpetuate the oppression of women with regard to land and consequently any decision-making in relation to land. “Not only have they [women] suffered at the hands of racially discriminatory legislation, but they have also been denied land rights under indigenous law” (Pharoah 1999:12).

The central issue is that land reforms were premised on the idea that communities are cooperative and tend to take communal decisions and work together to achieve shared goals and ideas (Pharoah 1999:22). However, literature reveals that such communities rarely exist (Pharoah 1999:22). Unfortunately, programmes with an intention to drive participation and decision-making at community level do not always take into consideration that “community” does not always include everyone, especially women (Whaley & Cleaver 2017:56). Even more unfortunate is that policy developers and implementors tend to consider men’s perspectives as the community perspective (Ntwasa 2009:78).

This view of men encompassing community needs is problematic. Whaley & Cleaver (2017:61) found that such notions engendered conflict, reproduced, and entrenched the existing unequal village power relations without generating greater efficiency or empowerment. The exclusion of rural women within

participatory structures is a form of disempowerment (Kabeer 2005:13). Disempowerment in their ability to make social, economic, and political decisions with an intention to produce positive outcomes. The representation of women within leadership and decision-making institutions is limited and essentially poses a serious threat to their empowerment, especially rural women (Kumar 2011:26).

Most community programmes are not studied with women in mind. This may be due to South Africa's focus on the racial integration of the economy rather than women's participation within said economies (Mafukata 2020b:194). Women's issues seem to fall through the cracks of this young democracy. Community organisations, traditional leadership and governance reinforce men's existing property rights and power over resources and continue to marginalise women in favour of men, resulting in increased land access and ownership for men regardless of women and men's equal land rights (Lowe Morna *et al.* 2017:123; Weideman 2006:379; Akinola 2018:7; Grabe 2015:7; Bandiera & Natraj 2013:16; Gammage & Smith 2018:4; Pharoah 1999:12; Agarwal 2001:1626).

Making equal control and ownership of land is almost unattainable within affected contexts. Blom (2006:37) went so far as suggesting that land should rather be given to individuals than to groups such as CPAs that may not be fully inclusive and may perpetuate existing gender inequalities. While this may be ideal, unfortunately, women, African women to be specific, lack the confidence to by themselves challenge men's authority (Blom 2006:21) and men will not give up such authority without a fight. Women owning and

controlling land, as well as their ability to change the rules, norms and perceptions in a gender progressive manner has the potential to positively impact on their bargaining power (Blom 2006:20; Agarwal 2001:1641; Tanwir & Safdar 2013:220) and solidify their place within society. Concerning their right to access a variety of key productive assets and services including land, labour, financial services, water, rural infrastructure, technology, and other inputs (Raidimi 2014:11). This has become an area of concern for many researchers within development studies. Government and related institutions should be wary of this.

The continued oversight of women's significant contributions and roles within development, not only undermine the development agenda (also set out in the land reform programme), but results in misguided projects, food insecurity and an increase in poverty (Raidimi 2014:11). There is much work that needs to be done with regard to where women find themselves in relation to land in South Africa. As things stand, it is difficult to fathom if and how women benefit from land reform programme, what Moyo (2013: 5395) called government's noble cause.

2.3 WOMEN'S EXPERIENCE OF GENDER INEQUALITY AND PATRIARCHY

Patriarchy manifests itself institutionally through male dominance—male dominance that acknowledges that while some men will be dominated by other men because of hierarchy, both those men (the dominator and dominated) unite in their common objective to dominate women (Taiwo 2003:48; Sultana 2010:3; Maseno & Kilonzo 2011:45). This extent of male dominance often

renders women as unable to lead, make decisions or participate in socio-economic and political spheres, more so within rural contexts. This manifestation of dominance results in the disempowerment of women across the board and perpetuates gender inequality. Deep-rooted patriarchy, social institutions, cultural beliefs, and norms as is found in many of South African's rural communities become direct hinderances to women achieving this equal status, authority, and credibility (Pharoah 1999:4; Moyo 2013:5398). Like many other institutions of power, CPAs are dominated by men through the system of patriarchy. Generally, such institutions, which are influenced by patriarchy actually serve to perpetuate male bias and power (Pharoah 1999:4), making it unlikely that land reform can do much to challenge such deep rooted patriarchal customs (Blom 2006:36; Tanwir & Safdar 2013:215).

Women's experience of inequality is due to their low status, their socio-economic, cultural and institutional circumstances, including power-sharing, decision-making, the division of labour, control of resources, literacy level, age, marital status, child rearing, socio-political influence and patriarchy (Bne Saad 2013:219; Kabeer 2005:16; Oluwagbemi-Jacob & Uduma 2015:224; Sultana 2010:3; Weideman 2006:378; Grabe 2015:4; Cornwall & Rivas 2015:6; Kabeer & Natali 2013:22; Bandiera & Natraj 2013:17). All of these are vital factors that relate to and affect women's leadership and participation. Although constitutionally, South Africa in particular has provisions in place that encourage women to participate equally in societal activities (Maluleke 2012:7; Lowe Morna *et al.* 2017:68), there has been some notable resistance by men to comply as men have felt harassed into including women (Sultana 2010:9;

Flores *et al.* 2016:2; Pharoah 1999:50; Imburgia *et al.* 2020:20). This opposition and as a result the marginalisation of women, amongst others, is said to be a major cause and effect of gendered poverty (Kumar 2011:27; Bne Saad 2013:231; Maseno & Kilonzo 2011:51; Jones, Holmes & Espey 2010:113; Fredman 2011:5).

One contributing factor to the continuation of gender inequality is that South Africa maintains a gender-neutral stance throughout many of its policies. As established, women and men are considered legally equal in many countries, including South Africa. However, women are by no means equal to men socio-economically and society in general is aware and accepting of this (Ntwasa 2009:19). This fallacy of gender equality is embedded more so in the lives of rural women, and land reform potentially perpetuates this acceptance of gender inequalities. There is not sufficient, if any, information on women's representation in land governance structures (Chan & Mbogoh 2016:27).

This is partly due to laws and policies regarding land access and ownership being gender neutral, which allows for male dominance through national and local government institutional processes to systematically underrepresent or exclude women from land and forest governance (Djouidi, Brockhaus, Brown & Bandiaky-Badji 2012:4). For instance, gender inequality within traditional, rural contexts allowed only men a position to obtain and inherit land through customary laws as women were considered minors prior to 1988 (Blom 2006:19; Pharoah 1999:12). Women's position within customary marriages, therefore, explains why men and society at large within rural areas, who have lived under the aforementioned law would not see women as equals, let alone

fit to make decisions at any level. It could be presumptuous to believe that a generation and society that has lived during such a time would easily accept gender equality and practice it as prescribed. There is much potential for a spill over into present day rural communities, just on the basis of how community accepted norms are preserved and carried from one generation to another. Communities may have trouble adapting, as they have been socialised to accept these patriarchal norms and values that govern their societies (Pharoah 1999:82).

The lack of specific legislative measures or provisions to promote women's representation in management and administration of community land (Chan & Mbogoh 2016:27), coupled with a weakness in the general implementation of such provisions (Chan & Mbogoh 2016:27), causes tensions between constitutionally defined land administration and socially accepted customs (Ntwasa 2009:17). This notion, defined by Chan & Mbogoh (2016:31) as a legislative vacuum that perpetuates male dominance, is evidence that no transformation can take place with the existing restrictive and rigid cultural laws (Ntwasa 2009:72). Essentially unattainable in the context of how deeply entrenched such laws are within rural areas. Change and greater equality is said to only be achievable where women already know and exercise their rights, in communities where patriarchal structures are already weakened, better yet in urban areas, where gender equality is more prominent and monitored to a degree (Qomfo 2020:10; Blom 2006:37).

2.4 WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION WITHIN RURAL LAND GOVERNANCE

Flores *et al.* (2016:1) and Chan & Mbogoh (2016:29) singled out poor governance and patriarchal attitudes that stem from an adherence to cultural and religious norms, as notable barriers to women's full representation and participation in both formal and customary land governance structures and decision-making. Adding to the variety of barriers within women's control as well as outside their control. Women's active and meaningful participation is faced with numerous structural and institutional obstacles, regardless of the critical role women play within rural development, (Tanwir & Safdar 2013:215). The culprit—participation.

The concept of participation has always just assumed that men and women participate equally within the rural economy, never taking into consideration or addressing the complex social, political, cultural, and economic factors that continually result in gender inequality (Tanwir & Safdar 2013:211). Therefore, any and all efforts made to ensure equal participation cannot simply ignore these deeply ingrained inequalities (Tanwir & Safdar 2013:211). According to Agarwal (2001:1623), women's participation or its lack thereof is determined by societal rules, norms and perceptions, factors that disadvantage women and only their bargaining power or that of a community can change their status quo. In order to achieve meaningful participation of women within rural organisations, one must understand what participation entails. In most cases, women have little to no bargaining power because they do not always participate at the same level as men who mainly benefit in many aspects of life, including ownership, leadership, and decision-making. Conversely, women do

not participate because they do not have much, they have little to no influence and therefore tend to self-restrict. Lekganyane (2008:20) highlighted poverty as a contributor to rural women's lack of participation even in seemingly minor decision-making matters within the household. This coupled with the plight of food insecurity and economic hopelessness within gender unequal male-headed households (Lekganyane 2008:20). The underlying understanding is that women are represented, by a male figure, on decisions concerning social, economic, and political matters. Women are represented by their husbands or a male relative within society as they are not always seen as full-worthy citizens (Blom 2006:4).

It is assumed that women benefit through men, and it is an accepted practice that allows men to retain leadership and decision-making in all aspects of community life as they do within the household. These actions neglect the need and role of women within decision-making and leadership, let alone them believing it is necessary for development (Akinola 2018; Weideman 2006). There is a need for women to increase their bargaining power, as this increase happens, women stand to benefit from their participation which should in turn affect them positively. Making women's representation an important aspect of women's empowerment, control over socio-economic outcomes, and equality.

2.4.1 PARTICIPATION TYPOLOGY

Participation is more than just participating. The degree and level of participation produces varied outcomes. One cannot simply assume that participation in itself is sufficient and yields positive results or assume that there are only two sides to the participation coin. Agarwal (2001:1624) provided the

following levels of participation:

- ❄ **Nominal participation**, which refers to solely holding membership within a group or organisation.
- ❄ **Passive participation**, which is when one is voiceless, having no say with regards to the decisions being taken, decisions are essentially taken on one's behalf.
- ❄ **Consultative participation**, which is when a member may be consulted on decisions, but the very member may not directly influence those decisions.
- ❄ **Activity-specific participation**, which is when a member has been found to be useful to execute specific tasks within that group or organisation.
- ❄ **Active participation**, which involves a member being expressive on matters and being one that takes initiative against any odds.
- ❄ **Interactive (empowering) participation**, which is when a member is recognised as a vital member, a member who is considered to be an influencer, influencer of the groups' decision-making functions.

Based on the above typology, participation can mean various things for women. Therefore, one cannot judge women's participation at face value. This study asserts that women within rural community organisations, mainly fall into the lower levels of participation, i.e., nominal, passive, consultative and, at most, activity specific as described by Agarwal (2001). Tanwir & Safdar

(2013:212) discounted nominal and passive participation as being sufficient for gender empowerment and development. More often than not, nominal, and passive participation of women are the main forms of participation within rural communities. They are rarely consulted and will mostly be tasked to perform specific activities within these committees (Agarwal 2001; Pharoah 1999). It is of importance to note that participation alone cannot achieve gender equality or equity, more so, within pre-existing socio-economic inequalities and unchanged power relations (Agarwal 2001:1625). As with all things, participation is but just one aspect of empowerment and development.

2.4.2 FACTORS INFLUENCING RURAL WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION

South Africa is among the many countries that have legislated for gender equality within their national institutions. The use of gender quotas, unlike on a national level has not easily translated into rural communities. Tanzania is one such country that supports women's representation within natural resource governance through quotas (Hyle, Devkota & Mustalahti 2019:1063). However, in some instances, the very gender quotas were found to be problematic or artificial (Hyle, *et al.* 2019:1069; Agarwal 2001:1641). Pharoah (1999:3) noted the necessity of having both men and women's equal representation within rural organisations, as they have differing needs, interests, or prioritised concerns, this without implying that all women share the same needs. Women are said to have needs that are a result of their subordination to men and strategies to fulfil such needs seeks to alter the status quo (Pharoah 1999:3), as well as practical needs that aim to improve their day-to-day lives within society (Pharoah 1999:3). This is to say that women's needs will range

between equity and adequate housing at any given point. Nonetheless, a number of land association executive committees fail to represent women – both in quantity and quality of women's involvement (Chan & Mbogoh 2016:31; Samndong & Kjosavik 2017:9). CPAs, as well as other rural community organisations may be victim to this lack of quantity and more especially quality of participation.

Moyo (2013:5398) argued that women's inadequate representation and lack of voice within CPAs presents a link to their lack of land ownership. Furthermore, the inherent social order, results in men mainly occupying the main positions within rural organisations, positions of chairman, deputy chairman and treasurer (Flores *et al.* 2016:2; Pharoah 1999:48; Blom 2006:36). Such positions are mostly influential in terms of the decision-making processes within organisations. People elected to these positions tend to be respected and trusted with the power and weight that comes with such positions. Unfortunately, women – rural women, are not always considered for these positions as they do not always fit the description. They are not always qualified, educated, or experienced to hold those positions.

In some cases, women are either explicitly excluded from community leadership bodies, with men making decisions on community issues including land (Chan & Mbogoh 2016:28; Flores *et al.* 2016:1), or women are instead assigned to stereotypically feminine positions of secretary or additional member (Pharoah 1999:80). It is no surprise that women do not hold positions of power, they are sometimes perceived to be incompetent, and the existing societal hierarchy does not assist this narrative. This incompetence is based

on a scale that may measure capabilities and qualities that women do not possess due to factors beyond their control. Therefore, making such a perception not only unfair, but one that perpetuates women's disempowerment. At the end of the day, women are just not involved as they should be within decision-making processes, nor are they taken seriously (Elbehri & Lee 2011:29; Samndong & Kjosavik 2017:9). Their opinions carry little weight, and some are not even aware of the decisions being made (Agarwal 2001:1626).

These are all factors that should not be accepted by women, nor the communities they find themselves. In fact, this disproportionate mismatch in participation is said to not only be detrimental for women but has a negative effect on their household, society, and the rural economy (Tanwir & Safdar 2013:210; Tanwir & Safdar 2013:214). Agarwal (2001:1630) perceives participation as a measure of one's human rights and empowerment, where women's absence from such participation is an indicator of a project's failure. In this case, women's limited participation within the land reform programme should be an indicator of its failure at that level.

2.5 WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP

The lack of influence on and ownership of land and related governance adds another layer to rural women's existing socio-economic and gender-based constraints such as poor access to education, technology, credit, and markets (Imburgia *et al.* 2020:12; Tanwir & Safdar 2013:213). Gender roles, time constraints, self-censorship, lack of women's advocacy, lack of accountability and good governance are some of the other notable barriers to women's

participation in decision-making, leadership, and empowerment (Chan & Mbogoh 2016:30; Samndong & Kjosavik 2017:10; Flores *et al.* 2016:3; Lama *et al.* 2017:269; Djoudi *et al.* 2012:4; Mindzie 2015:16; Awofeso & Odeyemi 2014:108; Choudhury *et al.* 2016:53; Bandiera & Natraj 2013:16).

Women will be constrained by a variety of barriers in their lifetime, some more than others. More specifically, rural women will be constrained by most if not all the above-mentioned barriers, barriers that continue to limit their meaningful participation within decision-making and leadership in many aspects of socio-economic and political life, including their involvement within rural organisations. There is a visible trend in the manner in which rural women across the globe have limited access to leadership or decision-making positions within rural governance. Generally, it is believed that rural women do not participate because they are overburdened with unpaid housework work, reproductive responsibilities and caring for the elders, all which isolate them from economic activities and in turn lowers their bargaining power within the family, community, and workplace (Tanwir & Safdar 2013:215; Imburgia *et al.* 2020:19). However, as established, these are but some of the multiple constraints to their participation within rural organisations, women are constrained by so much more.

2.5.1 WOMEN'S SELF-RESTRICTIVE NATURE

While barriers that are beyond women's control are many, there are some factors that women face that are as a result of women themselves. There are some instances where women themselves, are a barrier to their own participation within rural organisations such as CPAs (Pharoah 1999:82). One

of the many internal factors affecting women's participation, is women's self-restrictive nature. These self-restrictive factors worsen the situation for women when combined with external constraints, many of which have been mentioned. Women have been said to, in some cases, avoid positions or avoid holding higher portfolios as to avoid the increased responsibilities associated with those positions (Pharoah 1999:50; Flores *et al.* 2016:2).

Women struggle with feeling uncomfortable within settings such as CPAs where there are men and speaking in front of men becomes problematic for some women (Pharoah 1999:50). However, the feeling of being uncomfortable is as a result of women respecting men and observing traditional norms that expect and require women to know their place within society (Pharoah 1999:61) and therefore causing them to refrain from much participation as this may offend men and challenge widely accepted traditional norms (Pharoah 1999:69). Unfortunately, women and society at large conform to this narrative, both consciously and unconsciously. Further to this, women tend to not support or choose other women to represent them (Agarwal 2001:1626; Pharoah 1999:60), this stems from the tendency to associate men with leadership and women feeling that there is not much to gain for themselves or through other women representing them since they cannot make any changes within these mostly patriarchal structures (Pharoah 1999:72). There is conflicting literature regarding time and whether it is a barrier to women's participation. However, one cannot deny that women's responsibilities have the potential to be a barrier, although this will differ from one woman to the next. Rural women may have difficulties with regards to attending what may be lengthy meetings taking

place at inconvenient times (Agarwal 2001:1638) and they may possibly regard such meetings as being a nuisance to them based on their perception of CPAs not being beneficial to them (Pharoah 1999:52).

Such instances make it important to always establish whether women are interested in participating (Imburgia *et al.* 2020), rather than to merely assume that all women are interested. Perhaps participation within such structures is not what rural women consider as a form gender equality. As such, women may have their own ideas of what their emancipation entails.

2.5.2 INSTITUTIONAL IMPEDIMENTS

Other than women's self-restrictive nature to their meaningful participation within rural organisations in terms of decision-making and leadership, cultural institutions tend to exclude women in what has been identified as intentional and systematic (Ntwasa 2009:71). This exclusion has become deeply ingrained into the fabric of many rural societies, it takes place seamlessly and therefore, it is not opposed or questioned as should be the case. The absence or presence of women within many rural organisations is neither here nor there. They function with or without women. It is important to note that while women are technically "participating" (Pharoah 1999:75), whether this participation is meaningful is questionable and as research shows, doubtful. Furthermore, women lack direct decision-making power and influence (Pharoah 1999:75). Two indicators of meaningful participation which women fall short of because they continue to be viewed as mothers, wives, and daughters rather than decision-makers and community players (Pharoah 1999:81). This continues to be a difficult perception to alter within patriarchal contexts. While women are

wives, mothers, and daughters, this should not be seen as an inability to make decisions or an inability to contribute to the betterment of the societies they find themselves in. Their involvement has the potential to influence decisions and should help accrue equal benefits to women across the board.

However, land governance, like many of the other social, economic, and political resources, is perceived as a male concern (Chan & Mbogoh 2016:30), so much so that women are considered disrespectful and can receive backlash from the community when they show interest in actively participating within governance structures (Chan & Mbogoh 2016:29; Pharoah 1999:61; Agarwal 2001:1639). Essentially, people with influence, social connections and lobbying skills are elected as leaders (Imburgia *et al.* 2020:13). All of which women may not have, as they have been mostly denied access to involvement, resources and positions that can allow them to gain skills, influence, or make connections. They face blatant exclusion or when they are involved, are undermined (Flores *et al.* 2016:3; Choudhury *et al.* 2016:54; Bandiera & Natraj 2013:16). Even where women are given positions within rural organisations, power and decision-making over critical functions such as finances are still held by their male counterparts (Flores *et al.* 2016:2; Lama *et al.* 2017:266). Hence, women may have positions within CPAs, for instance, and still not have power to make decisions, or have a genuine influence on decision-making.

In addition to society's view of women's inability to lead, there is much confusion regarding women who are most suited to form part of rural organisations. Flores *et al.* (2016:2) found that (a) younger women tend to be considered as inexperienced to hold office within rural organisations, (b) elderly

women may have the experience but are unable to fully participate due to health constraints, and (c) married women tend to require permission from their husbands in order to participate within rural organisations. Based on the aforementioned, there seems to be no ideal woman, as all are constrained one way or the other. So which group of women are suitable?

Agarwal (2001:1640) considers older women, married women or women who have leadership skills and self-confidence to be in a better position in terms of being considered to participate within rural organisations. Imburgia *et al.* (2020:20) took this even further and brought to the table that the ideal woman for participation within such structures is either divorced or widowed, as well as with children who are grown enough not to “need” her in the way younger children would, she is better suited for leadership positions as she has fewer household duties. All things considered, the best suited woman for participation within the leadership structures of rural organisations should be a single, middle-aged woman with no children—a completely unfair and unrealistic expectation. All these expectations and perceptions deny women an opportunity to participate freely, they essentially exclude women from decision-making and leadership, based on technicalities (Flores *et al.* 2016:3). One is not old enough, or young enough, not single enough, or has too many responsibilities, and so on.

2.6 SUPPORTING WOMEN TOWARDS GENDER EQUALITY WITHIN LAND GOVERNANCE

Women, men and society at large require a greater awareness of the various factors relating to women’s participation within rural and land governance.

While a number of these factors have been discussed in the previous sections, Agarwal (2001:1638) provides the following summary of barriers:

- ❄ The rules of entry or criteria defining membership to organisations,
- ❄ The pre-existing restrictive social norms that tend to be difficult to challenge,
- ❄ Patriarchy which mostly plagues rural contexts,
- ❄ Gender division of labour,
- ❄ Social perceptions regarding women's ability to contribute to activities,
- ❄ Men's entrenched claims and control over community structures,
- ❄ Women's personal and household attributes including educational levels, property status, marital status, age, class,
- ❄ Women's limited political connections and limited experience of interaction within public forums (Agarwal 2001:1640), and
- ❄ An overall acceptance of both male and female behaviours that tend to prevent women from full participation (Agarwal 2001:1639).

Once women, men and society at large have become cognizant of the above-mentioned factors, then actions can be taken towards making changes and gearing up to support women towards equality within rural organisations, including CPAs. This support for women towards participation within rural

organisations, decision-making and leadership has the potential to allow women access to networks that could help women with gaining a reputation, knowledge, credibility, and confidence (Pharoah 1999:85). This means that all efforts to both include women and enhance women's involvement within leadership structures such as CPAs, requires a restructuring of such social institutions (Mama 2004:121; Fredman 2011:10), in order to sensitise and educate both men and women of the various effects of male domination (Maseno & Kilonzo 2011:54) and all the other factors impacting on women's participation.

Rural women need to actively penetrate these social structures in order for meaningful change to take place (Moyo 2013:5398). While institutions have much work to do, women have a role in making sure that they are involved and contributing meaningfully. In addition, there is a need to focus awareness on helping communities gain an understanding of gender roles, the underlying cultural and power aspects that are embedded in the everyday life of men and women within society, which are reinforced through gender neutral legislation and governance that perpetuate inequality (Flores *et al.* 2016:3). These aspects strongly influence how women participate. When women do participate, they lack various resources and support to enable them to participate meaningfully.

2.6.1 WOMEN'S CAPACITATION

In the effort to include and enhance women's participation, imposing quotas alone is not enough (Imburgia *et al.* 2020:23). It has to be coupled with capacitation. While women need to be aware of the need for them to form part

of leadership structures and be in a position to freely participate within those structures, they need to be capacitated towards that participation. Firstly, institutions should relax restrictive administrative requirements and present more women friendly extension methods (Lama *et al.* 2017:269), in order to communicate to and accommodate more women from various demographics. This is because increasing women's participation is the first step in the right direction.

Women cannot influence such systems from the side-lines (Moyo 2013:5399)—it has been established that more women should be involved. However, capacitation should in the interim, be provided to women who are existing members forming part of rural organisations in order to make their participation meaningful. While there should be an increase in women participating within rural organisations such as CPAs, capacitation is just as important. There is a need for capacity building, with a strategic focus on offering education, support, skills development, leadership training and confidence building programmes to women within rural organisations (Mindzie 2015:16; Tanwir & Safdar 2013:222; McVay 2013:134; Gammage & Smith 2018:4; Naupa 2017:321; Hyle *et al.* 2019:1072; Pharoah 1999:89). Such initiatives have been found to promote social cohesion, and women's participation in decision-making processes in their communities (Mindzie 2015:17).

Over and above this capacitation, women should be equipped with knowledge on the relevant rights, processes and procedures that should enable them to participate effectively in land governance (Moyo 2013:5397; Pharoah

1999:89). Success is dependent of a combination of empowerment and capacitation (Tanwir & Safdar 2013:221). Empowerment is attained through awareness that is driven by intentional actions that target rural women. The gender issue along with the challenges that are specifically faced by rural women are matters that often do not appear on the land agenda, hence the need for targeted awareness amongst rural communities.

There should be effective communication and awareness-raising planned and provided to rural communities through various platforms, including community radios, workshops, seminars, posters that is specifically designed and targeted at women (Pharoah 1999:88; Moyo 2013:5399). Information about women's meaningful participation and the importance of women within leadership should be relevant, comprehensive, and usable by women (Pharoah 1999:90; Imburgia *et al.* 2020:23). Such provisions can facilitate women to occupy positions of power, actual power that can shape governing bodies, while being cognizant of the fact that this power is inherently political, and requires women to be accorded a status, authority, and credibility that is equal to what society and institutions have accorded men (Pharoah 1999:4). Land is one such vital component of development that has the potential to redistribute structural power that can allow women the opportunity to defy gender roles and increase their political participation—that has mainly been easily accessible to men (Grabe 2015:14; Gammage, Kabeer & van der Meulen Rodgers 2016:9). This requires more precise and targeted efforts towards achieving gender equality within rural areas.

There should also be provision for gender training to officials and organisations that come into contact with communities in order to ensure that gender stays on the agenda in the manner that communities are engaged (Pharoah 1999:87). Further to this, government should set a precedent by appointing female land officials in order to engage women towards land governance (Imburgia *et al.* 2020:20). Female land officials who will be able to connect with and understand women's challenges are key to such efforts. Essentially, making this reinforcement of gender equality a multi-sectoral approach (Pharoah 1999:88) that should be addressed at a variety of levels from national government all the way to grass-roots level.

2.6.2 SUPPORT MEASURES

In addition to supporting rural women towards gender equality within rural governance bodies such as CPAs, there are additional factors to take into consideration. These include monitoring, more specifically participatory monitoring that should be utilised to create a space for government – community – women discussions about improving transparency, participation, accountability and cooperation between men and women (Flores *et al.* 2016:3), concerning the overall functioning of rural organisations such as CPAs. There should be efforts to establish and maintain ongoing consultations in order to monitor the status of gender development policies, resolutions, and women's genuine involvement within communities (Moyo 2013:5399; Pharoah 1999:90). This includes consulting women and men within CPAs on the efforts that are being made towards gender equality, identifying the gaps and working towards solutions and securing the support of communities and committees to this

effect.

Monitoring women's involvement and meaningful participation is important, for instance, Raidimi (2014:12) put forward of the Vhembe district that the general perception is that men have benefited from development while women have been excluded. Therefore, to confirm or correct this perception, consultations must take place to establish or maintain women's participation. Pharoah (1999:50) insisted that the end goal or desired outcome of such actions to support the meaningful participation of women within rural organisations such as CPAs, would be for men to see value in involving women.

Recognising that women have always had and continue to have necessary contributions to make towards development. Ideally, efforts towards the promotion of gender equality and supporting women should see men socialising other men to accept being led by women (Imburgia *et al.* 2020:20). To this effect, Naupa (2017:317) also suggested framing the gender issue as one of social inclusion rather than a women's issue. This would open up conversations around gender equality to all community members. With an emphasis on mobilising men rather than women to advocate for gender-sensitive land reform, in order for these efforts to give men the space and role to legitimately support gender issues without undermining their own cultural standing (Naupa 2017:318), because one cannot address gender differences without men (Ntwasa 2009:19).

Women's association and cooperation is another support measure that can be employed in the efforts towards gender equality within rural organisations such

as CPAs. Rural women need to be more organised; they have to be encouraged towards the formulation of female-led associations (Imburgia *et al.* 2020:18), as such associations are lacking within rural communities. It is of importance that women within rural communities and who form part of rural organisations such as CPAs are encouraged towards cooperation, as women's cooperation has the potential to increase their bargaining power while avoiding being victims of what Agarwal (2001:1626) called a replication of the customary exclusion of women from village decision-making bodies.

Consequently, for women to experience effective change, they need to be formally involved within decision-making in order to increase their bargaining power, power that should ensure changes occur in their favour (Agarwal 2001:1643; Moyo 2013:5399). This requires an initial understanding and acceptance that the land reform programme, like many other development programmes, cannot succeed if women are not actively engaging in the formulation of policy, as well as its implementation, both of which necessitate social mobilisation and the emergence of a strong rural women's movement (Ntwasa 2009:78). The combination of society accepting and understanding the need for women to be fully involved within rural organisations and women coming together, forming women's groups to advance their rights becomes the proof of how women's collective strength has the potential to loosen restrictive societal norms and possibly men's views of women and their ability to lead and make decisions (Agarwal 2001:1645; Pharoah 1999:86).

Lastly, any association or formation of women's groups will contribute to women networking with other women, where assertive women from other

communities share ideas, constraints, and inspire one another (Pharoah 1999:89) towards gender equality, participation, and leadership. There is a need for women to network and learn from other women's experiences (Moyo 2013:5399), this is because affiliation allows the disempowered to network with people within and outside of their social groups in order to realise and extend their own power (Bhengu 2010:10). Potentially leading women to a place of self-assessment, assessment of both the personal and institutional strengths and weaknesses to build on the strengths and work on the weaknesses, as well as identifying the gaps and need for external support where necessary (Bhengu 2010:10).

2.7 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

As previously stated, a theoretical framework provides a layout that assists researchers in what to look for in the data against the backdrop of existing theories to answer the research question and substantiate one's arguments, findings and recommendations (Kivunja 2018:47). Therefore, enabling a researcher to not only interpret the meaning found in the data, but enhance one's ability to evaluate the solutions being proposed, the recommendations being made towards solving the problem and for future research (Kivunja 2018:48).

According to Kivunja (2018:48), a good theoretical framework should emerge from one's literature review. The theoretical frameworks discussed below are as a result of the literature reviewed in the previous section. The literature reviewed presented a variety of issues concerning women within the context of the study. As well as a number of challenges women encounter within their

social, economic and political lives. A summary of some noteworthy aspects of the literature review are shown in Figure 2.1.

Women's marginalisation takes different shapes and forms over women's lifetime as evidenced and detailed within the literature review. These give a sense of the various ways in which women experience inequality, disempowerment, underdevelopment, and poverty. For this reason, the theoretical frameworks that were identified as suitable to address the research problem were the Feminization of Leadership (Chatwani 2015), Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Approach (Kabeer 2005), the Role Congruity (Eagly & Karau 2002), and the Women's Leadership Theories (Msila & Netshitangani 2016). Figure 2.2 illustrates the theoretical frameworks influencing this study.

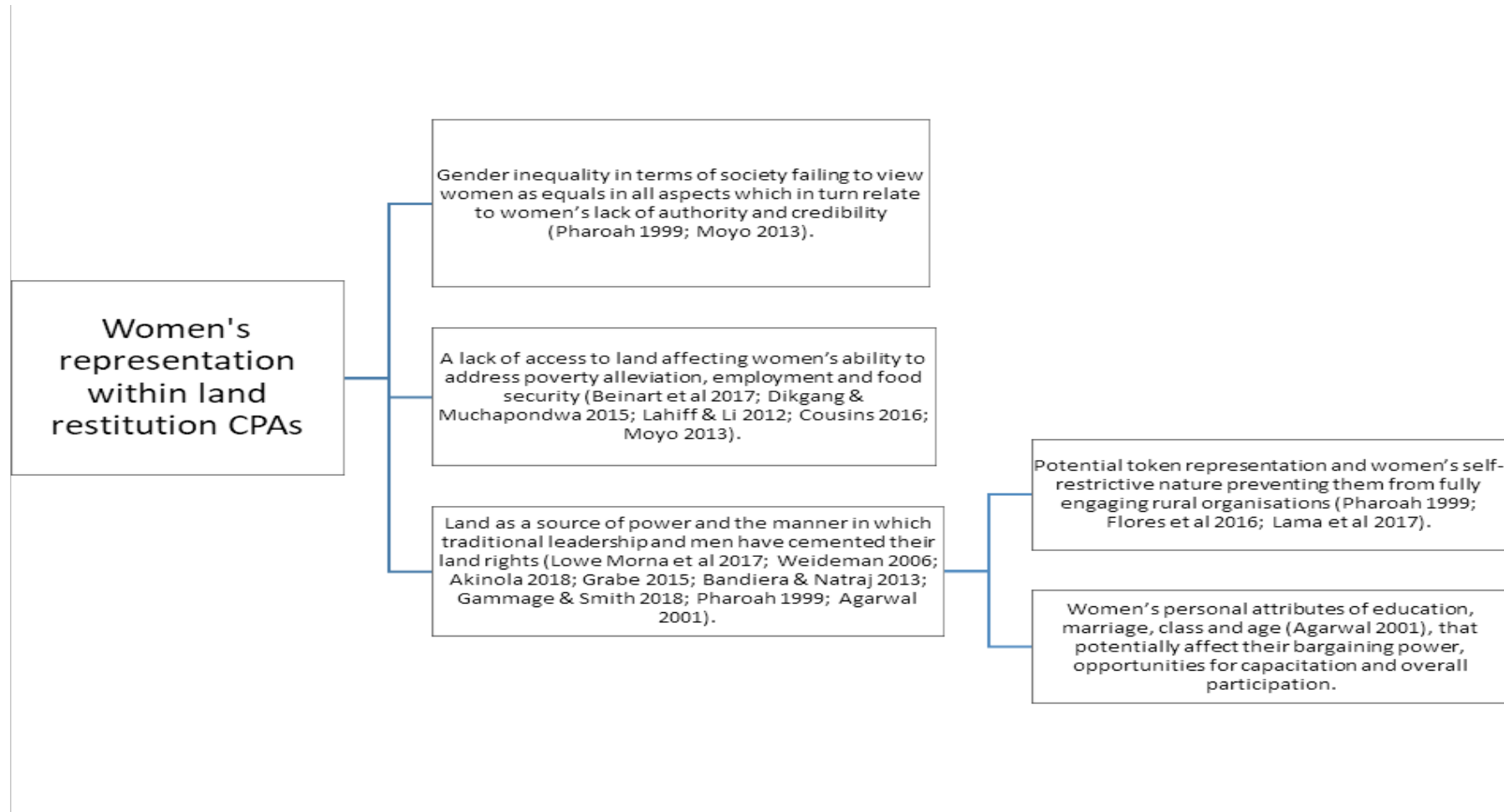


Figure 2.1: Summary of the literature

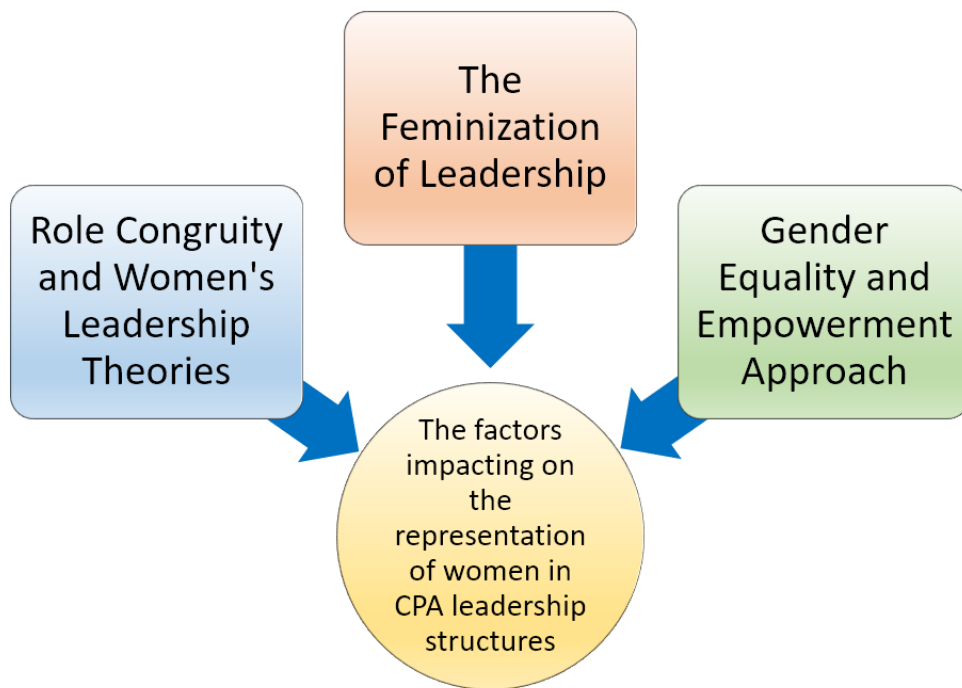


Figure 2.2: Theoretical frameworks influencing the study

2.7.1 THE FEMINIZATION OF LEADERSHIP

Gender and leadership, like many discussions on gender, development, and empowerment, have evolved over the past decades (Chatwani 2015:138; Raidimi 2014:12). Chatwani (2015:138) noted the manner in which gender and leadership has shifted from what the author calls a relatively simplistic discourse identifying the structural barriers to women’s leadership and ways to mitigate the negative impact these have on women, to complex discussions that Chatwani (2015:138) stated as:

- ❄ Women’s own motivation towards leadership,
- ❄ Women’s skills deficit,
- ❄ Definitions of leadership and potential biases,

- ❄ The negative perceptions society has of women in leadership,
- ❄ The manner in which women identify with leadership, and
- ❄ How work value systems within organisations and societal attitudes affect women.

All of which rural women fall victim to. While barriers to women's leadership or participation within leadership are many, there is little information on rural women's motivation for leadership as well as what female leadership looks and feels like for the women in question. The latter being what the current study aimed to address. Consequently, while the gap between gender and leadership is pressing, it remains unresolved (Chatwani 2015:138).

Much of the available research has focussed mainly on the barriers and possible solutions to women's leadership. This is expected as a variety of women continue to experience such barriers. So much so that in response to structural barriers within organisations, Chatwani (2015) alluded to women's tendency to resort to entrepreneurship and the manner in which such self-determination tends to lead to greater empowerment than is offered within organisations. In this sense, entrepreneurship allows women to be themselves. While being in leadership is one thing, the concepts and ideas society hold towards who should and can lead is another. In terms of tackling perceptions of women in leadership, Chatwani (2015:141) concurred with Eagly & Karau (2002) on the lose-lose situation in which women find themselves in terms of adhering to the perceptions of masculine leadership as this supports the perceptions, aids its continuation, and further dilutes the role of women within

leadership. The issue is discussed further in the subsequent section. Another vital issue is that of what leadership is to women. One cannot identify with that which they cannot define. The inability to define what leadership looks and feels like for rural women for instance, may result in a further disassociation. Women's inability to identify leadership within themselves may result in their inability to recognise leadership in others. Steady (2011:227) identified the manner in which women lack support and solidarity amongst each other as they tend to be reluctant to vote other women into positions of power.

This is an extension of the need for women to self-realise. "Integrating leadership into one's own self-identity alongside a societal accepted gender role identity is particularly challenging for women because women are embedded in an ambiguous environment that is deeply conflicted about whether, when and how women should exercise their leadership authority" (Chatwani 2015:143). While this is said of women in India, this is true for many women around the world and more so in the Vhembe district. Women are not always in a position to lead in the formal sense, as referred to in earlier sections, this is due to a variety of socio-economic and political reasons that tend to be beyond women's control.

Essentially, a move towards the feminization of leadership is necessary for women to be women within leadership. Most women, and more so rural women, cannot disassociate from the traditional gender roles of daughter, sister, wife, and mother (Chatwani 2015:144). Therefore, rural women's leadership is to be viewed under the umbrella of their existing roles within society, which Chatwani (2015:145) asserted as a possible central matter in

the conflict between those gender roles and leadership as experienced by Indian women. The same logic can be applied to women from rural parts of Vhembe and others around the developing world. In fact, according to Chatwani (2015:145) this presents an opportunity for women to claim and maintain a gendered leadership identity. More so, their feminine aspects have the potential to achieve sustainable social change (Chatwani 2015:146). This should result in what Mafukata (2020b:209) referred to as potentially leading to an emergence of women with self-worth and self-belief. Therefore, any effort by women to own their leadership and ability to lead has the potential to have a positive impact on them.

2.7.2 ROLE CONGRUITY AND WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP THEORIES

The reality is that rural women are a disempowered, disadvantaged group. In addition to this general disempowerment, women face many institutional challenges, including trials regarding women's ability to lead. The Role Congruity Theory considers the way stereotypes about gender and leadership roles produce some prejudice towards female leaders due to people's view of women being unsuitable for those leadership positions (Eagly & Karau 2002:574). Eagly & Karau (2002:589) further noted the manner in which males are favoured over females for leadership, as well as how women struggle to secure leadership roles and be recognised as effective in leadership roles. Msila & Netshitangani (2016:87) considered women to have abilities that potentially enable them to be effective transformational leaders for organisational success. While women's feminine skills may be considered crucial within society and organisations (Msila & Netshitangani 2016:88), these

qualities are generally not associable with leadership. Women's sympathetic nature, concern for people's welfare, sensitivity, helpfulness, kindness, nurturing, and gentle nature are considered as too soft, non-executive characteristics (Eagly & Karau 2002:574; Msila & Netshitangani 2016:92; Elmuti, Jia & Davis 2009:172). While their counterpart males are said to host agentic characteristics of being assertive, aggressive, ambitious, controlling, dominant, forceful, confident, self-sufficient, independent, and prone to act as a leader (Eagly & Karau 2002:574).

However, feminine qualities have a place within leadership. In fact, Steady (2011:217) mentioned how the term "mothering the nation" has emerged as a theoretical framework utilised to understand female leadership. Steady (2011:217) referred to this paradigm of leadership as a shift towards a more "matri-centric" leadership that emphasises humanistic values of compassion, nurturance, healing, social and economic development, moral fortitude, and peace.

Women's empathy towards people and situations, which is mostly associated with their leadership style, is an aspect of femininity that is said to possibly make women better suited to understand the people they lead (Msila & Netshitangani 2016:84). Another example is the concept of mothering, women's ability to manage their households, deal with and accommodate differing characters within the family, maintaining peace, sharing with, feeding, and caring for members (Msila & Netshitangani 2016:92) and essentially putting the interest, needs, welfare and well-being of others first (Steady 2011:234). The authors noted the aforementioned as being crucial values that

can be utilised in leadership, notions of shared, participative, compassionate leadership, values that they consider can enhance leadership within organisations (Msila & Netshitangani 2016:92). “It is this mothering quality gives women the ability be able to juggle a number of roles within leadership” (Msila & Netshitangani 2016:93).

While Western feminist discourse is said to view motherhood as a hindrance to leadership, an Afro-centric perspective maintains the opposite, viewing motherhood as empowering and not as subordinating women (Steady 2011:218). However, women should be cognizant of the extent of appropriateness of each of these feminine qualities and level of their mothering within organisations. Msila & Netshitangani (2016:93) warned against women “overdoing” it within their leadership positions in terms of their mothering qualities of caring, loving, protecting, providing, and serving. Nonetheless, women have much to offer organisations.

Msila & Netshitangani (2016:87) acknowledged current research that supports feminine leadership and how this leadership is linked to compassionate, transformational leadership. However, women around the world continue to be affected by various barriers in relation to them holding leadership positions. Meaning many organisations may never benefit from this said compassionate leadership. According to Elmuti *et al.* (2009:170) some barriers of interest include (a) organizational barriers, (b) selection process, (c) workplace relationships, (d) globalization, (e) internal motivation, (f) life-style conflicts, and (g) stereotyping and leadership styles. While these were specifically concerning management positions within corporations, the barriers are true to

rural organisations such as CPAs in that traditional institutions mainly house men, there are few women that hold positions of power within rural organisations and women can feel undermined by their male counterparts within rural organisations, selection processes are not always gender inclusive. Qualified community members tend to seek employment opportunities away from rural settings, many women may lack interest in governance for various reasons, conflict within organisations may cause women to refrain from participation, as well as internal conflict with regards to an inability to balance participation within their work or household duties. Lastly, rural women fall victim to gendered roles that involve stereotyping leadership as a male concern.

2.7.3 GENDER AND EQUALITY AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT APPROACH

Overall, the gender inequalities regarding access to and control of resources essentially undermine sustainable and inclusive development (Raidimi 2014:11). The case of CPAs is said to benefit a handful, the more highly educated members, also mostly men (Matukane 2011:68), plagued with poor leadership and lack a variety of skills (Matukane 2011:82; Matukane 2011:70). As established, women face many challenges, including challenges beyond their control, combating some of the aforementioned struggles, achieving gender equality and empowerment requires women to develop agency, secure resources, as well as be able to make choices that challenge power relations in order to influence others (Kabeer 2005:14; Choudhury *et al.* 2016:55; Walker 1998:17; Pharoah 1999:82). When women are empowered, they should see themselves as leaders and contributors within society. Through agency,

women tend to understand their value, have much self-esteem, confidence and aspirations which lead to the ability to bargain, negotiate, manipulate, resist and protest (Gammage & Smith 2018:2). Once this agency is established, resources need to be secured, through institutions and relationships within society that privilege certain members with positions of power, and in turn affects their decision-making authority (Kabeer 2005:14). Resources such as access to land, education, skills, training and knowledge of rights, processes, increased bargaining power and effective functionality (Moyo 2013:5399; Ntwasa 2009:78; Blom 2006:20) generally affect their confidence to actively participate (Pharoah 1999:60; Imburgia *et al.* 2020:20).

However, many women are merely beneficiaries of development. Even gender equality programmes do not take into consideration rural women's inferior position within society, let alone their lack of participation in policy formulation and implementation (Ntwasa 2009:77). "If a woman's primary form of access to resources is as a dependent member of the family, her capacity to make strategic choices is likely to be limited" (Kabeer 2005:15). Decisions are mostly taken on women's behalf with regards to various socio-economic and political matters. Meaning that their agency remains passive and not active, failing to realise its potential and is unlikely to be transformative, all which hinder their ability to achieve desired outcomes (Kabeer 2005:15). The further women accept this status quo, the more inequalities thrive. Inequalities in one area, when unchallenged, produce inequalities in other areas or are carried over into the next generation, allowing the same discriminatory structures to affect their daughters in the future (Kabeer 2005:16).

As inequalities are reinforced through institutional practices and social relations that further sustain gender inequalities (Kumar 2011:26; Akinola 2018:7; Deji 2011:164; Bandiera & Natraj 2013:16). There is an overall lack of willpower to challenge restrictive patriarchal tendencies. Tendencies that allow men, traditional authorities, those who are custodians of cultural laws in their efforts to advance societal norms that mainly benefit men (Ntwasa 2009:72). When women do not challenge these ideals, they appear as accepting and content with the status quo. This is to their detriment. Therefore, women's empowerment should foster an increased ability to question, to challenge and ultimately transform the existing unfavourable power relations not only between men and women, but institutionally at all levels (Gammage & Smith 2018:3).

2.8 SUMMARY

This chapter reviewed a vast literature concerning women's relationship to land and role within land governance, gender equality, women's leadership, institutional and other barriers to women's participation, as well as the support measures required to empower women towards and within participation. Further to this, the frameworks influencing the study, specifically the Feminization of Leadership, the Role Congruity and Women's Leadership Theories and the Gender Equality and Empowerment Approach, as well as how these have been interpreted within the context of women within the study.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Herein, the research methodology will be detailed in relation to the paradigms that best oriented the study—the design, the sampling, the data gathering techniques and analysis, trustworthiness, and ethical considerations.

3.2 RESEARCH APPROACH

The researcher undertook the research aim which sought to explore the factors impacting the representation of women within CPA leadership structures. A mixed methods approach was employed concerning the following research questions:

1. What are the factors impacting on the representation of women in the leadership structures of CPAs in the Vhembe district?
2. What are the socio-demographic factors of women within leadership structures of CPAs in the Vhembe district?
3. What contribution do women make within CPA leadership structures in the Vhembe district?
4. What influence do women have on decision-making within CPA leadership structures in the Vhembe district?

5. What should be done to facilitate greater participation on the part of women within the CPA leadership structures?
6. What policy recommendations can be given to facilitate greater representation of women within CPA leadership structures?

The research was mainly qualitative with a small portion of the data analysis taking shape quantitatively. The quantitative aspect of the study was with regards to the socio-demographic characteristics of the primary respondents. Guided by Annexure C, contained within this report. While the qualitative data assisted the researcher in understanding the context and factors impacting on women within selected CPA leadership structures in the Vhembe district. This is due to qualitative research being naturalistic in the manner which the research focuses on natural settings where social interactions occur (Nieuwenhuis 2016a:53).

The research concerned itself with how women arrange themselves within their specific CPAs, as well as how they make sense of their surroundings through social structures and social roles (Nieuwenhuis 2016a:53). The study explored the experiences and interactions between members within CPA leadership structures and, more especially, the factors impacting on women within such structures.

The researcher ensured that all the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) health protocols of wearing a mask, sanitising, social distancing, and all other requirements (SA, Department of Co-operative Governance 2020:5) were always adhered to during all face-to-face interviews.

3.3 RESEARCH PARADIGMS

Research paradigms are the different ways of viewing the world through a set of assumptions about what reality is, how knowledge is created and what is valuable to learn (Davies & Fisher 2018:21). Paradigms are said to be the lens through which we see the world around us, while governing how we ask research questions and how research is conducted (Davies & Fisher 2018:21). The ontological question that drives a researcher question the reality that exists out there (Rehman & Alharthi 2016:51). Davies & Fisher (2018:21) further note that paradigms often overlap and are not exclusive of one another. This is concurrent with the assertion by Manenzhe (2015:87) on drawing from several different paradigms, what he described as methodological pluralism in his support for multiple paradigm studies instead of single dimensional studies. However, this section looks into the five most common and popular paradigms in developmental sciences, there are (1) positivism, (2) post-positivism, (3) interpretivism, (4) critical theory, and (5) pragmatism. To aid the understanding of the reader, especially those lacking in background regarding developmental disciplines and their concepts, a brief description of each paradigm is presented hereunder.

3.3.1 POSITIVISM

The positivism paradigm assumes that there is one single reality, where studies to gain knowledge of that reality require high levels of objectivity and detached impartiality (Davies & Fisher 2018:21). It is the assumption that reality exists on its own, beyond human influence (Rehman & Alharthi 2016:53). Founded by Auguste Comte in the 1830s (Fuller 2001:11821) and a century later logical

positivism associated with the Vienna Circle (Fuller 2001:11821). Originally, as a quasipolitical movement, positivism aimed to use observation, experimentation, comparison, and historical analysis as methods to determine the plausibility of theories (Turner 2001:11828; Fuller 2001:11821). From a philosophical point of view, logical positivism shifted towards the deduction from abstract principles to testable hypotheses (Turner 2001:11828; Fuller 2001:11821).

Positivism was further popularised within social sciences by the likes of Herbert Spencer, Emile Durkheim, Talcott Parsons, and Robert Merton (Turner 2001:11828; Miller 2000:51). Alongside the other social research disciplines including psychology, sociology, and communication (Miller 2000:52; Miller 2000:54). Essentially, researchers are driven by cause and effect, where reality is context free and should produce the same conclusion when researched at different times, places and by different researchers (Rehman & Alharthi 2016:53; Turner 2001:11828). The epistemological position is that of objectivism, a detachment from the research and its participants in order to eliminate all bias, while reducing data to numerical indices by use of experimental methodologies and data collection (Davies & Fisher 2018:22; Rehman & Alharthi 2016:53).

3.3.2 POST-POSITIVISM

The emergence of other paradigms and “death” of classic forms of positivism by the 1960s (Miller 2000:52; Miller 2000:54), are noted as having influenced the birth of post-positivism (Miller 2000:58). Also credited, educational researchers in response to the limitations of the positivism paradigm sought a

more suited paradigm for social sciences (Panhwar, Ansari & Shah 2017:253) that had elements from both positivism and interpretivism (Panhwar *et al.* 2017:253). Post-positivism, while fundamentally based on the same principles of positivism, attempts to address the various areas in which the positivism paradigm falls short. The principles of gaining knowledge by searching for regularities and causal relationships within society stay the same (Miller 2000:60). However, post-positivism researchers reject the notion of strict separation and distinction between the researcher and the researched as well as acknowledge that absolute objectivity may be difficult to attain (Miller 2000:60; Panhwar *et al.* 2017:254).

They employ a combination of approaches based on the belief that no one approach can be perfect or determine the whole truth (Davies & Fisher 2018:22; Rehman & Alharthi 2016:53; Panhwar *et al.* 2017:255). “It is the identification that one can never find full accuracy and perfection in a scientific method as all methods have their faults” (Panhwar *et al.* 2017:256). The triangulation of approaches allows for balance between the weaknesses and strengths of the various approaches (Davies & Fisher 2018:22).

Furthermore, their critical realism acknowledges how complex social realities are and the possible biases the researcher carries over into such phenomena (Rehman & Alharthi 2016:53; Miller 2000:61). They will, to the best of their ability, use methods that will render their research unbiased, they remain vigilant to any possible compromise to neutrality, while relying on the critical scrutiny of fellow scholars (Miller 2000:61).

3.3.3 INTERPRETIVISM

Interpretivism is of the notion that if one seeks to understand the world, they must interpret it (Schwandt 1994:222). The development of this paradigm is accredited to the works of Alfred Schutz, Max Weber, Wilhelm Dilthey, later popularised by Hammersley, LeCompte and Preissle, Kirk and Miller, Martin Heidegger, Hans-Georg Gadamer and Charles Taylor between the 1980s and 1990s (Schwandt 1994:224). This anti-positivism approach rejects the notion of a single reality and sets out to explore, describe and understand the context of events as they naturally occur within these socially constructed multiple realities (Davies & Fisher 2018:23; Rehman & Alharthi 2016:55). With an aim to gain insight into meaning construction and clarification of what and how meaning is embodied within interactions of social actors (Schwandt 1994:222).

Here, it is recognised that a researcher cannot be detached from the research or the research participants as their worldviews, concepts and backgrounds are bound to contaminate such realities (Davies & Fisher 2018:23; Rehman & Alharthi 2016:55). Essentially, interpretivism is personified through the acts of watching, listening, asking, recording, and examining (Schwandt 1994:222). There is an emphasis on experiences, as they are lived, felt, and undergone by social actors (Schwandt 1994:236), without a heavy focus on method, but more on knowing and being (Schwandt 1994:222). Research findings are generated from dialogue and interaction between the researcher and participants (Davies & Fisher 2018:23). Phenomenology, grounded theory, and ethnography are amongst the approaches associated with this paradigm (Davies & Fisher 2018:23).

3.3.4 CRITICAL THEORY

Critical theory maintains that knowledge of the world and the uncovering of social conditions should surpass comprehension and result in practical transformation (Thompson 2017:2). Critical theory aimed to cut across disciplines and bring forth critical reasoning that would produce political liberation (Thompson 2017:12). Post-World War II authors Max Horkheimer, Herbert Marcuse, Theodor Adorno, Erich Fromm, Friedrich Pollock, and Jürgen Habermas, all affiliated with the Institute of Social Research at the University of Frankfurt, are considered the founders of critical theory as we now know it (Rehman & Alharthi 2016:57; Thompson 2017:1; Thompson 2017:6). Critical theory is also said to have its origins in the aftermath of the Russian Revolution and movements thereafter, as well as Orthodox Marxism (Thompson 2017:3).

Here, it is believed that culture, politics, ethnicity, gender, and religion interact with one another to create a social system and in turn shape reality (Rehman & Alharthi 2016:57). The critical paradigm, also known as an emancipatory approach, is said to advocate for social change and awareness (Davies & Fisher 2018:23; Thompson 2017:10). A collaborative approach is preferred, this to prevent further marginalizing research subjects (Rehman & Alharthi 2016:57). While some say feminist research, deconstruction, postmodernism, and others fall under the banner of critical theory (Davies & Fisher 2018:23; Rehman & Alharthi 2016:57; Thompson 2017:2), Thompson (2017:2) warns against this positioning and notes that such strands of thought are not critique, more especially in their ability to judge and to understand power, domination,

freedom, and human progress and are essentially detached from the original political influence of the theory.

3.3.5 PRAGMATISM

Nineteenth century authors Charles Sanders Peirce, William James, John Dewey, and Jane Addams are amongst the founders and major players in the popularization of pragmatism (Legg & Hookway 2008). Morgan (2007:70) also credits Michael Patton's early contribution, which he developed further to pragmatism as will be explored below. It is said to be a form of abductive reasoning that is constantly moving between induction and deduction, involving the conversion of observations into theories and thereafter assessing those theories through action (Morgan 2007:71; Feilzer 2010:14), and mainly through the use of mixed methods (Davies & Fisher 2018:24). This is due to pragmatism paradigm researchers viewing the traditional paradigms as prescriptive in the manner they undertake research (Davies & Fisher 2018:23).

Unique to the pragmatism paradigm is the acknowledgement of a possible single reality which all individuals experience and interpret in their own unique way (Morgan 2007:72). Furthermore, pragmatism rejects having to choose between results that are either wholly context specific or wholly generalizable to a large population (Morgan 2007:72). Researchers are urged to frequently question the extent in which their existing knowledge can be usable in other circumstances (Morgan 2007:72). Within pragmatism, researchers are able to use methods and methodologies that are best suited to investigate the phenomena they have set out to investigate regardless of the associated paradigm (Rehman & Alharthi 2016:58; Feilzer 2010:8). It is said that

researchers within pragmatism are not fixated on the “prescribed methods”, rather they choose the methods that will answer their research questions (Feilzer 2010:14). Hesse-Biber (2010:456) noted that the use of a qualitative methodology does not rule out the use of quantitative methods. “Methods are tools; a researcher’s methodology determines the way in which a tool will be utilized” (Hesse-Biber 2010:456). Researchers within pragmatism tend to be flexible and open, in light of the recognition of how unpredictable humans can be and how this yields unexpected data (Feilzer 2010:14).

3.4 RESEARCH DESIGN

Mixed methods research designs mainly either merge the qualitative and quantitative data in a parallel or concurrent way or have the one type of data build on or extend the other type in a sequential way (Delpont & Fouché 2011:439). These qualitative and quantitative phases of the study can either take place at the same point in time, or take place one after the other, as the second phase is led by the outcomes of the first phase (Delpont & Fouché 2011:439). The mixing of these two methods is said to allow for information to be integrated and or compared (Creswell 2009:214).

The researcher is said to gain a broader perspective from the use of different methods, different data collection and analysis at different levels of the study (Creswell 2009:214, Creswell 2009:215). There are generally four main mixed method designs: exploratory, explanatory, triangulation and embedded. The exploratory design involves the collection and analysis of qualitative data, the results of the qualitative phase develop or inform the quantitative phase (Delpont & Fouché 2011:441, Creswell 2014:226), allowing the researcher to

see if qualitative data from a few individuals can be quantitatively generalized to a large population (Creswell 2014:226). On the other side of the coin, we have the explanatory design which collects and analyses quantitative data first, which then informs the collection and analysis of qualitative data (Delpont & Fouché 2011:441, Creswell 2014:224), in order help explain in more detail the results of the quantitative data (Creswell 2014:224). Triangulation mixed method design employs both the qualitative and quantitative methods at the same time, with equal weight in order to compare and contrast the findings for better understanding of the phenomenon being studied (Delpont & Fouché 2011:442), as well as whether the findings confirm or disconfirm each other (Creswell 2014:219).

Lastly, the embedded design, which this study utilized, is when there is a primary data type and another which provides a supportive, secondary role in the study (Delpont & Fouché 2011:443, Creswell 2014:228). According to Creswell (2009:214) the primary method guides the mixed method study while the secondary possibly addresses a different question or seeks information at a different level of analysis, much like what this study has done. This can also mean that one or more forms of data are nested within a larger design and can be collected at any phase of the study, concurrently or sequentially (Creswell 2014:228). When an embedded design is primarily quantitative, qualitative data such as interviews can be used to follow up on the quantitative results (Delpont & Fouché 2011:443). However, when the study is primarily qualitative, quantitative data could be used to describe the broader context of the study (Delpont & Fouché 2011:443).

The practice of most mixed methods (sequential, concurrent, and embedded) is said to commonly favour quantitative methodologies, with the qualitative data merely supporting the quantitative results and measures (Hesse-Biber 2010:457). This study, however, remained qualitative in its focus on women's experiences and the meaning they attribute to their lived realities. Qualitative approaches provide a deeper understanding of such lived experiences, as well as allowing for the promotion of social change, uncovering of subjugated knowledge and potentially being able to test and generalise ideas (Hesse-Biber 2010:467). The quantitative data analysis put participant demographics into perspective, as well as questioning the relationship between women's education level and the positions they hold within CPA committees, as a factor impacting on their level of participation. This data was embedded within the research findings to be discussed in the next chapter.

3.5 SAMPLING

The Vhembe district is a culturally vibrant and diverse district of Limpopo. As indicated briefly in Section 1.6, Vhembe is a predominantly rural community housing over a million people within four local municipalities and a rural economy that mainly sustains itself on the following industries: commercial agriculture, forestry, and tourism (Aliber *et al.* 2013; Vhembe District Municipality 2020). Notwithstanding, the district and province face a variety of socio-economic challenges, including poverty and high unemployment amongst the youth and women (Mafukata 2020a:166). This reality is synonymous to many other rural communities across the provinces of South Africa. The district has a significant reliance on land-based resources, as well

as a majority population of women (Vhembe District Municipality 2020). The current study essentially explores women's role within land restitution governance. Interestingly, 47.7% of the entire Vhembe district population is said to live in the Thulamela Local Municipality with over 85% of that population living in tribal areas of the municipality (SA, Statistics South Africa 2011a). This is an important factor to consider in terms of community power structures within the district. This is also highlighted in Vermaak (2006:118) who recognised indigenous leadership as a strong informal power structure amongst the Venda people. This consideration puts into context the issues of such power structures and women, all which are discussed in forthcoming sections.

Limpopo Province is home to approximately 150 land restitution CPAs (SA, Department of Rural Development and Land Reform 2019:53). Vhembe district has a little over 50 of these land restitution CPAs. From the four local municipalities within the Vhembe district, the researcher purposively selected CPAs from three local municipalities as shown in Figure 3.1. The majority (75%) of the women interviewed were Venda, while two (16.7%) were from the Batlokwa area and one (8.3%) was Xitsonga speaking. This is synonymous with the population demographic of the area, which houses mostly a Tshivenda speaking population (SA, Stats SA 2011b). While the study purposively selected six (n=6) CPAs, the researcher was only able to collect data from five (n=5) CPAs, illustrated in Figure 3.1.



Figure 3.1: Vhembe district. Source: Municipalities of South Africa (2021)

In total, twelve ($n=12$) women were interviewed as well as four ($n=4$) key informants. The research mainly required beneficiary women within CPAs who hold positions within their CPA committees. From each CPA, the researcher interviewed all the women available during the data collection as shown in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Sampling of community property associations (CPAs)

CPA	Local municipality	Total number of women within each CPA	Total number of women interviewed
CPA 1	Makhado	03	02
CPA 2	Makhado	03	02
CPA 3	Makhado	04	03
CPA 4	Thulamela	05	04
CPA 5	Collins Chabane	03	01
Total		18	12

Of the twelve ($n=12$) women, seven ($n=7$) were interviewed individually and five ($n=5$) were in a focus group discussion (FGD). The aforementioned interviews provided the primary data. The researcher secured interviews with

the total number of available and willing beneficiary members in each of the CPAs selected within the district. Secretaries and chairpersons of the selected CPAs supplied the details of all the women in each of their CPA committees. Secondly, the researcher selected participants for the key informant band as showed in Table 3.2. Four (n=4) participants were purposively selected across society, and this was dependent on their knowledge of rural organisations and CPA matters.

Table 3.2: Sampling of key informant interviews (KIs)

KIs	Gender	Basis for selection
Vhamusanda (Chief)	Male	Chief and chairperson of CPA community with knowledge of traditional aspects relating to CPAs.
Government official	Male	Official at the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform, working closely with CPAs in the province and district.
Academic expert	Female	Professor working closely with communities on rural development matters within the province.
District CPA representative	Male	District representative with vast knowledge on matters affecting CPAs within the province.

3.6 DATA GATHERING PROCEDURES, INSTRUMENTS AND METHODS

Due to the limited data on women within CPAs and more specifically their roles and experiences within CPA leadership structures, it was important to collect data directly from women. Interviews and observations were the most appropriate ways to gather these experiences. Data was collected over several days in the months of April and May 2021. The interviews included seven (n=7) women individually, five (n=5) women in a focus group and four (n=4) key informants, in line with the study's specific research questions (Chapter 1).

- ❄ **The first question** and overarching aim of the study required the fulfilment of all the other research questions in order to explore the factors impacting on the overall representation of women within the leadership structures of the selected CPAs in the Vhembe district.
- ❄ **The second question** required an understanding of women's demographical information, mainly their roles, positions and significance within CPA committees.
- ❄ **The third question** prompted further insight into how women perceive their contribution or value they add to CPAs.
- ❄ **The fourth question** was centred around the CPA committee dynamics, the institutional and traditional factors, the societal perception of women's capabilities and gender roles impacting women and their decision-making within such committees.
- ❄ **The fifth question** gained insight on the election process, how women could be encouraged towards meaningful participation, as well as identifying the gaps and need for capacitation within CPAs.
- ❄ **The sixth question** awarded the researcher an opportunity to synthesize all the research findings, themes and literature, in order to provide recommendations for greater participation and pointers for future research.

The researcher arranged all the interviews through the district. Meetings were then arranged with willing CPAs that had women within their structures and who were available to meet; several CPAs did not have women in their committees (for various reasons).

The researcher travelled to all CPAs selected for the study. These were in three of the four local municipalities in the district. English and Tshivenda were utilized during the interview process, this depended on the preference and proficiency of the interviewees. Successful communication was key and maintained by using both languages to retain what Mafukata (2014:68) referred to as adequate levels of cultural and linguistic understanding. It was imperative to understand what was being said from a cultural perspective. The researcher personally conducted, translated, and transcribed all the interviews with the research participants.

3.6.1 SEMI-STRUCTURED QUESTIONNAIRE

A semi-structured questionnaire instrument (Annexure C) was used. This was the main data collection instrument for the primary data that was collected from all the women within the selected CPAs. All twelve (n=12) women responded to the questionnaire, resulting in the demographic information presented in Chapter 4. Face-to-face interviews were conducted with all COVID-19 protocols were observed. Seven women (n=7) were interviewed individually on their specific experiences within their respective CPA committees.

3.6.2 FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS (FGDs)

A Focus Group Discussion (FGDs) was held with five (n=5) of the twelve

women beneficiaries from participating CPAs using guided discussions (Annexure E). The members, as with the individual interviews, were exclusively women beneficiaries from participating the CPAs. Herein, two (n=2) CPAs were selected for the focus group due to their proximity to one another. The focus group gave insight to a variety of dynamics. The discussions were held over one round at a central location and all COVID-19 protocols were observed. Interviews involved open-ended questions and were audio-recorded.

3.6.3 KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS (KIIs)

Pre-determined questions were arranged to guide four (n=4) Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) found in the data collection process (Annexure D). One key informant was met in person and the remaining three interviews were conducted telephonically, two were unavailable due to work commitments and one due to health issues. In the main, the KIIs provided knowledge on the traditional and organisational context of CPAs.

3.6.4 DATA-GATHERING METHOD

Overall, the data collection procedure unfolded in a manner that was in line with mainly focusing on achieving the research objectives and less on the order of events. Due to the availability of the research participants, individual interviews, FGDs, and KIIs took place at different points of the research process. The focus group produced some broad themes and an overall general context of women within CPA leadership structures. The individual interviews with the remaining women gathered the specific experiences of women in other

CPAs and whether those experiences were similar or different to those of the women in the focus group, as to validate those discussions. The research explored the various experiences of women and factors influencing women's participation within the leadership structures of CPA within the district, this required the researcher to be open to the possible emergence of new and unexpected data (Feilzer 2010:14). The questioning expanded as the research continued allowing for an emergence of more themes, both confirming and contrary to literature, including contexts previously unknown to the researcher.

3.7 DATA-ANALYSIS STRATEGIES

While data was mainly qualitative, a portion of the study (women's demographics) were analysed quantitatively. Both strategies are discussed below.

3.7.1 QUALITATIVE DATA

The primary participants, both individually and in a focus group, as well as key informant interviews (KIIs) constituted the qualitative data. This was analysed using thematic approaches, considering that such data comprised only of qualitative properties. All the interviews were audio-recorded (consent was provided), translated by the researcher where necessary, and transcribed verbatim. The analysis incorporated all the transcripts; individual (n=7), focus group (n=5) and key informants (n=4), field notes and observations. The researcher employed Tesch's Eight Steps in the Coding Process (Creswell 2014:198). Of the eight steps, the researcher analysed the qualitative data by way of reading all the research transcripts with a specific intention to find the

underlying meanings, listing all the arising topics, finding and ranking similarities by mention and importance, assessing the manner in which the findings answer the research aim, objectives and questions, and finally formulating all the aforementioned into themes, categories and sub-categories (Creswell 2014:198; Nieuwenhuis 2016b:110). Themes, categories, and sub-categories are detailed in Chapter 4.

3.7.2 QUANTITATIVE DATA

Quantitative data consisted of the results from the first component of the semi-structured questionnaire instrument (Annexure C), collected from the total number of twelve women (n=12) representing each CPA in the study. These were analysed and are presented as figures in Chapter 4. These participant demographics included the ages, marital status, source of income, education level and positions within the CPA committee. Furthermore, a cross-tabulation analysed the possible relationship between women's education level and the positions women hold within their CPA committees—this is also provided in Chapter 4.

3.8 TRUSTWORTHINESS AND CREDIBILITY

In order to ensure credibility, the researcher made use of an appropriate research method and tools to explore the factors impacting on women within CPA leadership structures, as well as maintaining peer and supervisor debriefing and self-reflections (Nieuwenhuis 2016b:123). The researcher has kept a record of all the original and edited transcripts, field notes, and all documents relating to the research, all to ensure dependability (Nieuwenhuis

2016b:124). To ensure confirmability, the researcher remained cognizant of keeping the voice of the participant in the main by use of quotations to support the data interpretation (Nieuwenhuis 2016b:125). Lastly, the researcher sought to provide descriptions that convey a complete understanding of the context in which women within CPA committees find themselves and their involvement within CPA leadership structures, all in order to ensure transferability (Nieuwenhuis 2016b:124).

3.9 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Once the researcher was cleared to conduct the research, as can be viewed in the ethical clearance certificate (Annexure A), the researcher contacted the selected women within each CPA to request permission to interview them. The participants were made aware of their right to deny participation, their right to privacy, their right to share or withhold information and the researcher refrained from any actions that would cause participants to feel pressured into such (Gray 2017:168). In order to ensure anonymity, participant identities were concealed and remain unrecognisable, and their confidentiality was and continues to be maintained by protecting their information from any unauthorised use (Babbie 2017:67). Furthermore, the participants were made aware of their right to participate willingly as well as their right to withdraw at any stage of the research process (Gray 2017:179; Rubin 2014 as cited in Gray 2017:178). Informed consent (Annexure B) was explained and signed by all research participants. It was accompanied by a participant information sheet that provided the research topic, purpose, process, risks, benefits, rights, the researcher's funding and that they would not be remunerated for their

participation (Gray 2017:176; Babbie 2017:65). Finally, participants were not harmed or endangered in any way, the research did not grapple with any risks (Gray 2017:173).

3.10 SUMMARY

This chapter presented the paradigm, research design, research sample, data gathering and analysis techniques, trustworthiness and ethical considerations. These are all the components of the methodology as employed by the researcher to address the factors that impact on women's representation within CPA leadership structures in the Vhembe district.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The chapter details the various research findings. The emerging themes, categories, and sub-categories, supportive literature, and participant quotations. Thereafter, a discussion is provided to summarise the outcome of the data gathering process outlined in Chapter 3. Herein, the demographic profile of the participants and the themes, categories, and sub-categories are presented.

4.2 DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF THE PARTICIPANTS

The socio-demographics of the twelve women (research participants), specifically their age, marital status, education level, source of income and positions within the CPA committee are presented in Table 4.1. These are discussed further in subsequent sections.

4.2.1 AGES OF THE PARTICIPANTS

The results of this study revealed that most women were between 51 – 60 years (33.3%) and 60 plus years (33.3%), with the ages ranging between 31 and 60 plus years as shown in Figure 4.1. The results were expected. In a similar study in the Vhembe district, Mafukata (2020b:205) found that the participant ages ranged between 34 and 62 years, with an average age of 46.3 years.

Table 4.1: Demographics of the participants

	Age	Marital status	Education level	Source of income	Position in CPA committee	No. years in CPA committee	Household members
01	60+	Single	Tertiary	Pension	Treasurer	1-2yrs	06
02	51-60	Single	Tertiary	Formal employment	Deputy secretary	3-5yrs	11
03	60+	Married	Primary	Government grant	Deputy secretary	1-2yrs	08
04	41-50	Single	Secondary	Government grant	Additional member	1-2yrs	04
05	31-40	Single	Secondary	Government grant	Additional member	1-2yrs	03
06	60+	Married	Tertiary	Formal employment	Additional member	1-2yrs	06
07	51-60	Single	Tertiary	Formal employment	Chairperson	5-8yrs	04
08	41-50	Married	Secondary	The CPA farm	Treasurer	5-8yrs	04
09	51-60	Married	Secondary	The CPA farm	Secretary	5-8yrs	06
10	51-60	Single	Secondary	Government grant	Additional member	3-5yrs	05
11	41-50	Married	Secondary	Government grant	Additional member	3-5yrs	05
12	60+	Married	Secondary	Government grant	Additional member	3-5yrs	02

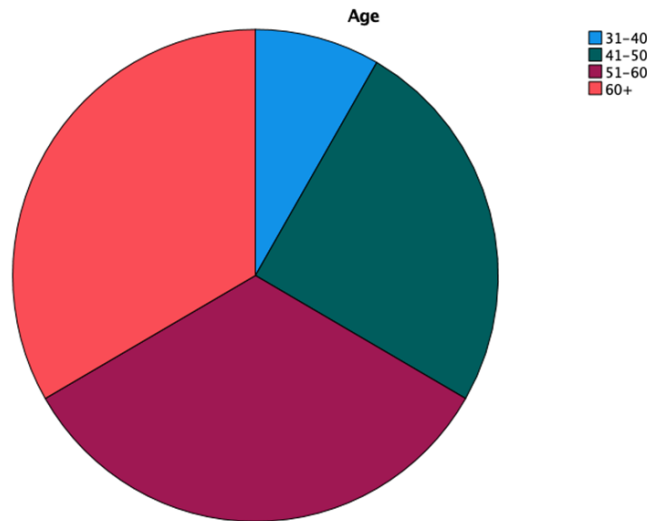


Figure 4.1: Ages of the participants

Land restitution programmes are claimed on behalf of or by previously dispossessed communities that consist of elderly members who were either present at the time of dispossession or are the direct descendants (children or grandchildren) of the dispossessed. However, in another study, respondents' ages ranged between 31 and 40 years and lesser over 41 years, women totalled 65.9% of the study (Matukane 2011:62). While Matukane's study revealed a younger cohort, this is concurrent with CPA dynamics. In the absence of the dispossessed, a suitable, willing and available descendant represents the dispossessed family. Furthermore, where the elderly members are unable to participate within such CPAs, younger family members step in. In the same breath, where the descendants live or work far away from the CPA, an eligible member steps in.

4.2.2 MARITAL STATUS OF THE PARTICIPANTS

Figure 4.2 presents the results on the distribution of the marital status of the participants. Half the women participants (50%) interviewed were married and

half (50%) were single.

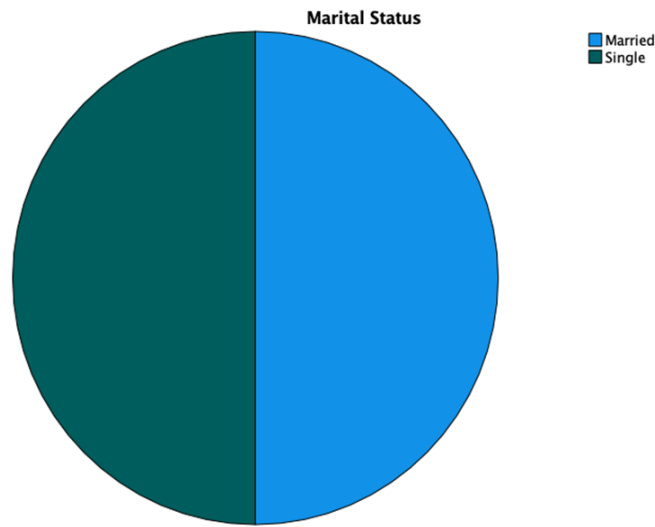


Figure 4.2: Marital status of the participants

In the aforementioned study by Mafukata (2020b:205), the majority of women (66.7%) were unmarried, while 33.3% were married. Matukane (2011:63) found 44.8% of the respondents to be married, 38.1% married, 12.2% divorced and 2.6% widowed (women totalled 65.9% of the study). While some of the literature considers marriage a barrier to women's participation, one could be of the opinion that the presence of married women in the study may contradict this narrative. One key informant suggested that many women refrain from participating within CPA structures due to their husbands. However, this would require a study amongst the said women rather than those participating.

4.2.3 EDUCATIONAL LEVEL OF THE PARTICIPANTS

The results of the study revealed that while only one woman (8.3%) went up to primary school education, the majority (58.3%) of the participants obtained some form of secondary education up to different grades, with four women

(33.3%) holding tertiary qualifications or some form of post-matric education (Figure 4.3).

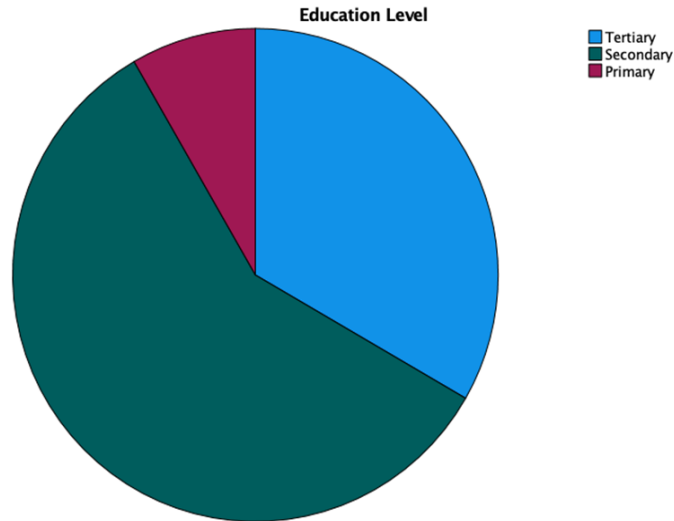


Figure 4.3: Educational level of the participants

In a study in the same district, Matukane (2011:70) found that the majority of the respondents had secondary education, what she referred to as a modest education. This assertion of secondary education being modest has to be considered against the various socio-economic circumstances many rural women are faced with. Conversely, Mafukata (2020b:205) found that the majority of the women had attained post-school education with 16.7% having only achieved primary school level education. In another study, Nkuna (2013:40) determined that members' low educational levels were insufficient to manage, administer or run CPA/project activities effectively. The members were said to have no formal education or training (Nkuna 2013:40). Nonetheless, education is not preliminary to land restitution CPAs or committees, making education, like skills, an additional benefit to such CPAs.

4.2.4 SOURCES OF INCOME OF THE PARTICIPANTS

Figure 4.4 reflects the various sources of income as attained by the participants. Six women (50%) relied on the government grant in place of a source of income. This was expected, as many women within rural areas depend on the government's elderly or children's grant. Three women (25%) were formally employed, one was retired from formal employment and living off her pension while two women (16.7%) earned a living through CPA projects.

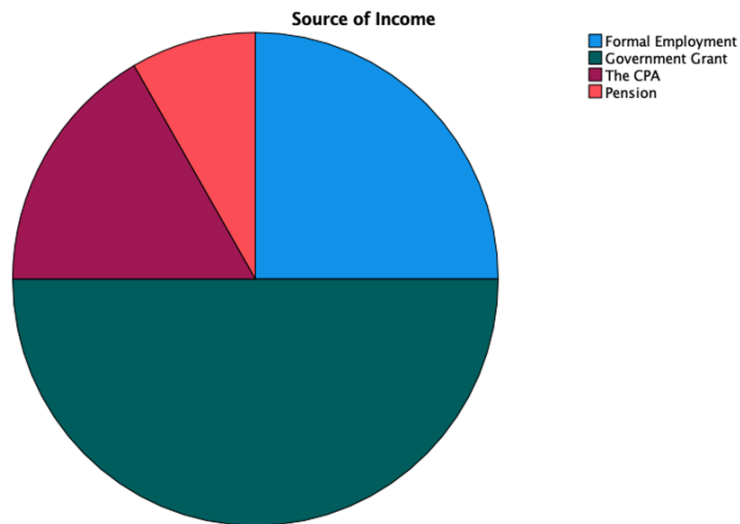


Figure 4.4: Sources of income of the participants

There is a heavy reliance on the child support and old age grant within rural families (Ntjana 2014:15). Conversely, Mafukata (2020b:205) found that 83.3% of the women in the study were employed professionals while the remaining 16.7% were unemployed housewives. Nkuna (2013:39) found that the CPA committee consisted of mainly employed or retired teachers. Similarly, participants in the current study were employed as either principal, teacher, or retired teachers. While Matukane (2011:65) found that the majority of the respondents were employed on the restitution farms. Case studies have

revealed that the majority of restitution projects have not provided tangible benefits to members in terms of cash income or direct access to land or general improvement of their livelihoods (Matukane 2011:67).

4.2.5 LEADERSHIP POSITIONS HELD BY PARTICIPANTS WITHIN CPA COMMITTEES

Women held a variety of positions within their respective CPAs. Six women (50%) held the position of additional member, two women (16.7%) were deputy secretaries, one woman held the position of secretary, two women (16.7%) were treasurers, and one woman was the chairperson of her CPA committee (Figure 4.5).

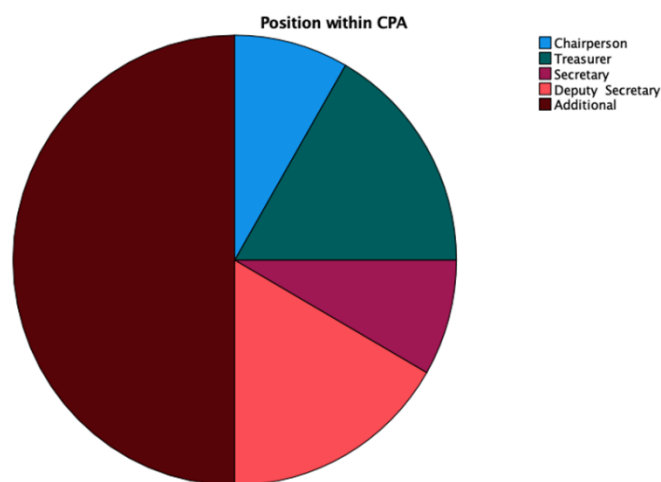


Figure 4.5: Leadership positions held by participants within CPA committees

This provides insight into CPA leadership dynamics. Women are not well represented, and this could be an indication of women's lack of influence within such committees. Further to this and as established, one's educational level, age, employment status are not necessarily prerequisites to one's ability to hold a position within a CPA committee—this is clearly stated by Nkuna

(2013:41) who found that positions were occupied on account of being a beneficiary rather than one's expertise.

4.2.6 CROSS-TABULATION OF POSITIONS WITHIN CPAs BY EDUCATION LEVEL

An area of interest and consequence of the study findings was the possibility of a relationship between the positions women held and their education level, whether this was significant enough to consider was analysed as shown in Figure 4.6 below. Of the six women (50%) who held the position of additional member, five (41.7%) had obtained some level of secondary education, and one (8.3%) with tertiary education. The exception to this relationship between positions and education level being two women (16.7%) with secondary education who held positions of treasurer and secretary respectively, and one woman (8.3%) who held the position of deputy secretary with only primary education (Figure 4.6).

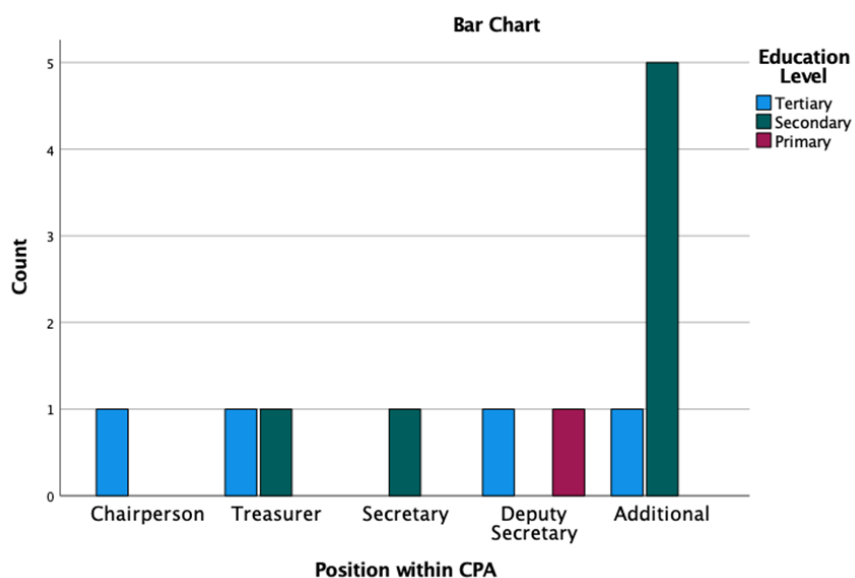


Figure 4.6: Cross-tabulation of positions within CPAs by education level

4.2.7 PARTICIPANTS' EXPECTATIONS OF CPA OUTCOMES

Herein the sum of needs as expressed by participants are presented. These are the expectations the women had of CPAs, essentially how benefits (if any) from the CPA could be utilised or the type of impact the benefits could have on their lives. Figure 4.7 indicates the various needs the research participants expressed. The needs ranged from general household concerns such as the ability to pay for school fees, home improvement and food supply, to a desire for income generation through farming and other entrepreneurial activities that could improve their livelihoods. This is against the backdrop of an average household of 5.3 members ranging between 2 and 11 persons within the participant's households. Therefore, women and men within such CPAs, represent the fate of a number of family members.

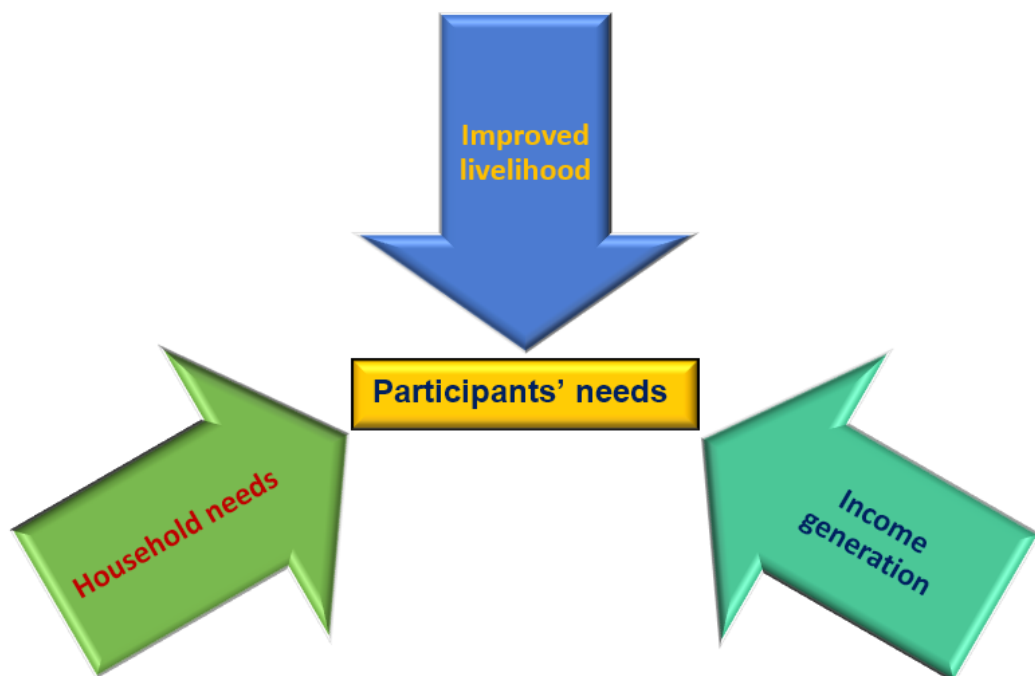


Figure 4.7: Participants' needs

The hope women hold towards why and how they form part of CPA structures and committees relies heavily on what decisions and activities take place within CPAs. Participants' involvement within CPAs represents their hope for land restitution and CPA committees to make decisions and partake in activities that address not only their landlessness, but rather the associated poverty, lack of development, unemployment, and lack of opportunities. The women in this study hoped for an overall improvement of their livelihoods and felt that their CPAs had yet to address their desire. For the majority of the women and as observed, forming part of the CPA had not significantly improved their lives.

4.3 THEMES, CATEGORIES, AND SUB-CATEGORIES

Herein the themes, categories and sub-categories are tabulated. Table 4.2 is a summary of the research findings. The data collection and interpretation revealed the following concepts and dynamics pertaining to the research sample:

4.3.1 THE INTERNAL FACTORS IMPACTING ON WOMEN WITHIN CPA LEADERSHIP STRUCTURES

There are various factors impacting on women within CPA leadership structures, factors that are both within and beyond women's control. Here, the research revealed the factors as experienced by women within the committees, women's perception of what they contribute towards the CPA community and committees, as well as an overview of what their participation entails and the ways in which women benefit from their participation within their respective CPA leadership structures.

Table 4.2: Themes, categories and sub-categories

Themes	Categories	Sub-Categories
1. The internal factors impacting on women within CPA leadership structures	1.1. The experiences of women within the CPA leadership structures	1.1.1. The positive and negative gender roles women display within CPA committee
		1.1.2. The factors influencing women's involvement in decision-making within CPA committees
		1.1.3. The benefits of participating within CPA committees
2. The external factors impacting on women within CPA leadership structures	2.1. The institutional challenges facing women within CPA leadership structures	2.1.1. The factors influencing CPA committee membership dynamics
		2.1.2. Objection, conflict and infighting within CPA committees
	2.2. The lack of capacitation within CPAs	2.2.1. The lack of government support towards CPAs

4.3.1.1 The Experiences of Women within the CPA Leadership Structures

The researcher found that women participated within CPA leadership structures. This was contrary to much of the literature reviewed in Chapter 2, for instance Ntwasa (2009:71) regarding the intentional and systemic manner in which cultural institutions tend to exclude women. However, women's participation within the CPAs in the study was consistent with much of the concerns raised in the literature (Chapter 2) regarding the various types of participation and whether women's participation is meaningful.

Concurring with Agarwal (2001:1624) on nominal, passive, consultative, activity-specific, active, and interactive/empowering participation, all of which the study identified within the CPAs. The women interviewed presented a variety of the aforementioned types of participation, from nominal to empowered participation. Nonetheless, most of the women in the study were found to be passionate about being a part of their respective CPA committees—they were driven by the desire to champion development within their communities and sought to address the high rates of unemployment and poverty within their communities. Some of the participants, when asked about their experience of being a part of the CPA committee said the following:

It has been good to work faithfully for the community.

The community loves having women in the committee.

We are being treated well in our CPA.

When women brainstorm, I feel that things come together.

I arrived with a lot of passion to learn and understand. As a teacher this programme has exposed me to a lot. Men did not doubt my abilities because they could see I was capable... I was very passionate about what was going on. I was very interested; I was driven by passion. Then I started learning and became an active participant.

The majority of women interviewed felt accepted by their respective CPA communities and committees. Alongside feeling accepted by the general CPA community and male counterparts within their committees, women supposed that they were treated equally within committees and had a sense of fulfilment in working for the betterment of their communities. Generally, women viewed their participation as vital to the functioning of the CPA, they felt that they contributed in various ways. Participants felt that they themselves and other women within the committees contributed in terms of brainstorming within the committees and encouraging men within the committees. In fact, women expressed a strong belief in that men could not function without women, which in their view is the reason that necessitates having women within committees.

While the majority of the participants felt that women participated within CPA leadership structures, one participant shared an opposing view. The Vhembe district, like many other mainly rural parts of the country, is unequal in many aspects including the limited participation of women within leadership structures. The participant, who was male, shared the following regarding the general lack of participation within CPAs in the district:

In our area most women are not participating, some the husbands do not allow to participate. And a variety of other reasons. Women who are found to be fully participating are single mothers. Those that

are married, may have challenges as sometimes you need to travel... sometimes men have an inferiority complex and they do not allow their women.

The above statement is in accordance with the challenges married women face when participating within rural organisations, as stated by Flores *et al.* (2016:2), instances where married women require permission from their husbands. To this effect, Imburgia *et al.* (2020:20) suggested that divorced or widowed women with older children are better suited for leadership positions as they have no husband or burdensome household duties to prevent them from such participation within rural organisations. While requiring permission from a husband may be the reality for some married women within CPAs, 50% of the research participants were married and none of these married women in the study were questioned specifically on the matter, but rather the participant who made the statement was responding to a question regarding the involvement of women with the district, of which the said participant felt was lacking. Nonetheless, the women who were interviewed felt a sense of belonging and participated in a manner which they perceived as satisfactory.

4.3.1.1.1 *The Positive and Negative Gender Roles Women Display within CPA Committees*

A sub-category of women's experiences within CPA leadership structures, is that of the manner in which women's gender roles are revealed. These gender roles present themselves with both positive and negative connotations amongst women within the CPAs. Women's perception of their participation was mainly positive, with some of them viewing their various feminine qualities as strengths that they consider to be adding value to the CPA committees and

communities they find themselves in. However, there are a number of these feminine qualities that are problematic in relation to women's meaningful participation. Some positive aspects of the strength of women includes women being able to sustain families and communities in the absence of men:

May women realise that the roles they play are the same roles that caused women to carry the burdens and wages of families when the forefathers and fathers back in the day worked far away from home, yet villages stood.

This expression concurs with much of the literature that recognises women's efforts and contribution within development. Tanwir & Safdar (2013:215) noted this critical role women play within rural development. One other participant added to the above statement, here in relation to women holding the fort in the absence of their male chairperson—she said the following:

The community can see that we as women are very powerful because our chairperson was not around for a long time, and women were the ones running the CPA.

The above accounts reflect how women perceive themselves as having the experience and strength to lead. The participants provided many examples of women's strengths—strengths that were expressed in order to prove the need for women within CPAs. Women, particularly within the focus group discussion, gave the following opinions:

Men take things for granted, but women care about things.

I would want the number of women to increase, because without women, there is no progress.

Yes, there must be men, but women must increase a bit. As women, we strengthen the situations we find ourselves in.

If we can increase the number of women, and become many, it would assist us in being heard when we talk.

Women desired for CPA committees to host more women, for a variety of reasons, some include strengthening CPAs, to “increase their voice” as women and to use their feminine qualities to make a positive impact within their CPAs. One participant wished that her CPA would have more young women involved, which should be the case, however, the participant emphasized this desire in terms of it making allowance for older women to teach and discipline these younger women. Other participants wished to increase women’s participation to advance their gendered roles of caretaker.

Say we have a meeting here tomorrow; you will find the men going around in circles. They do consider that people must be fed, they do not know what to do. They will be going around with their hands in their pockets. But as women, we leave our positions of secretary and whatever and first cook for the people.

When we have mass meetings and people attend the mass meetings, responsibilities are handed over to us women. The man themselves always say that they do not know anything. We go and buy food; we know what to do. Then we come and cook.

When we are at the farm, we sweep up around the farm. While the men are working, we cook for them.

We have to make sure that when there is a meeting, 2 women attend and 2 women cook. We also go and have a peek at what is happening in the meeting. But it would help to have more women, others cooking, others dishing up, others doing this and others doing

that.

Women taking their gendered roles of caretaker, roles that mainly exist within the household into the CPA is consistent with Pharoah (1999:81) on the state of women and the difficulty they face in terms of constantly being viewed as just mothers, wives, and daughters. The desire to care for and serve others stems from these roles that women hold within their homes. One participant summarised this shared sentiment as follows:

... men don't care. A person can come into the house and the man will not even offer water to drink, but as a woman, you will feel embarrassed. You would want to know that there are visitors coming and be prepared to offer them something, so that the visitors can leave fed. Not to say that those people came only to eat.

Here women themselves perpetuate these roles by taking on caretaking responsibilities at the expense of their participation within meetings. Nonetheless, they remain contributors within their communities. However, when women attend to caretaking rather than attending meetings for instance, they pose a danger to not only their overall participation, but their opportunity for learning and contribution to decision-making. Women forming part of committees while they are not in actual fact participating, but rather preoccupied with cooking, cleaning and serving, leaves much room for token representation. Two of the participants shared a concern over committee members, but mostly women being expected to cook while they should be participating within the committee. They shared this in the following statements:

I still remember when we would go to meetings, they would tell us to prepare the chickens whenever the committee was expecting

visitors. I remember complaining to the chief, I asked him whether we were called to the meeting just to cook. If so, when would we learn, how were we going to learn?

In other CPAs you will find both men and women cooking, but we always encourage them to cook earlier so that all people who are supposed to be in the meeting participate. Because it does not make any sense for people to be cooking and when resolutions are being taken in a meeting. We are trying to discourage that. They should rather get other people, non-members to do the cooking while they participate in the meeting. Indeed, it is a problem when you are not present. Men will always expect women do the cooking while meetings are taking place. Only when there is voting, they make sure that women come to vote, while they did not participate. We are trying by all mean to discourage that.

Another participant added:

When there are meetings, women must attend. So that they can see what is happening and participate. It would help them know their rights.

However, women cannot know and exercise their rights if they are confined to gender roles of caring and cooking within committees. It defeats the purpose of their participation within the committee and CPA community. This practice essentially makes allowance for the committee and community to benefit from women's adherence to gender roles. This self-inflicted inequality would require women to see themselves as equal rather than men treating them as equals. However, women viewed this sense of taking care of men and their CPA community as a sign of respect, as required of women within the Venda culture.

While women adhering to gender roles at the expense of their meaningful participation is something that should be discouraged, it is unfortunately in line with the sentiments shared by Msila & Netshitangani (2016:85) who noted the various “supplementary” roles women hold within society, roles that they consider to be vital and influential. For instance, women being tasked to perform specific activities within committees (Agarwal 2001; Pharoah 1999), is in line with Msila & Netshitangani (2016:88) who recognised the input and role of women within leadership and management as one that has been supportive to men, complementing and elevating men. However, supplementary is not equal and women cannot be considered vital to leadership on the basis of how they support men. What is unfortunate is the manner in which this supportive role may be accepted and advanced by women.

4.3.1.1.2 *The Factors Influencing Women’s Involvement in Decision-Making within CPA Committees*

As established, women are participating within CPA committees that essentially represent and implement the interests of the general members within the CPA community as illustrated in the example provided by one participant:

The executive committee could meet a potential investor and want to get into an agreement with that potential investor. However, they are not supposed to take a decision. A general meeting should be called to take a resolution so that the executive committee can implement the decision.

Based on the above statement and participants’ views, women are said to contribute to these meetings and therefore it is assumed that they contribute

to decisions. However, there are other views that suggest that women mostly and for various reasons, refrain from talking during meetings, alongside being preoccupied with cooking during meetings (under gender roles). Women not talking, contributing thoughts and opinions during meetings, regardless of the reason, is considered to pose a serious risk to their contribution towards decisions. Some participants shared their account of what takes place within such meetings:

When we go to meetings and workshops, women attend, but they hardly talk. Perhaps it is their level of understanding. I am telling you women attend when there are mass meetings, but they hardly talk, even when we go to workshops.

Even though they have some ideas or responses regarding what is going on, some are shy and they don't want to be seen talking. When women and men are together, you will find that women will always draw back and not want to communicate. They do not talk.

Women sometimes feel oppressed when men are around.

This phenomenon of women not “talking” in meetings may be as a result of some traditional and committee dynamics. Here, it becomes important to consider the context of many CPAs. CPAs essentially formulate under the supervision of the particular royal family that ruled over a dispossessed community, as pointed out by one of the participants:

CPA must belong to the traditional leadership because it is the chief or king's land that has been taken from him and his people.

While the CPA represents the interests of a dispossessed community and no one person should have all the power to make decisions, these dispossessed

families exist under the governance of a chief and royal family. This royal family continues to reign over the very people that form part of the CPA community and committee thereof. This potentially sees a spill over of some traditional/societal gender norms of respect and women's inferiority, which in turn affect women negatively.

Women's reverence to the chief may present some negative effects on women's participation. One cannot ignore the fact that the presence of this chieftaincy may have a significant impact on who holds the final say, or the direction that discussions around decision-making should go. Therefore, no autonomy can be established or sustained by the community members, and more so on the part of women. This factor became clear as the data collection was carried out.

Another dynamic to women's involvement within the decision-making of CPAs is one concerning the type of men that are found within the CPA. More specifically the type of chairperson. Essentially, women's decision-making and autonomy is dependent on such chairpersons and how they steer the committee. Committees are said to make joint decisions, where a decent, reasonable, and non-oppressive chairperson is involved. The level of decision-making on the part of women is highly reliant on the chairperson, who is in a position to enable both women and men's participation within the committee. This is evidenced in the following comments participants made:

Our chairperson is a man, but because of his character, he will not take decisions without asking us whether we are happy. He will confirm whether the secretary should take notes on the decision, and

if we are not happy then the secretary does not note the decision until we all agree.

Our chairperson is a different type of person, perhaps because he is a pastor. He is the type of person that will not take a decision without our input. He wants decisions to be taken together. He cannot say I am taking the decisions; he will say we are taking the decisions. He confirms if we agree, only then does he consider the decision taken.

In our CPA, our chairperson is not quick to make decisions. He really wants us to have equal decision-making, to avoid being the only one making decisions. He confirms whether we are happy with the decisions. He will request confirmation of our support for the decisions numerous times before the secretary can note the decision taken.

Conversely, a certain type of chief – chairperson within a CPA, presents unique modes of participation on the part of members who are essentially the royal family’s “subjects”. Chairpersons that use their chieftaincy to make unilateral decisions oppress members’ right to fairness and equality, which would be unfortunate for the committee, but more so for women. Although the majority of participants viewed the chief – chairperson role as being separate within the context of the CPA, one participant made the following statement:

You may find chairpersons that are oppressive towards committee members. When finalizing matters, serious matters that have the potential to develop the CPA, the chairperson then uses their position to oppress people. We will eventually agree with the chairperson especially if they are a chief then they have the final say and no one can oppose them.

Essentially, women’s involvement within CPA committees and decision-making is in accordance with the statements of Msila & Netshitangani

(2016:89), Ntwasa (2009:19) and Agarwal (2001:1626) on the manner in which women are not perceived as having a role in guiding organisations, where their opinions are not considered, or they are not privy to the decisions being taken even in the presence of South Africa's "legally equal" status.

4.3.1.1.3 *The Benefits of Participating within CPA Committees*

Women within the CPA committees were engaged on the various ways in which they consider their participation to be beneficial to them, whether there was value for them. They expressed a number of ways they benefitted from being part of the general CPA and committee. While they had not benefitted financially, all the women seemed to have benefitted in terms of knowledge and experience.

Women shared some of the benefits as:

When I participate, I have an opportunity to gain theory and knowledge. The knowledge I have gained is from the CPA, from the CPA gatherings.

We have benefitted in the sense that we have received our land back. We have something of our own, land that belongs to our people. As well as an opportunity to know our history and where our grandparents were removed from.

I have gained knowledge, a lot of knowledge. I learned good conduct. Understanding what it means to be a leader and knowing how to work with people.

In monetary terms I have not benefitted much as compared to what I earn as a teacher. But I have been exposed and capacitated. I am receiving informal education; it is as if I am attending school. The

CPA brings different dynamics. I have realized the importance of working for the community.

Women had also benefited from their engagements with other women, when given the opportunity to network with other CPAs.

Participants said the following:

I learn a lot of things when I meet with others. I am also encouraged to do many things. We learn from each other in order to make our CPAs successful.

We are learning a lot, especially when we meet with others. When sharing experiences, we are able to encourage and develop one another.

The benefits, knowledge, experience, and exposure are all vital in empowering women within rural organisations such as CPAs. All of which most of the women would not have had an opportunity to gain outside of the CPA committee context. These benefits can and should be enhanced and used to encourage more women to get involved within CPA leadership structures. Encouraging women to network and associate with other women is in accordance with Pharoah (1999:89), Moyo (2013:5399) and Bhengu (2010:10) who insisted that women should share ideas, experiences, challenges, inspire and support one another towards equality, participation, and leadership.

4.3.2 THE EXTERNAL FACTORS IMPACTING ON WOMEN WITHIN CPA LEADERSHIP STRUCTURES

Women are faced with several external factors that impact on their participation negatively. Included herein are institutional challenges, conflict within CPAs

and several capacitation issues, all which are outside the control of women.

4.3.2.1 The institutional Challenges Facing Women within CPA Leadership Structures

There are several challenges women face—challenges that are specifically relevant to the context in which women find themselves. Democracy demands equality and structures in all arenas are to refrain from any form of discrimination against women. However, men have always led various community structures. The community has always accepted this, as they have been socialised to associate and trust men with leadership. More so within land and related matters. This is the first institutional challenge or bias women are faced with. As a result of society's preference for men over women when it concerns leadership, men have gained much knowledge, skills, and exposure over the years and this gives men an upper hand with regard to their participation. So much so that a participant noted the following:

Men will always voice out and address issues, even when they do not know much about those issues but they are in a better position than women.

The participant continued:

Women are always associated with household issues. Leadership will always be referred to men. Women are confined to household activities rather than leadership roles. Culturally women are not supposed to be in leadership, and this affects their development.

This preference for men at an institutional level is a social bias linked to some of the gender roles that have been discussed earlier, and limit women's

exposure within leadership, thus impacting on women negatively, including their confidence and potential to hold positions (especially positions of power). This is in accordance with Msila & Netshitangani (2016:95) on the stereotypes, societal expectations and generally patriarchal societies that present challenges to women obtaining positions and progressing within rural organisations. Such societal perceptions completely ignore women's capabilities. A participant explained:

That is why we always make sure that women come on board, women are hard workers and they are more committed than men. If you give them positions, they will work very hard. Men mostly fight to have authority but when it comes to the groundwork, they are nowhere to be found.

The participant demographics revealed that of the twelve women interviewed is, six were additional members. While this constitutes participation, generally and within the district, women's participation is low. This is in accordance with Pharoah (1999:69) who states how women may refrain from participation out of respect for men, as to observe tradition, or an act of knowing their place within society. Nonetheless, the level of participation, the way women are treated within CPA communities and committees are just some of the external challenges women face.

4.3.2.1.1 The Factors Influencing CPA Committee Membership Dynamics

Women's election to and presence within the committee are affected by some of the aforementioned challenges. It becomes important to consider factors influencing women's election into committees in order to understand why

women hold the positions they do within committees. These dynamics further revealed women's experiences of CPA committees and whether their participation can be considered meaningful. However, one cannot deny that women are involved one way or the other in a variety of community structures. One participant shared this sentiment:

Men need women greatly. Within our community, there is no structure or any committee that can be formed without women. There is no single structure without women.

However, it is questionable whether women's participation is solicited genuinely or as an adherence to the constitution's requirement for gender equality and non-discrimination. For instance, two of the participants were recruited under interesting circumstances. The one participant gave an account of how she and other women were recruited into the CPA committee. She noted that her particular CPA was in negotiations with stakeholders that could not continue with negotiations for the land claim because the CPA committee was not gender representative. In order for the negotiations on the land transfer to take place, men were then forced to include women. The participant said:

They accepted us because they needed us in order to have a breakthrough... While they did accept women, they only wanted us as ornaments, just to decorate the committee.

The second participant was recruited to the committee because the women who previously held positions, had left the committee, she said:

The ladies who elected or nominated in the committee just

disappeared. No notice, no information of their whereabouts.

Another participant confirmed this need to have women within the CPA out of adherence to the constitution in the following statement:

In some CPAs you find that women are present because the constitution requires of it. They are guided by the constitution. If there is a committee of 9 people, 4 must be women. So, you will have women in the CPA. In most cases women are participating, although not participating in a similar way to men because of how restitution operates.

This is against the backdrop of women being the majority population within these communities. While there seems to be an effort to allocate positions to women, it is hardly in a manner that fully represents the population equally. Women are said to always outnumber men during general meetings, this majority presence of women in the general CPA community, however, is not translated into the committee in terms of the positions that women hold. The participant explained the following:

In the general meetings, you find that women outnumber men – that is in the general meetings. What is left and what we are trying to do, is to push for women to take up senior positions at executive level. That is what we are fighting for. But in general meetings you always find women outnumber men. It is only that some women believe or have the notion that men are more capable of holding positions, but we are trying to recruit more women.

It becomes important to encourage the election of women into committees, not only to fulfil the constitution or equally represent the population but because women have value to add. A participant added her view of one such manner

women can add value within CPA committees:

When people are encouraged, they attend the meetings. At the meetings, if they get elected, they may have ideas that no one else has within the committee. Such a person can implement their idea which would help develop the CPA.

For this reason, women have to be encouraged and brought in earlier, rather than after the fact. One participant said:

Even at its inception, women should be brought onboard, be allowed to give a voice to what they think about CPAs and how it should be run.

Unfortunately, the process of electing women into CPA committees is not always fair to women. One must note some of the following of elections to CPA structures. Participants gave the following statements:

Concerning elections within the CPA, unfortunately for women, our communities are used to CPAs being run by men. So, for that reason the community decides to elect only 3 women. They are of the mindset that there is no need for women to be many within the CPA. Even those overseeing the election do not make people aware or request that there should be a minimum of 50% women and 50% men, they just take the votes. So, you end up with a majority of people electing men and only 2 women being elected. That is where it goes wrong. There should be awareness and a request for 50% men and 50% women, that way the community and women will be drawn to elect women. So, women do not come forward for elections because the community prefers men over women during the voting process.

During committee elections, you find that women themselves do not

choose women to be in that particular committee. They believe that men are more capable. We undermine ourselves because we have been raised to think that way. We also undermine each other.

This action of women not electing women to committees concurs with Agarwal (2001:1626) and Pharoah (1999:60) on women not supporting or choosing other women to represent them. Seemingly, being elected to the committee is not as straightforward as one participant suggested:

If I qualify, I must just participate irrespective of my gender.

Qualifying being the operative word in the participant's statement. It is not always easy for women to "qualify", they may not have the required skills, knowledge, and confidence to hold positions and to fulfil duties synonymous to the positions they are elected to. Some participants indicated:

People look at the work a person can do, how a person is performing.

The quality of education that she has and whether the community are happy with her forming a part of the committee.

You may find that the person who has been elected cannot even take minutes because of their lack of education.

In accordance with Agarwal (2001:1638), the rules of entry, the pre-existing restrictive social norms, perceptions about women's ability to lead, women's education level are but some of the contributing factors to women being elected to committees. The reality is that women mostly lack skills, education, and knowledge.

One participant said:

That is why you find men preferring to place women as additional members.

There is concern regarding the positions that women tend to hold within committees. Women must be encouraged not only to elect women, but to see themselves (once elected) as capable to hold those positions. Participants added the following:

When we are elected as women, we should not underestimate ourselves or believe that the position should belong to a man.

Women must not allow themselves to be side-lined by the committee or be told that certain jobs are not for women. They must join the committee, so that they can take part in the workshops. Because there are workshops, various trainings. If a person is keen to learn, they can gain understanding.

It is up to us as women. Nobody can make us become what we want to be, only we can make those changes. Women who are now enlightened should assist other women in climbing up the ladder, show other women that it is possible.

This is in line with Pharoah (1999:4) and Moyo (2013:5398) on women having a low status, limited authority and credibility which hinder their participation and confidence to lead. Women have to remain focused on being a part of institutions in order to overcome many of the challenges they face. Moyo (2013:5398) states that rural women need to actively penetrate such social structures in order for meaningful change to take place. Seemingly, women do get elected and some do hold positions of power within committees, including holding position of chairperson. A participant mentioned:

In some CPAs women are chairpersons, because the community can see potential and have the right to make a woman their leader.

The researcher had the privilege to interview one such female chairperson. To the researchers' surprise, although confirmed in some of the research, she was overburdened by the responsibilities of her professional life and that of being a CPA chairperson.

The participant shared the following:

The CPA is a programme with a portfolio of projects. I hold two positions which both have huge responsibilities. The community does not want to accept my request to step down from being the chairperson that I may focus on my profession. It is a huge challenge and I do not know how to solve it... I am failing to strike a balance. When I communicate this to the committee, they do not want to accept my request when I tell them I am struggling. I want to be relieved of my duties or become an additional member, and no longer a chairperson.

This is in line with Pharoah (1999:50) and Flores *et al.* (2016:2) whose stated that women avoided positions or higher portfolios as to avoid an increase in responsibility. Nonetheless, women should still pursue all positions, committees should see value in women's contribution and communities should refrain from gender stereotypes that negatively affect women's participation.

4.3.2.1.2 Objection, Conflict, and Infighting within CPA Committees

Women, once elected, experience much conflict and objection with the CPA. It is important to recognize that the conflict and infighting addressed herein, as faced within the CPA and committee were not exclusively related to gender.

However, such conflict does affect women. The women interviewed were keen and passionate about contributing to developing their communities through their work within the committees. They were highly frustrated by the level of opposition and conflict that exists in their committees. Some participants gave the following accounts:

When working for the community, you come across different types of people. As the people leading the community, we should have patience. During meetings, different people attend, some are drunk.

As the committee, we are not working for ourselves. As we speak, we have left our household duties, striving for our community thrive and for our people to get employed, but still, some do not cooperate.

My opinion is that women within the committee, we are faced with many challenges. Such challenges also reveal the number of people with small mindsets. Minds that are not developed, mindsets that oppress others.

In CPAs you find two groups, you will find people fighting, others claiming things to be theirs. Everything within the CPA cannot belong to one particular person, it is for everyone. But you will find a person claiming things belong to them.

All the aforementioned represent the gender-neutral conflict as it takes place within their respective CPAs. Other participants gave examples of conflict that is specific to gender:

When meetings are being chaired by a woman, men tend to use language that is vulgar. But this is mostly done by youngsters. Young boys tend to be oppressive towards women.

While women are participating because of the constitution, they tend

to struggle with some of the issues more especially when there's conflict, when there are infights. Some of which become physical.

While another participant wished for women to develop more masculine traits to better participate within CPAs. She hoped for women to be like men in the following manner:

Women should teach themselves to plough just like men. We should teach ourselves to shout just like men.

Of these challenges within committees and communities, two participants provided what could be a contributor to constant conflict within the CPAs as well as why women should remain focused amidst these challenges. They said the following:

When people are not educated and developed, they will always try to destroy each other. But when they are exposed to true knowledge, they will take it and they will develop one another.

No matter what the others do, let us stand together as women. We know what hunger is as parents. Even when others attempt ruining things for the CPA, we should stand firm, endure and keep pushing forward.

4.3.2.2 The Lack of Capacitation within CPAs

Being a part of the CPA committee is not as simple as one would imagine. There are rigorous tasks and, as a result, skills required to both run the CPA successfully as well as be in a position to make decisions that will have a positive impact on these previously dispossessed communities. The CPA is a business that concerns itself with development, creating employment,

managing people, managing stakeholders; the list is endless. One participant recalled the need to engage, negotiate and maintain a partnership with stakeholders that were far more knowledgeable and experienced than herself and her CPA committee. She said:

When we got to the board meeting, we found academic doctors and we could not match their standard. That is why I said it was not easy, we were dealing with experts... Even when we were developing contracts, I didn't know anything about clauses. I could feel that the meetings were high level. But these days I can chair those meetings. People may be happy to have a particular person in the committee and elect them, but sometimes that individual does not even have a grade 12. I see that as a serious challenge. It is extremely difficult to understand certain concepts, especially when you are a woman.

She continued:

When we attend meetings, there are general meetings and there are finance meetings. Do you think you can compile a financial report with only grade 12? Other times you can be requested to write a business proposal.

And finally, the participant added two vital factors that are lacking in much of the literature. The participant highlighted the manner in which rural communities are affected by the lack of education and understanding. She noted how educated individuals seek employment outside the community, these are individuals that would have been in a position to understand a variety of issues within the CPA. Then she proceeded on how those remaining are challenged in that many aspects and dealings of CPAs are difficult to translate and interpret into the local languages. Ending up with what seems to be a lose – lose situation.

The level of education counts. Educated women work outside the community. So, the level of education really counts. Another thing is that English is complex, sometimes things are difficult to explain in one's mother tongue.

To that effect, some other participants gave the following accounts:

Especially in rural areas, you find that most women are illiterate.

Education is power, it gives you a voice. When issues are discussed, which are beyond your level of understanding, you will always find that women drawback.

There were some challenges because many women were not educated.

Women's level of understanding is considered a challenge because the absence of education and skills can impact on their level of participation. If activities within the CPA committee include negotiating, strategizing, project planning, presentations, partnerships and so on, then women will almost always receive the bitter end of that stick. Participants shared the sentiment saying:

Even when we attend workshops and women are being spoken to, you can see that what is being said is beyond their level of understanding.

Women that hold the position of treasurer are mostly lady teachers or women participating in their SGB as treasurers, they have been trained. Some perhaps work in companies, working in finance and so on. The lack of skills is one of the major problems that we have.

Interestingly and against all these odds, women were considered to be more

suitable to handle finances within CPAs. Some participants said the following:

*Women can raise a family that does not even have support.
Financially, women can raise a country.*

*Women are usually careful with finances. If the funds are controlled
by men... things do not go well. Women take care of the finances;
they have a good conscience.*

*Sometimes you find that women are the best when it comes to
handling funds.*

Two of the participants, noted occasions where women had been accused of financial mismanagement within their CPAs. However, there is still much opportunity to capacitate women through relevant training in order to support and harness some of these qualities that could benefit CPAs greatly.

*The main thing is that they need to be educated. In my view, I can
see that women need education and training in order to be
capacitated in order to understand these programmes and be able
to move with it. If women get educated, that would help them have a
better understanding.*

*You educate a woman, you educate a country or nation, because
what a woman knows, she will teach to the children.*

Women encounter various members within their communities, including children, which makes the empowerment of women something of utter importance. It becomes clear how important it is to capacitate women with the CPA community and committee, because women are said to be in a position to make great decisions that could benefit their communities highly. This would enable women to benefit as is intended by the land reform programme.

However, many factors, as have been discussed, impact on their ability to fully contribute to their CPAs. Participants mentioned the following:

When you are capacitated and informed, you can make decisions. Women can make powerful decisions, based on information that they can get and their level of understanding. So, it is not that men are preventing women from participating, when we invite women to come to meetings they do not talk, because they do not have anything.

If women are made aware, I think we can change this. They need to be informed, well informed about these issues, policy issues. Even though they are illiterate, we should be able to devise some means to help them understand where the country is heading. Training, proper workshops, proper training, proper campaign awareness, we can change their status quo. Then we can build up a better community, which is led by women or both men and women in particular communities.

This lack of education, awareness and workshops are all in line with Msila & Netshitangani (2016:84), Pharoah (1999:88), and Moyo (2013:5399). When women are not engaged and capacitated, their participation remains at risk. Women have numerous qualities that can be harnessed to empower them and enhance their role in leadership and decision-making.

4.3.2.2.1 The Lack of Government Support towards CPAs

Unfortunately, government has neither the tools nor processes to directly encourage or monitor women's meaningful participation. Government's lack of support towards CPAs affects women's empowerment and their equality thereof. Alongside all the challenges women are faced with, women's inability to be remunerated for their participation poses a risk towards their meaningful

participation as the lack of income-generating activities may limit their overall involvement and contribution towards the CPA. Therefore, the lack of government grants impact on women who would rather opt for income-generation elsewhere. As stated by one participant:

When a land restitution claim goes through, of the amount of money that has been used to buy the farm, the CPA should be given 25% of that money as a development grant. We have struggled to secure these funds, the majority of CPAs in Limpopo, only about 10-15% have received that development grant.

Communities that lack support or income-generating activities have to self-fund their participation—something most women would not be in a position to do. The government cannot fulfil the intentions of restitution without giving CPAs support to empower those communities and empower women within those communities. A participant noted the manner in which members of the CPA, in this case men, do not last long within committees due to a lack of income. Women are not immune to this either. The overall lack of government support affects all CPA members and their communities. A participant shared the following:

Most of the time, men are elected to committees but within six months they are nowhere to be found. People desire to be part of the executive committee because they assume they will be remunerated and when there are no more remunerations, they run away. In many of these CPAs, you will find a committee operating with only a chairperson, a treasurer or secretary, the rest are nowhere to be found.

To this effect, other participants stated the following:

When you are given a CPA, but have not been given 25% grant, whoever wishes to participate or go around at CPA level has to use their own money to travel wherever they are instructed to go. That in itself becomes the problem.

Government gave us land with no grants, and yet expect much from us. That is a drawback for us and is a contributor to women drawing back.

If the CPA had money, I would leave my teaching job and work for the community properly, but it does not have money.

If you give a woman a grant, and develop that woman, you will actually be developing your country, your community. Grants allocated to the CPAs would enable them to call all the women from each CPA and provide workshops on how to accumulate this wealth.

That's the major problem. Remember, it is the government's responsibility to empower the committee, they need service providers to train them.

All things considered, there is a need for women to be capacitated. This capacitation will in turn create a balance, considering that women are in majority. As stated by one participant:

Majority of the population is made up of women and they are the ones who have to make sure they have got bread on the table at the end of the day. Why can they not be given that opportunity?

This overall lack of government support to a number of CPAs within the district should be viewed as a breach of government's promise regarding the land reform programme and should be addressed accordingly. However, CPAs should find ways to capacitate and empower themselves and women in the interim.

4.4 DISCUSSION

Contrary to much of the literature; culture, institutions, and men were not perceived by most of the women as being inhibitors to participation. In fact, the majority of the participants praised men, the community, and the committees for being gender equal in the sense that they were accepting and encouraged women to form part of such committees. While culture in itself was not a barrier, the effects of cultural socialization, however, were found to be problematic. The ingrained societal norms that dictate a variety of gender roles and perspectives cause some of the following.

4.4.1 GENDER ROLES

Leadership has been mainly associated with men; this, however, does not mean that women cannot lead. Unfortunately, when women are confined to gender roles of caring and cooking for men within the CPA, their participation and contribution within the committee is at risk. This practice essentially makes allowance for the committee and community to benefit from gender roles at the expense of women. This is one of the factors that cause women to in fact be a barrier to themselves due to their maintenance of such gender roles within the committee and because men benefit from such, they would not necessarily be keen to address this. This self-inflicted inequality would require women to see themselves as equal rather than men treating them as equals.

4.4.2 ELECTION PROCESSES

During the election of members into office, and even though communities may be aware and have no reservations about women leading, below the surface,

they may be conditioned to associate leadership, land issues, governance, and so on, with men. While there is no intentional prejudice on women, the belief that women are incapable of leadership is a by-product of the process of patriarchal socialization.

Furthermore, influencing the community perspective on who is best suited for what is contentious. Therefore, making the community reluctant to elect women for leadership positions and more especially prominent positions. Secondly, women who also hold the aforementioned bias, may never come forward or show interest in certain positions because they too have been socialized to associate leadership with men. Lastly, some individuals within the very context, may be keen to hold those positions and be confident in their ability to fulfil related duties, but will refrain from those positions because the community as stated in the initial point, may have perceptions that negatively affect women with regards to leadership.

4.4.3 POSITIONS

Women are said to be accepted and respected by men within the committees and the CPA community at large. Women are represented within CPA committees. However, women still hold in the majority, ancillary positions of additional members, deputy secretary and secretary, all of which are not particularly positions associated with power and influence. Nonetheless, at face value, there are women within these community structures. These women are participating and wish to encourage other women to do the same.

However, the research concerns itself with whether this participation can truly

be considered meaningful. Meaningful in the sense that women make decisions, have autonomy, can influence others, and give opposing views. All of which on consideration of the positions that women hold, may be highly questionable. And whether the positions provide the required amount of exposure, education and capacitation that can lead to their empowerment, is doubtful. If people are elected to positions based to their skills and knowledge to execute tasks and responsibilities as required by that position, then women will most likely never be elected to positions of power that influence others and decisions.

4.4.4 CAPACITATION

Women are a disadvantaged group, their limited education, skills, and training are further encumbrances in that they cannot hold certain positions within the CPA because they do not have the capacity to fulfil the required duties. This alongside all the socially inherent barriers they face that already challenge their involvement. In order for a land reform programme such as that of land restitution to fully benefit women, forming part of the leadership structure is but one foot in the door. If women are not developed and empowered to make meaningful contributions to those structures and influence decisions based on knowledge gained through awareness, training, networking, and education, and so on, then women cannot truly benefit equally.

Participation based on agreeing to decisions made should not be considered a fair measure of women's agency and does not reflect true active participation. It is quite impractical to expect women to participate meaningfully under the current circumstances, let alone have an expectation for women to challenge

their status quo. Women need to be capacitated, in order to increase their level of understanding on a variety of matters that are discussed within the committee, in order for them to make informed decisions or contribute to decision-making from a point of knowledge.

4.5 SELECTION PROCESS TOOL TO FACILITATE GREATER GENDER REPRESENTATION

The study aimed to develop a tool to facilitate greater gender representation, a research objective outlined in Chapter 1. Women who participate within the CPA committee do not always possess the specific knowledge or skills required of them to participate meaningfully in a manner that leads to agency and empowerment. In the absence of qualifications, CPAs should look for qualities that are associated with leadership. Qualities that can be groomed towards leadership. Essentially looking at the potential women have in order to hold positions and succeed within CPA leadership structures without disqualifying or marginalizing them based on their lack of education and skills. The researcher has developed a tool that should supplement election processes, make processes gender focused (Table 4.3).

Table 4.3: Selection process tool for CPA leadership positions based on women's potential

Selection Process Tool for CPA leadership Positions based on Women's Potential	
Position within CPA:	Chairperson/ Deputy Chairperson/ Treasurer/ Secretary/ Deputy Secretary
Criteria	What educational subjects did you find interesting during schooling? Which were you more drawn towards or did well in?
	<div>0</div> <div>1</div> <div>2</div> <div>3</div>
	What work experience do you have? Formal and informal. What did you enjoy doing the most?
	<div>0</div> <div>1</div> <div>2</div> <div>3</div>
Criteria	What skills and interests do you have? What do you believe you are good at? What would you like to learn or know more about?
	<div>0</div> <div>1</div> <div>2</div> <div>3</div>
Total score	.../9
	Total Score Scale definition
Potential	0-3 Candidate is the least compatible to position
	4-6 Candidate is moderately compatible to position
	6-9 Candidate is most compatible to position

The tool seeks to help CPAs to become aware of the various interests, capabilities and skills women use daily for survival, in order to draw them in and capacitate them towards greater participation at all levels.

The tool intends to account for not only the number of qualified women within CPA communities (because this method alone potentially marginalizes other women), but to account for women who have the potential to learn, understand various concepts, gain skills, and thrive within committees. This evaluation begins to give members an idea of who may be more suited for a position and easily trained at a level of their understanding. For instance, a woman aged 60+, who went up to secondary school, at face value may not seem to be suited for any position within the CPA committee. However, she may have been self-employed for many years through her sewing/dressmaking business. She has had to negotiate prices, manage expectations and relationships, as well as account for her finances. While all these activities are at an informal and small scale, she can be capacitated, she has potential.

4.6 SUMMARY

The chapter presented in detail the demographic profile of the research participants: their age, marital status, source of income, education level and positions within CPA committees. The chapter also discussed the main themes, categories and sub-categories, all which aided the researcher to achieving the objectives of the study.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The final chapter herein presents the conclusions, recommendations, and pointers for future research. The researcher's main aim to explore the factors impacting on the representation of women in the leadership structures of post-settlement CPAs in Vhembe district, Limpopo Province, South Africa will be discussed below.

5.2 SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

Providing a summary of the study requires the researcher to reflect on the manner in which the study met the research objectives and research questions set out in the earlier sections.

5.2.1 EXPLORE THE FACTORS IMPACTING ON THE REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN IN THE LEADERSHIP STRUCTURES OF CPAs IN THE VHEMBE DISTRICT

The fulfilment of all the subsequent research questions answers this overarching aim and question that necessitated the study. Every aspect of the research, more especially research questions numbers two to six are the factors that were found to be impacting on the representation of women within the leadership structures of CPAs. This includes their socio-demographic circumstances, influence within the committees, and overall representation.

5.2.2 CHARACTERIZE THE SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS OF BENEFICIARY WOMEN WITHIN LEADERSHIP OF CPAs IN THE VHEMBE DISTRICT

Semi-structured questionnaires proved favourable for this aspect of the study. The gathering of women's demographic information in order to understand the research population's age, marital status, source of income, education levels and positions within CPA committees was ideal. These demographics are detailed in Section 4.2 of the study and reveal that women within the CPAs in the study are generally older, mainly have up to secondary education, predominantly rely on the government grant and hold additional member positions within their CPAs.

5.2.3 ESTABLISH BENEFICIARY WOMEN'S CONTRIBUTION WITHIN THE LEADERSHIP STRUCTURES

Much of the literature suggests that women do not have much influence within leadership structures. Open-ended questions administered individually and through a focus group revealed that women considered themselves as contributors within CPA leadership structures. However, women faced a variety of challenges within CPAs, both internal and external factors impacted on women's participation, influence, and contribution, as detailed in Section 4.3 under themes, categories, and sub-categories. Generally, women considered themselves as significant within the CPA, some identified women's ability to take care of people as their major contribution within the CPA.

5.2.4 ESTABLISH WOMEN'S INFLUENCE ON DECISION-MAKING WITHIN CPA LEADERSHIP STRUCTURES

The majority of women within the CPAs in the study had little to no autonomy

within their leadership structures. The factors influencing this lack of autonomy have been detailed within the literature and theoretical frameworks, as well as evidenced in the research findings. These include, although not limited to, societal perceptions of women's role within leadership, women's limited participation within influential positions, women's lack of skills and resources and committee dynamics.

5.2.5 INSTRUMENT TO FACILITATE GREATER WOMEN REPRESENTATION IN LEADERSHIP STRUCTURES OF CPAS

In response to this objective, the researcher developed a selection tool for CPA leadership positions based on women's potential (Section 4.5). The researcher proposes an election strategy employable to appoint women based on their experience, passion, and personal skills, all of which present potential to be capacitated to certain positions. This assists in facilitating greater women representation in that women can qualify in the absence of qualifications. Therefore, the tool should assist CPAs in identifying the capabilities of women that can be harnessed to empower women towards meaningful participation.

5.2.6 PROPOSED POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS FACILITATING GREATER REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN WITHIN CPA LEADERSHIP STRUCTURES

The research revealed gaps in the participation of women within CPA leadership structures. These were in line with much of the literature and frameworks discussed in Chapter 2. The researcher addresses some of these recommendations in a subsequent section.

5.3 CONCLUSION

As stated, the study sought to explore the factors impacting on the representation of women in the leadership structures of post-settlement CPAs in Vhembe district, Limpopo, South Africa. Where CPAs often exist within inherently patriarchal societies, where women are not always associated with leadership and therefore do not always hold prominent positions within organisations. There is much work to be done in order to realise a “suitable” form of gender equity within these rural societies. Suitable to the concerned communities and more specifically, suitable for women that find themselves within those communities and institutions. For instance, where women can embrace their gender roles, without infringing on their right to participate meaningfully.

Furthermore, women should be capacitated in a manner that is equal to men, as well as be granted equal opportunity to participate within leadership and decision-making. There is a need to encourage gender equity within CPA communities. Rural women and women across the board have varying needs. One must be cognizant of the fact that gender equality as is prescribed globally and nationally, may not be a factor to some women, especially within traditionally rural contexts. More should be done in terms of encouraging, embracing, and enhancing women’s abilities, abilities that are stereotypically considered inappropriate in relation to leadership.

This requires communities to essentially working with what women have. That is by recognising, developing, and amplifying women’s abilities within organisations in such a manner that solidifies women’s contribution. This

should occur alongside promoting women who have potential, rather than disqualifying them on the basis of what they lack or keeping them in positions that do not allow them to gain a sense of autonomy. Women who have the potential to lead, eagerness to learn, coupled with a passion to make a difference within their communities should be capacitated to that effect, in order for a land reform programme such as land restitution to be meaningful.

As established, land is one such resource that has the potential to advance women within the said contexts. Regardless of the various challenges they face, women's contribution within CPAs is a prerequisite and evidence of how much more women can do if empowered. Empowerment that should result in meaningful participation within a variety of rural organisations, and more especially CPA leadership structures.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

All things considered, the researcher has the following recommendations that should assist rural women within committees and communities to recognise, appreciate, formalise, and enhance the role and contributions of women within CPAs and other rural organisations.

5.4.1 AWARENESS AND ASSOCIATION

Firstly, women need to be encouraged towards being confident in their abilities. They have to be made aware of the extent at which their role within leadership is necessary and valid, not only in light of gender equality, but in order for them to derive benefits from development programmes such as land restitution. This requires women to be encouraged towards a sense of agency. The type of

agency that should bring women together, to form associations where women share their knowledge and experiences, gain support, and most importantly advocate for their place within society. This should assist women not only to gain confidence, but to seek the skills necessary to empower them in executing all duties of the position they hold or desire to be elected for.

Some of the admirable qualities found amongst women in this study include them being hardworking, determined and filled a desire for unity and growth. The women possessed a sense of womanhood that could be harnessed towards greater development for them, their households, and communities at large. In fact, CPAs should advocate for many more female chairpersons. This should cement women's role within leadership while being able to engage other CPAs in a manner that models the feasibility and capability of women to hold such a position. As an extension, associations should invest in activities that would empower women through land related income-generating activities in order to address the various challenges faced by women within those communities because women within CPA communities are not immune to the greater poverty within rural areas.

5.4.2 CAPACITATION AND GOVERNMENT SUPPORT

There is a gap within rural societies, this gap affects all members of society, but more so women. As established in Chapters 2 and 4, women lack education, skills and various other resources that should empower them towards leadership and meaningful participation. There is a need to educate, train, and upskill rural women. While this can take shape informally, there needs to be concerted efforts on the part of government through support

services and institutions through a gender-focused approach. A gender approach that is intentional in the manner that women are elected to the CPA, that recognises that women are essential to leadership and therefore should be solicited for their contribution and not to merely fulfil legislation. While women do not always have qualifications, they do however have life experiences, they are passionate and have potential. These should be grounds to build on, capacitate them to excel within rural organisations in general and more specifically CPA leadership structures. This capacitation should enhance women's participation and ensure that women play a role within decision-making in all aspects of their lives.

5.4.3 MENTORSHIP AND PROMOTION OF EQUAL PARTICIPATION AMONGST THE YOUTH

Another gap within rural societies, is the lack of mentoring and development of young people, young men and especially young women should be engaged on CPA matters, in a manner that equips them with knowledge and skills that should assist them to succeed in the current committees. Unfortunately, the little to no representation of women within influential positions directly affects young women within such societies. When young women do not witness women's leadership, they may not identify with leadership and may not aspire to hold leadership positions. This is to say that women's leadership or meaningful participation within leadership not only requires women to be involved within leadership but cannot be fully realised without a clearly defined and socially accepted leadership identity that is defined by women, for women.

There is also a dire need to advance concerted efforts towards the promotion

of gender equality amongst young people, as to break the cycle of patriarchy that disempowers rural women in society and institutions. Mentoring young people with an intention to hand over the reins, should include sensitising community members on the importance of women within governance, leadership, and decision-making. One must be cognizant of the role of men within such mentorship and promotion of gender equality, especially amongst young men. Women cannot achieve the promotion of equality on their own, they need men who will understand, support, and model the need for women within leadership.

5.5 FUTURE RESEARCH PERSPECTIVES

Further research regarding the experiences of former CPA members is missing and can be highly beneficial in the sense that former members, preferably women, will have insight into the various challenges within structures and could identify opportunities for change. This could produce information that can be useful in the empowerment of rural women, as well as enhance their participation within CPAs. Alongside this, researchers could as well conduct studies with CPAs that do not have women, in order to establish circumstances, ramification and rectification thereof. Further to this, there is a need for research that should explore the participation or more specifically the absence of young people within CPA structures, especially young women. Young rural women may be next in line regarding the current disempowerment as experienced by women within rural institutions. Lastly, more work is required in formulating programmes that capacitate rural women towards developing agency and acquiring resources for the promotion of their gender equity within

the socio-political and economic contexts they find themselves.

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Annexure A: UNISA Ethics Clearance Certificate



COLLEGE OF HUMAN SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS REVIEW COMMITTEE

09 April 2021

Dear Ms. Murendwa Sharon Makhubela

Decision:
Ethics Approval from 09 April 2021
to 09 April 2024

NHREC Registration # :
 Rec-240816-052
 CREC Reference # :
 51603586_CREC_CHS_2021

Researcher(s): Name: Ms Murendwa Sharon Makhubela
 Contact details: 51603586@mylife.unisa.ac.za
Supervisor(s): Name: Prof MA Mafukata
 Contact details: mafukma@unisa.ac.za

Title: *Representation of women in the leadership structures of post-settlement community property associations (CPA) in Vhembe district, Limpopo*

Degree Purpose: Masters

Thank you for the application for research ethics clearance by the Unisa College of Human Science Ethics Committee. Ethics approval is granted for three year.

The **Low risk application** was reviewed on the **23 March 2021** by College of Human Sciences Research Ethics Committee, in compliance with the Unisa Policy on Research Ethics and the Standard Operating Procedure on Research Ethics Risk Assessment.

The proposed research may now commence with the provisions that:

1. The researcher(s) will ensure that the research project adheres to the values and principles expressed in the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics.
2. Any adverse circumstance arising in the undertaking of the research project that is relevant to the ethicality of the study should be communicated in writing to the College Ethics Review Committee.
3. The researcher(s) will conduct the study according to the methods and procedures set out in the approved application.
4. Any changes that can affect the study-related risks for the research participants, particularly in terms of assurances made with regards to the protection of participants' privacy and the



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Annexure A: UNISA Ethics Clearance Certificate

confidentiality of the data, should be reported to the Committee in writing, accompanied by a progress report.

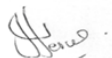
5. The researcher will ensure that the research project adheres to any applicable national legislation, professional codes of conduct, institutional guidelines and scientific standards relevant to the specific field of study. Adherence to the following South African legislation is important, if applicable: Protection of Personal Information Act, no 4 of 2013; Children's act no 38 of 2005 and the National Health Act, no 61 of 2003.
6. Only de-identified research data may be used for secondary research purposes in future on condition that the research objectives are similar to those of the original research. Secondary use of identifiable human research data require additional ethics clearance.
7. No fieldwork activities may continue after the expiry date (**09 April 2024**). Submission of a completed research ethics progress report will constitute an application for renewal of Ethics Research Committee approval.

Note:

*The reference number **51603586_CREC_CHS_2021** should be clearly indicated on all forms of communication with the intended research participants, as well as with the Committee.*

Yours sincerely,

Signature :



Prof. Ilse Ferns
CHS Ethics Chairperson
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Annexure B: Informed Consent

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY

I, _____ (participant name), confirm that the person asking my consent to take part in this research has told me about the nature, procedure, potential benefits and anticipated inconvenience of participation.

I have read (or had explained to me) and understood the study as explained in the information sheet.

I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and am prepared to participate in the study.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without penalty (if applicable).

I am aware that the findings of this study will be processed into a research report, journal publications and/or conference proceedings, but that my participation will be kept confidential unless otherwise specified.

I agree to the audio recording of the interview.

I have received a signed copy of the informed consent agreement.

Participant Name & Surname
(please print)

Participant Signature Date

Researcher's Name & Surname
(please print)

Researcher's Signature Date

Annexure C: Semi-Structured Open-Ended Questionnaire Instrument for the Primary Participants

TITLE: REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN IN THE LEADERSHIP STRUCTURES OF POST-SETTLEMENT COMMUNITY PROPERTY ASSOCIATIONS (CPAs) IN VHEMBE DISTRICT, LIMPOPO PROVINCE, SOUTH AFRICA

INTRODUCTION TO STUDY

CONSENT FORM

PERMISSION TO TAKE NOTES AND AUDIOTAPE

SECTION A: PERSONAL INFORMATION

1. Age

20-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	60+

2. Marital status

Married	Single	Divorced	Separated	Other

3. Number of members in your household

4. Main source of household income

Source	
4.1 The CPA farm	
4.2 Government Grant	
4.3 Formal employment	
4.4 Self employment	
4.5 Remittance	
4.6 Other (Mention)	

6. What is the main source of your expenditure?

Food	
Education	
Health	
Entertainment	
Other (Mention)	

7. How long have you been involved in the CPA?

	Years
--	-------

8. Are you the original beneficiary or substitute?

Original	
Substitute	
Other (Mention)	

9. Position within CPA committee

None	Chairperson	Deputy (specify)	Secretary	Treasurer	Additional

10. How did you get into the CPA leadership?

Election	
Secondment	
Other (mention)	

11. How many of the CPA leaders are women?

12. Number of years in leadership position

1-2	3-5	5-8	8+	

13. Educational level

None	Primary	Secondary	Tertiary

14. If the CPA were to assist you with anything, what would be your main need

Food supply	
Electricity	
Housing	
School fees	
Sanitation and clean water	
Other (mention)	

SECTION B: OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

Question 1: How would you describe overall attitude of the CPA community towards women CPA leadership?

Question 2: How would you describe the attitude of your fellow CPA committee members towards women's leadership?

Question 3: What would you say is the significance of women CPA leaders in the welfare of your CPA?

Question 4: How would you describe the challenges women face with CPA committees?

Question 5: What would you say were the positives of women leadership in the CPA?

Question 6: What do you think needs to be done to improve the role of women in the CPA?

Annexure D:Key Informant Interview (KIIs) Guide

TITLE: REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN IN THE LEADERSHIP STRUCTURES OF POST-SETTLEMENT COMMUNITY PROPERTY ASSOCIATIONS (CPAs) IN VHEMBE DISTRICT, LIMPOPO PROVINCE, SOUTH AFRICA

INTRODUCTION TO STUDY

CONSENT FORM

PERMISSION TO TAKE NOTES AND AUDIOTAPE

OBSERVATION SCHEDULE

Case:	Date and Time:
Setting/Context:	What is being observed:
Emerging themes:	Further questioning:

INTERVIEW GUIDE

Question 1: What is your relationship to land restitution and CPAs within the district?

Question 2: How would you describe the involvement of women in CPA leadership in the CPA's you are involved with?

Question 3: How could CPAs become gender representative?

Question 4: What would you say were the main factors contributing to poor women representation in the CPAs in your area?

Question 5: Are there any government instruments and tools to encourage women leadership in the CPAs? If not, why not?

Question 6: Are these instruments and tools effective in encouraging women leadership, and if not, how would you describe the complexities?

Question 7: What would you suggest as the way forward for CPAs to improve on issues of women representation in their leadership?

Annexure E: Focus Group Discussion (FGDs) Guide

TITLE: REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN IN THE LEADERSHIP STRUCTURES OF POST-SETTLEMENT COMMUNITY PROPERTY ASSOCIATIONS (CPAs) IN VHEMBE DISTRICT, LIMPOPO

INTRODUCTION TO STUDY

CONSENT FORM

PERMISSION TO TAKE NOTES AND AUDIOTAPE

The purpose of this Focus Group Discussion is to understand the experiences of beneficiary women within CPA leadership structures. As well as expand on issues and themes arising from the initial data collection through questionnaires and key informant interviews.

OBSERVATION SCHEDULE

Case:	Date and Time:
Setting/Context:	What is being observed:
Emerging themes:	Further questioning:

DISCUSSION GUIDE

Question 1: Please tell us what your experience of the CPA committee has been like with regard to women leadership?

Question 2: How would you describe the attitude of CPA members towards women leadership?

Question 3: What do you think were the challenges women leaders were faced with in their CPAs?

Question 4: What could be done to increase women representation in your CPA's leadership?

Question 5: Do you feel committees should be more gender inclusive or exclusive?

Question 6: In order to level the playing fields in the leadership of your CPA, what would you recommend?

Annexure F: Language Editing and Typesetting Certificate



Prof Donavon C. Hiss

Cell: 072 200 1086 | E-mail: hissdc@gmail.com

24 October 2021

To Whom It May Concern

This serves to confirm that I have edited the language, spelling, grammar and style of the **MA** dissertation by **Murendwa Sharon Makhubela**, titled: **“Representation of Women in the Leadership Structures of Post-Settlement Community Property Associations (CPAs) in Vhembe District, Limpopo Province, South Africa”** The manuscript was also professionally typeset by me.

Sincerely Yours

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Hiss'.

Cert. Freel Journ, Dip. Creative Writing, MSc (Medicine), PhD (Medicine)