

**The Socio-Cultural Factors Affecting the Participation of Women in Agricultural Development:  
Khwezana village in Alice District**

**BY**

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## Declaration

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that this dissertation is my own original work and that it has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other university, and all sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by complete references.

Signature .....

Date .....

## **Dedication**

This project is dedicated to myfamily, more especially my mother and my two sisters (Nosphiwe and NolusindisoMajali) for their love, support and inspiration.

## **Acknowledgements**

I would first like to thank God Almighty for the strength that He has given me throughout my life for enabling me to complete this dissertation. I would also like to extend my greatest gratitude to my supervisor Mr M.P. Komanisi, for his support and encouragement.

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## Acronyms

ABET	Adult Basic Education and Training
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
	ARDRI Agricultural and Rural Development Research Institute
CLARA	Communal Land Rights Act
	DoLADepartment of Land Affairs
DoSD	Department of Social Development
(DoWA),	Department of Water Affairs
FAO	Food Organization Agency
FET	Further Education and Training
GRTI	Gender and Rural Transport Initiative
HIV	Human Immune Virus
NGO	Non Government Organization
NLC	National Land Committee
NRMED	Natural Resources Management and Environment Department
RSA	Republic of South Africa
SSA	Sub-Saharan African
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

## **Abstract**

The study sought to investigate socio-cultural factors that contribute to the invisibility of women in agricultural activities at Khwezana village, Alice district. The present study was underpinned by a people's –centered developmental approach paired with the feminist perspective based of ethnographic research methods, participant observation and basic individual interviews. The study mainly focused on female residents of the village, those who are active in agriculture and also those who are not practicing crop production. Rural women of South Africa have historically played a significant role by contributing in the sustainable livelihoods of the country as well as their communities. However, it has been revealed that there are factors that impede the participation of women in agricultural development. The study revealed that socio-cultural factors such as limited access to land, access to credit (due to tradition and culture circumstances), limited education and culture change in general are the major factors that significantly influence the low agricultural activity in the study village.

**Key words:** agricultural development, sustainable livelihoods, education, land, credit, culture change.

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## **Chapter One: Introduction**

### **1.1 Background of the Study**

Various studies (Fabiyyi, Danladi and Mohmood, 2007, Onguono 2009:69, FAO 2008:58, Karki 2009:23) have shown that women have historically used agriculture as one of the strategies to address poverty and improve livelihoods, and also to maintain the stability and sustainability of their families. Women, especially in Africa, have played a significant role in the sustainable development and economic development of their communities and countries. Kehler (2001:36) argues that rural women have historically played a crucial role in agriculture as food producers. They constitute more than half of the agricultural labour.

This is more evident in developing countries such as Nigeria, South Africa, Ghana, etc (Manuh, 1998:12). Karki (2009:24) accepts that rural women alone are responsible for up to 50 percent of the world's food production and they also contribute about 60 to 80 percent of the production in many developing countries. Fabiyyi *et al* (2007:196) state that female farmers have played an important role in food production and food security. Women account for 70 percent of agricultural workers, 80 percent in food production and take up to 60 to 80 percent of marketing (Fabiyyi *et al*, 2007:23).

Even though rural women contribute significantly to the socio-economic development of their countries through agriculture they continue to face major socio-cultural challenges, which differ from one community to another. Kabane (2010:3) asserts that tradition and cultural norms are the major challenges that limit the access of women to agricultural input, thereby leading to the invisibility of women in agricultural development.

This piece of work originated from the pilot study carried out by the researcher for her honours degree in 2010 when it became evident to her that female farmers are continually undervalued although they work extensively in agricultural production in the study area. It was observed that women have contributed enormously to agriculture in the study area. However, much of their work continues to be unrecognized. The historical exclusion of women from access to land ownership, credit and their low level of education set the stage for women's limited access to farm land at present. Despite widespread participation of women on farms, their farm work often remains invisible. This study was, therefore, prompted by the need to explore various factors that seemed to inhibit women's participation in agricultural development in the study area. Discussions on crop production and agricultural development with the local female farmers during the pilot project also convinced the researcher that there was a need for a study of this nature.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Although there are enough natural resources (i.e arable land, water supply etc.) at Khwezana (see figure 1.1: map of Khwezana village), rural women are not all actively engaged in farming. Only a few women in the village are involved in the one community gardening project. This community garden covers a very small area of land, of about one hectare. The interest of the researcher in undertaking the present study was to explore the social-cultural barriers, e.g. land ownership, access to credit, education, culture change, etc that seems to impede the serious participation of women in agricultural activities in the study area. On the basis of the findings of the pilot study that the researcher carried out in the study area, it was concluded

that there were socio-cultural factors in the study area that could account for the small number of rural women in crop production. The above mentioned socio-cultural factors were chosen because of their perceived influence on the participation of women in agricultural development in the study area and also because they are fundamental and significant resources to agricultural development.





### **1.3 Research Questions**

This study sought to address the following questions:

- I. What are the socio-cultural factors which limit the participation of women in agricultural development in the study area?
- II. How do socio-cultural factors limit the participation of women in agricultural development in Khwezana village?

### **1.4 Research Objectives**

- I. To identify the social-cultural constraints faced by women in agriculture in Khwezana village.
- II. To examine the influence of socio-cultural factors in limiting women's participation in agricultural development in Khwezana village.
- III. After examining the influence of socio-cultural factors in agricultural development in Khwezana village the study will suggest ways of overcoming such constraints.

### **1.5 Delineations and Limitations**

#### **1.5.1 Delineations**

The study specifically explored socio-cultural factors affecting the participation of the women of Khwezana village, Alice district, in Nkonkobe municipality, Eastern Cape in agricultural production. These were the factors that seemed to have major effect on agricultural development in the study area. The research was limited to married, single, and widowed women who were permanent farmers in the study village and who were between the ages of

21- 70 years. The researcher chose this group of people because they were the active farmers in the study area.

### **1.5.2 Limitations and Challenges**

The first and most important limitation the researcher experienced was gaining entry. This was difficult because the researcher was a visitor to the village and, consequently, it took time to establish a rapport with the informants. All the informants the researcher met during the pilot study had left the village and some had died. A considerable amount of time was spent learning about the villagers who would be willing to participate as informants.

In trying to overcome this challenge the researcher had to spend a lot of time in the village interacting with the informants. As the participant observer, the researcher got an opportunity to immerse herself in the lives of the study population when she joined them on a daily basis in their disability centre. She volunteered her services at this centre, where she met the majority of local farmers who talked openly to her. As pointed out by Oke (1990:58), through the process of immersion (mentioned above) the researcher penetrates deeply into the lives of local social relationships. The researcher observes details of daily life and activity enacted by the study population.

Some of the villagers at this centre were old. This was also a challenge. Firstly, these people were inactive in agriculture and thus were not familiar with contemporary factors affecting women in agriculture. Secondly, the information they provided was based on their memory of agricultural practices. The result was that the researcher had to spend a great amount of time waiting for them to recall some of the information and this required a lot of perseverance.

Another challenge occurred during the data collection. Most of the women, especially the aged, were illiterate. The mere fact that the researcher was educated intimidated many of the elders and made them uncomfortable. Consequently, they were reluctant to answer questions. When the researcher reminded her informants that she was therefore academic purposes to learn about the factors affecting women in agriculture, the villagers were put much more at ease and began to discuss the issues more openly.

The research was conducted at a time when informants were constantly occupied with their household chores, such as cleaning the house, washing blankets and clothes, and cooking, which made it difficult for the informants to sit down and answer questions. This meant that, at times, the researcher had to organize evening interview sessions with some of the informants who were interested.

Some informants were not interested in answering questions for academic purposes especially to young women. They preferred to participate in a gainful pastime but because the researcher is a student, she could not give them what they expected, and this was a setback in the data collection process. However others were willing to participate without remuneration.

Another serious limitation the researcher encountered was that, the main informant was partially deaf. This situation had an effect on the interview, in some instances. Sometimes the researcher had to speak loudly and repeat questions two or three times. This required the researcher to be as patient as possible.

## **1.6 Definition of Terms**

### ***Socio –cultural factors***

Socio-cultural factors are things that can affect our lifestyles as a society. They can have an influence on individual behaviors depending on one's' social values. Some of them could be religion, economic status, education, family, politics, cultural values etc. They are the facts and experiences that influence an individuals' personality, attitudes and lifestyle. Socio- cultural factors involve both social and cultural elements of the society (Kottak, 2000:16-19and Ember and Carol, 2004:197-2000).

### ***Acculturation***

Acculturation refers to the changes that occur when different cultural groups come into intensive contact (Ember *et al*, 2004:206). The term is commonly used by anthropologist to explain the diffusion of cultural traits from one culture or society to the other. Thus acculturation can be seen as a process of extensive cultural borrowing in the context of super ordinate –sub ordinate relations between societies (Kottak: 2004:19).

### ***Matrilocal***

The daughter stays and the son leaves, so that the married couple lives with or near the wife's parents (Ember *et al* 2004).

### ***Matrilineal***

In each generation, the children belong to the kin group of their mother. Although a woman's sons and daughters are all members of the same decedent group, only her daughters can pass on their descended affiliation to their children (Ember *et al* 2004:15).

### ***Patrilineal***

The children of the married couple belong to the kin group of their father. Their father in turn belongs to the kin group of his father and so on. The affiliation in this group is transmitted by the sons to their children (Ferrare,2000:63).

### ***Patrilocal marriage synonyms of Virilocal marriage***

The son stays and the daughter leaves, so that the married couple can stay with or near the husband's parents (Ember *et al* 2004:16).

### ***Natal family***

The family from whom one originates, Kottak (2000:16).

## **1.7 Assumption**

The assumption of the researcher in the present study is that women's participation in agricultural development in the study village is invisible owing to socio cultural factors.

## **1.8 Significance of the Study**

Azahari (2008:2) reveals that, there is evidence indicating that the elimination of barriers to women's access to productive resources can lead to the productive participation of women in agricultural development and women can earn recognition as important players in the development process. It is felt that this study will catch the attention of the provincial agricultural sector and makes it more gender sensitive in the formulation of policies that will also favor women farmers. The study will be a very important contribution to the wide range of material that is now rightfully seen as gender studies. It will encourage the government and NGO's to focus their programmes on rural development and promote women independence on agriculture.

The study will increase the understanding and awareness of gender issues in agriculture and rural development. Regional policy makers, district planners and community development officers will also benefit from the study. Furthermore, the study will allow policy makers, community developers etc. to gain a deeper knowledge and background of the reasons behind economic limitations in rural areas. It will also highlight the reasons for the lack of community self-sustenance in rural areas. Finally, the study may also assist community developers, policy makers and other stakeholders concerned in coming up with ways of dealing with the women's issues identified.

## **1.9 Chapter Overviews**

### **Chapter one: Introduction**

The chapter begins by giving a brief background to women and development with special focus on agricultural development. The chapter mainly discusses the past socio-cultural position of African women in agricultural development. It looks at how socially active women are in agriculture and the fact that even though they make the most contribution, they still are struggling to access the necessary resources such as education, land tenure and credit. The chapter also highlights the importance and the need for agriculture to sustain the people's livelihoods not only in Africa but also worldwide, the chapter further suggests that assisting rural populations may help in sustaining the livelihood of the people. It continues by addressing the statement of the problem which motivated a study of this nature. The research questions and the objectives of the study are also spelt out, and so are the limitation and delineations of the study, as well as the significance of the study.

### **Chapter Two: Literature Review**

Chapter two first outlines the two major theoretical frameworks that underpin the study. It proceeds by reviewing the literature relevant to the study. The literature generally scrutinizes factors that hinder the participation of women in agricultural activities. In general, these factors are access to land, access to credit and education. The chapter argues that, factors such as land, education and credit are the more fundamental hindrances to women's progression in agricultural development.

### **Chapter Three: Methodology**

The chapter mainly deals with the methodologies that were used to conduct the present study. The main research methodology used in the study was the qualitative research method, specifically making use of participant observation paired with basic individual interviews. The data in the study was analyzed using the content analysis technique.

### **Chapter Four: Historical and Socio- Economic orientation of Khwezana Village.**

Chapter four examines the historical and socio-economical orientation of the study village. It starts by describing the geographical situation of the village and proceeds to discuss the historical background of the study village mainly by tracing the origins of the study population, the history of their culture in relation to agricultural practices, and their social identity. The chapter concludes by outlining the infrastructural orientation of the study village.

### **Chapter Five: Characteristics of the Population**

This chapter examines the characteristics of the study group. It focuses mainly on the characteristics of the informants (women). Initially, it explores the personal characteristics of the informants looking specifically at gender of the informants, their marital status and the educational level of the informants. The chapter further investigates the impact of the above mentioned factors in limiting the participation of women in agricultural activities. It investigates whether these factors play a role in limiting crop production in the village studied.

The chapter further investigates the socio-economic characteristics of the informants, it looks at such things as land, rural youth, migration, labour, credit, household economy and lastly



transport. The aim of the chapter is to explore the impact of the above mentioned socio-economic factors as they limit the participation of women in crop production.

### **Chapter Six: Culture Change in Women's Agricultural Activities**

This chapter specifically seeks to explore culture change as one of the socio-cultural factors that contribute to the limitation of women's participation in agricultural development. Furthermore, the chapter discusses how culture change in socio-cultural roles of women play a role in the invisibility of rural women as they attempt to engage in agricultural activities.

### **Chapter Seven: Conclusion and Recommendations**

The last chapter is basically the synthesis of the findings drawn from this study. And finally the conclusions and recommendations.

## Chapter Two: Literature Review

### 2.1 Introduction

In 1988, Meer concluded that “the impact of development on women in South Africa is quite different for urban and rural women. In fact, there is substantial evidence that rural women are mostly neglected, and consistently have lost in the developmental process” (Meer 1998:21). There is also overwhelming evidence of development policies and projects formulated by-passing the involvement of rural women in most African countries<sup>1</sup>. Many studies (Kongolo 2002:12, Songelwa 2009:150, Yemisi 2009:15 etc.) have provided evidence showing that rural women specifically, contribute significantly to the economy of developing countries but they often find themselves lacking certain resources when it comes to contributing effectively to the economic output of their countries.

Development, according to Olopoenia (1983:29) and Pradip (1984:23), is not an isolated activity, for it implies a progress from a lower state to a higher and preferred one. Development is a process by which people are awakened to opportunities within their reach. Development, therefore, starts with people and progresses through them (Seer, 1981:25; Gwanya, 1989:14). Rural women are the most marginalized group in terms of their needs, while being the people who produce almost 80percent of the food consumed in most of Africa’s rural areas<sup>2</sup>. Moser (1993:56) echoes the sentiment when he says that women are “an untapped resource that provides an economic contribution to development”, and that “development processes would proceed much better if women were fully incorporated, instead of being left to use their time

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<sup>1</sup>See Hunger Project (2000:1-2).

<sup>2</sup>See Hunger Project (1999:4).

unproductively". For this reason, rural women should be involved in on- going development initiatives which will enrich their lives.

This chapter, therefore, begins by exploring two theoretical frameworks which are relevant to the study and proceeds to review various works of scholars that have made contributions to the field of gender and development studies. There is a lot of literature related to women in development. The literature focuses on a variety of issues affecting the development of women in Africa and abroad. This literature focuses generally on socio-cultural factors which affect the participation of women in agricultural development. This chapter seeks to orientate the reader on the challenges facing rural women, the challenges that retard the progress of women in agricultural development.

The literature explores different socio-cultural factors in different societies and cultures which affect the participation of women in agricultural development. This literature aims to identify the major factors which seem to make women's participation invisible in agriculture. In an attempt to do this, the chapter, discusses a few main factors which affect women in agricultural development around the world, factors such as land ownership, access to credit and education.

The chapter further touches on a number of socio-cultural issues which make a huge contribution to women's participation; issues such as: culture/ tradition, legal issues, gender discrimination etc. The chapter also illustrates the need for rural women to have access to resources such as credit, land and technology. In more ways than one, the chapter aims to show that women around the world have been, and still are living under inadequate developmental conditions but still, they manage to contribute significantly in agricultural development.

## **2.2 Theoretical Framework**

There are various development theories that focus directly on the issues the participation of women and development in rural communities. The following approaches i.e. “People-centered development” combined with the feminist perspective were used to underpin this study for the reasons mentioned below. The approaches mentioned above were chosen to guide the study because of their relation to the study enquiry.

### **2.2.1 A Peoples- Centered Development Approach**

According to Davids *et al* (2005:40), people-centred development is defined as a “process by which members of a society increase personal and institutional capacities to mobilize and manage resources to produce sustainable and justly distributed improvements in their quality of life”. A “People - centered approach” is based on people’s participation, sustainability, social learning and empowerment (ibid). Participation is a complex and ongoing process through which people are enabled to exercise varying degrees of influence over developmental related activities that affect their lives (Kotze, 1997:30). The People- centred developmental approach is aimed at encouraging communities to be responsible for their own development, control their own resources, have access to relevant information, have the means to hold government officials accountable for the services they render within the community and participate in the development process (Coetzee and Graaff, 1996:25). The approach also strongly encourages small-scale community actions such as agricultural projects and community home gardening in order to enhance economic self-reliance and create reliable sources of income. Hence, the approach encourages the participation of the majority of the population, especially women, theyouth and the illiterate in the process of development (Coetzee and Graaff, 1996:29).

According to the pilot study conducted in the village, there are enough natural resources which are fundamental to agricultural development such as arable land, access to water and human capital. It is felt that the people of Khwezana need motivation, empowerment (in terms of addressing socio-cultural barriers), and encouragement about agriculture and needed resources to execute agricultural development activities. The approach leads to the involvement and education of women in various areas of development. These women become empowered, self-confident, creative, responsible and cooperative (Schenk *et al.* 2000:24). They also are able to make decisions on issues affecting them and they participate in social and economic development.

The theoretical base which underpins the study puts emphasis on people taking the initiative to participate in activities that will enhance their development. It encourages people, especially women, to make their own decisions and promotes access to development related resources that are needed to enhance their development activities. The participation of women in agriculture related activities at Khwezana village will lead to personal enrichment, self-sustenance, independence and community and economic development. The People centered developmental approach encourages a hands-on approach to the people's developmental process. While participating in agricultural development they will be providing for themselves and their families and also contributing to the economy of the country.

### **2.2.3 Feminist Perspective**

The study was also supported by the feminist perspective as it is an appropriate approach in dealing with issues relevant to women. The feminist approach was considered relevant to the study because of its interdisciplinary nature in studying women related issues. Various feminist

perspectives were developed to help in addressing the oppression of women in communities. Cornwall (2005: 39) defines feminism as women's engagement in demanding and creating an equitable society. He further states that feminism deals with the power of women that encompasses recognizing and respecting women. According to Moore (1988:10) feminism refers to the awareness of women's oppression and exploitation at work, in the home and in society as well as to the conscious political action taken by women to change this situation.

The feminist perspective believes in the empowerment of women and the restoration of the dignity of women as members of society. The main argument of this perspective lies in the equal treatment of all members of the community, which includes equal rights and access to the necessary resources. The feminist theory concerns itself with the rights and interests of women and also the equal distribution to power among women and men in society or any other place. According to the feminist perspective, women, are the same as men, therefore, they have a right to equal treatment (Hughes 2002:13). Feminist theory encourages women to assume autonomy in their roles as daughters, wives and mothers.

The present study was conducted in one of the rural areas of the Eastern Cape, Khwezana village in Alice. This village is still anchored in and still abides by the rules of tradition and culture. Through the feminist approach, the study was used to address the position of women in the society and also highlight the influence of tradition and culture in limiting women's participation in agricultural related activities, as the approach prescribes that all members society be treated equally with respect and dignity, and that equal distribution of resources be

practiced. The equal distribution of resources and equal treatment of women in the society will encourage them to engage in agriculture related activities.

## **2.3 Literature Review**

### **2.3.1 Land Ownership**

Kabane (2010:14) argues that constraints which are faced by women farmers differ from country to country and culture to culture. In Nigeria, Afghanistan and other patriarchal societies for instance, women lack independent rights to land. Land rights are only allocated through men, either sons or husbands. The FAO (2009:2) agrees with the sentiment that women be allowed to access land either directly or indirectly, as the majority have limited or no access to or control over land. In some African countries, women are rarely allocated land in their own right, particularly in patrilineal areas. Land is allocated to men, who are the heads of household. Women in matrilineal societies on the other hand are allocated land in their own right, but the land is still commonly controlled by their husbands or male clan heads (FAO, 2009:3). The situation is the same in the study village. Men are the ones who have full ownership of property and any valuable goods in the household must belong to the head of the household. For example, if someone purchases a lounge suite for the house, the minute the lounge suite enters the door it becomes the property of the household head, the father. This, of course, is in line with their culture. According to Xhosa culture, a woman is not in a position, or rather, is not entitled to own any kind of valuable property such as land. This has been the culture for many generations and, apparently, still exists in the village. Consequently, women in the village do not feel that it is their right to own land personally, as their mothers did not do so. They are not

even aware of such things as owning property. However, they are allowed to access the land but they do not have control over it.

Another recent case study conducted by Kachika (2009:12) in Zambia and Malawi, notes that a concern expressed by women farmers was that the residential implications of marriage systems contribute to land underutilization in the country. For instance, in Malawi, women in the Machinga district, where marriages are matrilineal, mentioned that sometimes, women farmers are unable to improve farming because a husband may refuse to reinvest farming proceeds in farming, just because this is not his natal home, and he is not inclined towards developing it. And sometimes, he may even order the wife to leave the land idle for a whole farming season. As the result of the matrilineal system, some men do not even participate in agricultural activities. They claim that they do not belong to the land on which they live, so they are not obliged to cultivate it. As a result, there is reduced food production, and women cannot sell any surplus. The behavior also overburdens women and they cannot use the land productively. In the Chipata district in Zambia, a woman in a patrilineal, and thus virilocal marriage, confessed, "I am less inclined to invest in soil fertility technologies like planting of agro forestry trees. After all, I can leave all this land in the event of a divorce" (Kachika, 2009:11).

A synthesis report carried out in nine countries (Benin, Burkina Faso, Tanzania, Congo, Morocco, Sudan, Mauritania and Zimbabwe) also agrees that women rarely own land and when they do their holdings turn to be smaller and less fertile than those of men (Manuh, 1998:9). A study conducted by Naylor (1999:1) also supports the latter sentiment that Ghanaian women do not have ownership of land. To access or make use of land, they must first negotiate with



men, which sometimes mean begging for it, and eventually they are allocated inferior or infertile land. A study conducted by Manuh (1998:9) also reveals that, in parts of Northern Ghana, land that women have carefully tendered has been taken away leaving them with less fertile and more distant plots. Manuh (1998:6) also states that in Africa new land titles usually are registered in the name of a male household head regardless of women's economic contribution to the household, their customary rights or the increasing number of female headed household.

Wanyeki (2003:150) opines that in Africa, customarily and/or traditionally men manage land. Women only come to fore in exceptional cases, depending not on custom and/or tradition, but on individual families who try to be reasonable in granting positions to their sisters or mothers. Women are disqualified from the management of land because of the gender based division of labor that exists in customary and/or traditional communities. In such communities women's land rights are limited to user rights. This means that women are allowed to use their fathers or spouse's land but not to own it. However, these rights are lost once a woman gets married or once her husband dies. When a husband dies the land is returned to the family, and the family takes control of it. An exception can occur when a woman has a male child, to whom the land can be transferred. In such cases, the woman holds proxy of the land until the son is old enough to manage it (Wanyeki, 2003:151).

Blaai (2009:123) found that one of the challenges facing women in community project development in the rural areas of South Africa, as the case of the Mbashe local municipality in the Eastern Cape Province indicated was that women's agricultural projects operated on sites

leased by the village administration. There was no clear and known claim to the Land Redistribution Programme made by the women in the study areas. She discovered that in the village, land and its administration were still under the jurisdiction of the tribal authorities, who mainly operate under the customary law<sup>3</sup>, which prohibits women's sole ownership of land. Mutangadura 's (2004:12) study echoes this finding, noting that one of the major challenges that affect women's access to land in Southern Africa is patriarchy, which involves land being distributed by traditional authorities utilizing what he calls "traditional law"<sup>4</sup>.

Land ownership is not entirely an issue that affects or rather limits agricultural participation of women especially in the household in the village. According to the informants, working in the fields has always been what they did with their mothers to provide sustenance for the household regardless of the fact that ownership of land is granted to men. In fact, their mothers were the ones who contributed in the working of the fields more than their male counterparts. However some informants reported that, it is not easy for a woman to own her own personal plot in the village even if she wants to, this is due to cultural constraints influenced by patriarchy that still exist in the village. One informant stated that getting ownership of land for other purposes such as starting community garden projects becomes a struggle in the village. Land is distributed by the local traditional authorities who still abide by traditional laws. She explains that, for them to be able to get the property they now use for the community garden, they had to involve the social development department.

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<sup>3</sup> Customary law is a traditional common rule or practice that has become an intrinsic part of the accepted and expected conduct in a community, profession, or trade and is treated as a legal requirement (business dictionary.com, 2011).

<sup>4</sup> The term is made out from two separate words ( tradition and law) and it can be explained differently, for the purpose of this study we will define traditional law as the beliefs, customs, or practices (etc.) handed down from generation to generation by word of mouth or demonstration, for the purpose of governing a particular society.

Gundu (Ibid) further affirms that, in South Africa, rural women comprise 53 percent of the population, and 71 percent of these live under the 350 Rands/month poverty line, while 62percent are unemployed (National Land Committee, 2003:12). Women’s lack of independent land rights rules out one of the main fallback positions for women seeking sustainable livelihoods in the face of rising poverty. While there is enormous variation from one communal tenure system to another, women do not usually qualify to hold land independently from men. Rules of access and inheritance generally tend to favor men over women, and women with children over those without (Mutangadura 2004:2). However even though the constitution<sup>5</sup> of South Africa is non-discriminatory, women are discriminated against within all tenure systems, customary and statutory (Mann, 2000:19, Cross *et al*, 2001:63). The factors that constrain women in acquiring land rights as in other countries include: firstly, the application of the customary law of patriarchy, which discriminates against women;secondly, the lack of women representatives on community land committees and participation in traditional community decision-making structures. Although in some communities, women are now allowed to attend and participate or actively speak at public meetings, observations noted by an NGO working with rural women indicate that women bear the legacy of entrenched traditional values that make it difficult for them to speak freely in the presence of men (Hargreaves, 1999:13). Lastly, there is widespread ignorance among women of their rights to land from the provisions of the

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<sup>5</sup>Department of Land Affairs (DLA) committed its self “to provide access to land and to extend rights in land, with particular emphasis on the previously disadvantaged communities, within a well-planned environment” (DLA, 2005). It specifically states that government should ‘legally secure tenure or comparable redress to persons or communities whose tenure of land is legally insecure as a result of past racially discriminatory laws or practices. It further specifically includes the promotion of security of tenure and equitable access to land among all citizen of RSA.

constitution due to factors such as illiteracy and lack of dissemination of the legislation to the grassroots levels.

In Zimbabwe, there seems to be a gender division on the farming domains of men and women. A field is divided into two, one portion for women to grow small grains for home consumption, and the other portion for men to grow cash crops. Though women were found to be responsible for selling surplus food under their domain, usually this food was minimal, as most households allocated substantial land to cash crops compared to food crops. Thus, though about 53 percent of households got surplus food, women still did not generate sound income from their farming activities, and this reinforced their subordinate status (Kachika, 2009:18).

Kachika (Ibid) reports that In South Africa, most women farmers are unemployed and depended on social grants. They therefore could not fully utilize land due to limited or no, resources. For instance, in Kwa-Zulu Natal, though some women had acquired 600 hectares of land, they only managed to use 25 per cent of this land over a five year period due to the lack of access to credit. In the Kaoma district in Zambia, women farmers equally expressed this wish:

*“We desire to access credit, so that we can expand our fields, which are currently not fully utilized”.*

Similarly at the study village, the majority of household income comes from social grants provided by the government. These social grants include disability grants, old age grants, children grants etc. As a result, the locals argue that the money they get from the government which varies from R250 (children grant) R1100 (old aged grant or disability grant) is not enough

to buy food for their families and also finance their agricultural activities, this is one of the major reasons they are not using their land.

Kachika (Ibid) further asserts that, South African women farmers reported that they are sometimes unable to utilize land effectively because they are allocated land that is too far from their residential bases. Women therefore remarked that farming is difficult for them not only because they struggle to access land, but also because once they access it, it is located far from where they live and transport is expensive (thus unaffordable), therefore, visits are infrequent Kachika(ibid).

In South Africa, the law formally acknowledges the rights of women to ownership and use of land. The democratic government proclaimed its commitment to redressing land dispossession and skewed land ownership patterns through the drafted constitution (1996:25) which lays the basis for a land reform programme. Section 25 (5) of the constitution states that, “The state must take reasonable legislative and other measures, within its resources, to foster conditions which enable citizens to gain access to land on an equitable basis”. This gave birth to the establishment of a fully-fledged Ministry for Agriculture and Land Affairs whose main task was to administer the Land Reform Programme. This meant establishing programmes to restore land to the previous occupants, to restore and strengthen the role of women in agriculture by ensuring and securing their access to arable land and other farming resources (FAO 2005:2).

In addition, South Africa also has the 2004 Communal Land Rights Act (CLARA—operational in 2008), which combines customary land tenure practices and tilling by vesting ownership of land in a large group that lives under the authority of a Traditional Council. The Act allows individual

community members to own a secondary right to land. Land rights are administered by committees according to the administrative powers conferred on the committee by the rules of the community. While the Act specifically prohibits authorities from making decisions that discriminate against women, it nevertheless bestows authority on people and institutions that have historically held deeply conservative views regarding the place of women in controlling and holding property. The main argument here is that, since women are already marginalized and discriminated against under customary law, strengthening traditional leaders and customary law risks negative consequences for women, especially widows, divorcees and unmarried women. As a result of such laws women are discriminated against. (FAO, 2005:6).

The legal and policy environment in the five Southern African countries investigated by the FAO (2005:13) shows that while land laws and policies are critical to the promotion of women's land rights, other relevant laws such as those related to inheritance, marriage, divorce, and domestic violence are equally critical. Despite some gains that have been made, women's land rights in these five countries continue being violated because the State is not taking concrete action to review gender insensitive laws and policies, or to effectively implement gender sensitive laws and policies, where they exist. Many women are also not aware of some statutory laws that offer them opportunities to acquire land; or the procedures that they need to follow in order to get land.

Women in the village are not aware of the existence of the laws in the country, which are meant to protect them against traditional laws and social norms. The majority of these women are old and some of them have not progressed to higher education, one of the places where

they can be exposed to such laws and policies. The laws they are aware of are those which are imposed to them by society and culture and those are the laws they are obliged to abide by. The presence of these statutory laws that affect women does not make sense if they are not known and utilized by those they are meant for, like the women of the village hence the implementation or rather introduction of such laws is necessary for the rural women.

In all the five Southern African countries, women commonly use the customary land administration system, and it is a system whose laws they best understand. While there are some positive practices in some countries, customary land administrators that do not apply a rights based approach are compromising women's land rights. This is because they continue to apply discriminatory inheritance and land allocation rules. Married, divorced and widowed women are particularly vulnerable in most settings (FAO, 2005:6)

A study conducted by Blaai (2009:126) on challenges facing women in small scale agriculture, a homestead food production programme at the Mbashe local municipality, Eastern Cape, found that one of the challenges facing women's development in the project is that, the project ignored the implementation of the gender equity policy which advocates equal distribution of household responsibilities between men and women. Women in this project still believed that traditional roles such as care-giving, are for women only and they should not be shared with their men folk. She argues that African culture and tradition overburdened married women (in particular) with multiple household tasks and allocated fewer tasks to their husbands. This decreased women's time dedicated to the community project. The majority of women in the study area also reported that they did not have time to juggle both household responsibilities

and agricultural activities. They explain that, taking care of their family, which includes cooking, washing clothes cleaning the house keeps them busy every day, which then leaves them little time to engage in other activities such as agriculture. Other women in the village have full-time jobs which keep them busy all day and when they come home in the evening and during the weekends they have to concentrate on other households chores, leaving them with no time to engage in other activities.

Studies conducted by Hebinck and Lent (2007:23) and Monde, Fraser, Botha and Anderson (2006:2) reveal that, even though legally there is equal ownership and access to land in South Africa, in the rural areas of the Eastern Cape, South Africa, there is still low utility of land in agricultural activities. He argues that, instead, people rely on external economic activities i.e government grants for their subsistence, which contribute about 90percent of household income. According to Monde et al (2006:2) recent work done in the rural areas of the Eastern Cape show limited use of arable land by the majority of rural house households who have access to it. This is also apparent in Khwezana where people only own small home gardens, and the majority of them only use land they have inside their homes (home gardens), leaving huge areas of arable land in the fields unutilized. To be exact, an informant revealed that only two local residents own bigger land (fields) outside their gardens or yards. Otherwise the land is left fallow in the fields. A main informant argued that they want large pieces of land, but even if they had access to them they would not be able to utilize the land, because they would not have machinery and other needed resources to work them. Studies in both the former Ciskei and Transkei regions of the Eastern Cape show that the proportion of available arable land being cultivated does not exceed 35percent and may be as low as 10-15percent leaving 85 to



90 percent of the land unutilized, irrespective of cropping potential of that land. Fraser's (2009:5) report for the Eastern Cape provincial growth and development also agrees with Hebinck (Ibid) noting that a large proportion of arable land in the Eastern Cape communal areas is left fallow.

### **2.3.2 Access to Credit**

In addition to limited access to land, women face problems of access to their inputs, including credit (capital/money). This is because many credit associations and export crop market cooperatives limit membership to household heads in many African countries, thereby excluding married and single women (Manuh, 1998:13). Women face greater difficulties than men, particularly with regard to participation in rural cooperatives and access to credit, training and agricultural extension. These difficulties rarely flow from explicitly discriminatory norms, as legislation on these issues is in most cases gender neutral. Rather, they mainly arise from cultural practices and stereotypes (e.g. on women's role within the family and on interactions between persons of different sexes) and from socio-economic factors (e.g. as for access to credit, women's higher illiteracy rates, lack of information about available credit programmes, lack of land titles to be offered as collateral, more limited access to formal employment, and exclusion from credit cooperatives) (FAO, 2005:3). Onguonu (2010:5) notes that, in Nigeria women do not have access to resources such as finance for the execution of planned projects like their male contemporaries. In some Nigerian communities women are encouraged only to produce food crops for sustaining the family, leaving men in control of the production of cash crops.

Berger and Buvinic (1990:102) note that there are various factors that limit women's access to credit. They argue that in some Mexican rural areas socio-cultural factors can be a major limitation to women's access to credit (Ibid). In rural Mexico for instance, women are not allowed to walk long distances between their homes in rural areas and the banks in town by themselves or to offer the occasional bribe to male officials in charge of credit applications. Furthermore, entering a bank may intimidate the women because they are unfamiliar with the environment and the procedures. In addition women are often excluded from social gatherings where males learn about how and where to access certain sources of credit and how to apply.

This lack of financial support is one of the major factors that contribute to the invisibility of women in agricultural development in Khwezana village. As a result of the lack of financial support, there is low development in community projects. One informant suggested that, it would be much better if the government were to support community garden initiatives in the village the same way the government is supporting the community disability centre. She further asserted that if there were good financial support, it would be worth it for the community members to invest their time in it. However, they do not have the money to finance such activities now, hence starting it would be a waste of their time.

For Berger and Buvinic (1990:123), the lack of collateral security, illiteracy and mere gender discrimination can negatively influence women's access to credit. For example, the culture based idea that rural women are financially supported by males and that their only responsibility is to maintain the household is the reason bankers refuse to give credit to rural women farmers. Berger and Buvinic (1990:123) conclude that, unless women are exposed to

the relevant channels of credit distribution they will continue to be ignorant about many sources of loans and therefore they will continue to be at disadvantage when it comes to credit access.

Collateral security seems to be one of the major factors constraining the access of women to agricultural inputs. A study conducted by Arun (1999;12) reports that, in Moorkanad, India, women complained of having limited access to credit resources. These women were not allowed to borrow money from the bank because they lacked collateral security. He explains that, because these women did not have collateral security which can be in the form of land or production equipment, they were denied the right to borrow money from banks.

A recent study conducted by Baiyegunhi *et al* (2010;23) on determinants affecting credit access for rural households showed that the gender and age of the household head, ownership of land, value of assets and repayment capacity are statistically significant factors considered in determining whether a household is credit constrained or not. The results of the study showed that, younger household heads who own land or any other kind of collateral security such as poultry, oxen and livestock are less constrained in credit access. These results support the claim that credit policies can play an important role in rural development and that additional rural finance can enhance productivity and household welfare, thus contributing to pro-poor growth. Given the relatively high demand for credit and the limited access of rural households to both informal and formal credit in the Eastern Cape Province, the degree of effective credit rationing seems to be relatively high.

However, it is evident that legally in South Africa today, women are not constrained in credit access. The constitution clearly supports equality among all citizen of south Africa regardless of race, gender or sexual orientation. In the past, legal obstacles hindered women's exercise of self-employment activities. For instance, under the Black Administration Act of 1927, women married under customary law were considered minors under the guardianship of their husbands, and could not sign contracts (section. 11). This act was repealed by the Recognition of Customary Marriages Act of 1998, which recognized the full legal capacity of the wife to enter into contracts (section 6)<sup>6</sup>.

In addition, agricultural credit is governed by the Agricultural Credit Act of 1966, as amended by the Agricultural Credit Amendment Act of 1995, which was established by an Agricultural Credit Board to supply agricultural credit. No specific reference to gender is made in the act. In practice, however, women's access to credit is limited due to their lack of land titles, which is influenced by the socio-cultural reasons which are mentioned above that a woman cannot own land because of her gender (patriarchy, and customary law). Africans, especially in patriarchal communities, consider it a waste to give a resource such as land to a girl because when she marries, she will give away the wealth of her forefathers to her in-laws. Moreover, there is anecdotal evidence of banks requiring the consent of the husband before lending to women married in the regime of separation of property in the Republic of South Africa<sup>7</sup>. The Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act of 2000 prohibits unfair discrimination against women, including in women's access to credit by the state and all persons<sup>8</sup>.

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<sup>6</sup> See FAO (2002:17)

<sup>7</sup> See FAO (2002: 16)

<sup>8</sup> See section 6 and section 8 subsection (e) of the constitution of the republic of South Africa.

### 2.3.3 Education

Education is one of the significant factors affecting the participation of women in agricultural development. Rad et al (2010:5) agree that education is one of the important factors that help development to be realized. The purpose of education (formal and informal) as stated by Rad et al (2010:3) is to communicate accumulated wisdom and knowledge from one generation to the next. Secondly, education enhances active participation in innovation and the development of new knowledge. Ani et al (2004:6) further argue that education enhances the ability to derive, decode and evaluate useful information for agricultural production. The Food and Agricultural Organization/ United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization [FAO/UNESCO] (2002:12) note that better education and training have become essential for sustainable development and for rural economies to survive.

Manuh (1998:9) is of the view that the lack of education and training has been identified as a key barrier to women's advancement in the society. She argues that in Africa, female illiteracy rates were over 60 percent in 1996 compared to 41 percent of men. Certain countries have extremely high rates of low education on women, Burkina Faso at 91 percent, Sierra Leone 88.7 percent, Chad at 82.1 percent and Guinea at 86.6 percent. In many African countries parents still prefer to send boys to school, seeing little need for sending girls. Hence, illiteracy is still evident in most African countries (Ravinder *et al* 2009:16).

A study conducted by the Natural Resources Management and Environment Department (2010:1), reveals that, illiteracy is a major constraint facing women in development. Women are unable to understand and utilize technical information because they lack basic formal

education. This department also reveals that, because of their illiteracy, women farmers are unable to read and understand the written material provided by extension programs that educate farmers. Penin (1999:12) supports the latter sentiment by arguing that, education has a relationship with farming progressiveness. The reason is that there is a positive correlation between education and farming.

Through education, farmers are able to acquire new improved and effective written material. Educated farmers are able to acquire more information in the form of written material such as magazines, newsletters and farming instruction pamphlets, booklets and on packaged hybrid seeds, pesticides, fertilizers and many more (Penin, 1999:12). As further discussed in chapter in five, the majority of women in the study area have not pursued their education. As a result they are not exposed to ever revolving agricultural techniques. Most of these women are still making use of techniques that were used by their fore-bearers. The present study agrees fully with the sentiment that, educated or more exposed or rather more enlightened farmers' produce better crops than those who are not. This is clearly evident in the study area. This is because they have information on how to care for their land and their crops so that the land produces better food for them.

In addition, as noted by Anselm *et al* (2010:128), education plays a significant role in positively influencing the status of women in farm decision-making. He states that highly educated women are likely to make a higher contribution to farm decision making than uneducated ones. A study conducted by Aniet *al* (2004:13) on the relationship between socio-economic characteristics of rural women farmers and their adoption of technology in Nigeria showed that educated

women farmers adopts farm technologies at a higher rate than less educated people who continue to use more rudimentary technology. Therefore, the education of rural women is important for their progressive participation in sustainable development. Ravinder *et al* (2009:52) notes that, socio-cultural factors also play a role in hindering women from accessing and furthering their educational interests. They argue that, factors such as early marriage place a greater burden on household labour and acts as a barrier to girls' progress in education.

A study conducted by Gundu (2009:130) in a rural area of Zimbabwe called Chirau also reveals that one of the major factors that affect women in farming is illiteracy. It was argued that this constrained one's access to needed farming information (Ibid). Gundu (ibid), argues that even though there may be available reading material for farmers who want to improve themselves women in the village are ultimately limited by their illiteracy. Gundu (ibid) further observed that illiteracy among respondents seriously inhibited the respondents' ability to access and use agricultural information to achieve and sustain household food security. She further notes that the illiteracy situation limits women's capacities to access agricultural training, credit, participation in economic activities and also access to information from other relevant organizations, not to mention the post-harvest and surplus management offered. She adds that the lack of education also affects the reception of services such as extension, as generally, adaptation and diffusion of innovations is often slow among the less literate populations in society.

In South Africa, the National Education Policy Act of 1996 provides that the national education policy, to be formulated by the Minister for Education must realize the right of every person to

non-discrimination and equal access to education and must be directed toward “achieving equitable education opportunities and the redress of past inequality in education provision, including the promotion of gender equality and the advancement of the status of women” (section. 4(a) and (c)) (FAO, 2005:6)<sup>9</sup>.

The Further Education and Training Act of 1998, (section 1) aims to ensure access to education and training for persons who suffered discrimination in the past, including women. Each public further education and training institution must establish a council which must be “broadly representative of the community served by the institution” in respect of gender, and must develop a strategic plan addressing gender issues (sections 8, 9(2)(a) (ii) and 9(8)(e)). The council is also to adopt codes of conduct and disciplinary measures and procedures dealing with sexual violence and sexual harassment (sections. 16). Moreover, each public education and training institution must establish an academic board, which is responsible for “the promotion of the participation of women in the learning programmes” (section 11(1)(a)). Admission policies of public institutions cannot unfairly discriminate and must provide appropriate measures for the redress of past inequalities (section. 17(3)). As for private institutions, non-discrimination on the basis of gender is among the conditions for the registration of the institution (section 26(1) (c))<sup>10</sup>. The Skills Development Act of 1998 aims to improve the employment prospects of persons who suffered unfair discrimination in the past (section 2(1)(e)). The National Skills Authority established by the Act must include a woman (section 6(2) (c) (i))<sup>11</sup>.

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<sup>9</sup> See National Education Policy Act of 1996

<sup>10</sup> See Further Education and Training Act of 1998

<sup>11</sup> See The Skills Development Act of 1998



However, a study conducted by Kwaru *et al* (2002:15) showed that there is a significantly low number of women farmers than men who actively participate in agriculture in the Eastern Cape Province, South Africa. Women made up only to 34percent while men constituted 64percent. The study also showed that there is high percentage of illiteracy in the province; about 58 percent of farmers in the Eastern Cape do not have education or skills for farming leaving only 44.2percent with very basic agricultural skills. Even though there are available schools, colleges and universities which teach agriculture as a subject in the area, there is still a low level of agricultural expertise and activity in the Eastern Cape Province.

In her study, Blaai (2009:125) notes that ignoring the empowerment of women adds to the challenges faced by women in rural areas. As a result, women received limited training while their developmental responsibilities demand more skills and more extension services. She adds that, the study subjects lacked basic skills in literacy and mathematics which were very crucial for the success of a project.

## **2.4 Conclusion**

Several barriers affecting women's participation in agricultural activities have been identified in the discussion above. Even though there are laws and policies which enable women to freely access credit facilities and benefits in South Africa, in most rural settings, these women are not making use of such resource. As the literature suggests women are inhibited from practicing activities they desire and their rights are denied them by the social norms and customs of their societies. It has been noted that systemic gender based biases are one of the major issues limiting women in engaging and accessing agriculture related resources.

One of the issues discussed in this literature is that credit constraints for women put a severe limit on the full participation of women in agricultural related activities, thereby leading to less contribution to the economic development and self sufficiency of the rural community. Education, in how to acquire financial services is a need in the study village.

In the Eastern Cape specifically, the majority of studies have been on the issue of agriculture and development generally, However, very few studies have directly targeted the issues relation to the socio-cultural influences limiting rural women's lack of participation in agricultural development in the area. This could probably be the reason why women in the study area are not motivated. Moreover, the various studies highlighted earlier on with regard to socio-cultural barriers to agricultural development do not suggest in clear terms how to overcome such barriers. As stated in chapter one, one of the objectives of the present study is to suggest ways of overcoming these barriers. Although there is documentation of all over Africa and abroad about how factors such as land, credit and education including technology influence participation in agriculture, these factors on their own cannot be held fully responsible for the high levels of the invisibility of women in agriculture in the study area.

## **Chapter Three: Methodology**

### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter outlines the methodology used in this study. The study made use of the qualitative research design in the collection of data. A combination of participation observation and basic individual interviews was used to ensure the reliability of the data collected in the study area. The chapter also includes the sampling procedure used in the study, the life histories of the study group, secondary literature, and concludes by explaining the data analysis technique of the primary data collected.

### **3.2 Site Selection**

Four criteria were identified in the selection of a research site. Firstly, simplicity-that is, a research site that allows researcher to move from studying simple situations to those which are more complex. Secondly, accessibility- that is, the degree of access and entry that is given to the researcher. Thirdly, unobtrusiveness- that is, situations that allow the researcher to play an unobtrusive role. Fourthly, participation- that is, the possibility of the researchers participating in a series of ongoing activities<sup>12</sup>.

In choosing Khwezana village, the researcher has considered the second and fourth criteria. The researcher chose the second criteria –accessibility, because the research site was easily accessible to the researcher, because the village is located close to her home. Secondly, because gaining entry would be easy as this was an open access community for everyone (it was not a private estate). Above all, this would be the second sojourn of the researcher in the

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<sup>12</sup>See Komanisi, (2007:30).

study population. The researcher believed that she was familiar with some informants. The fourth criterion -participation was chosen because the researcher would be able to participate in the farming activities that were taking place in the village, as she grew up in a rural area where agricultural activities are prevalent.

### **3.3 Gaining Entry**

The objectives of the study were fully explained to the chairperson of the village, Mr. M. P. Gqogqa and to the key informants.<sup>13</sup> This was done to set the community members and the potential informants at ease, and to avoid any negative suspicions from the village residents. The chairperson of the village and the informants were assured that the information collected was meant for academic research purposes, not for any other illegal purposes.

According to Strydom *et al* (2005:38), obtaining informed consent implies that all possible or adequate information on the goal of the investigation, the procedure which will be followed during the investigation, the possible advantages, disadvantages, and dangers to which the informants may be exposed to, as well as the credibility of the researcher are communicated to the informants or their legal representatives.

Interview schedules (see appendix I) were designed and compiled before the interviews took place. However questions that arose during the interviews and participant observation were addressed during the time of data collection.

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<sup>13</sup> To protect informants, all names are fictional.

### **3.4 Qualitative Research Design**

The research was conducted using the qualitative research method. As explained by Babbie *et al* (2010:25), qualitative research is a research paradigm for social scientists to study human action from the perspective of social actors. They further argue that, the qualitative researcher's emphasis is on studying human actions in their natural environment, which means that, they study people in their communities. The primary goal of this approach therefore is to describe and understand the informants experiences from their point of view. A qualitative research is mainly characterized by in – depth text and explanation of the study results, instead of just using figures and illustrations to present the data (De Vos *et al* 2005:36). A qualitative research approach therefore is more efficient and effective for the present study, as the researcher seeks to gain a deeper understanding of the community.

The researcher chose this approach as she anticipated that it would enable her to describe the actions of the participants in greater detail. It was also felt that the approach would help the researcher understand and analyze the communities' actions through their own belief, history and context.

### **3.5 Research Methods**

#### **3.5.1 Participant Observation**

There are usually two types of observation in qualitative research, namely, *simple observation* where the researcher remains an outside observer; and *participant observation*, where the researcher is simultaneously a member of the group she or he is studying and a researcher

doing the study.<sup>14</sup> Observation is referred to as an activity in which the “researcher observes and to some degree participates in the action being studied, as the action is happening” (Lichterman, 2002:120). Although observation is often seen as a visual exercise of ‘noting a phenomenon, often with instruments, and recording it for scientific or other purposes’, it basically consists of gathering ‘impressions of the surroundings through all relevant human faculties’ (smell, hearing, touch, and taste), which therefore requires that the researchers actively witness what they are studying in action (Adler and Adler, 1998: 80).

During data collection, the researcher employed participant observation because she wanted to make full accurate notes of what went on. These notes included both empirical observations and interpretations of them. She actively participated in the daily lives of the people under study, which included participation in the agricultural activities of those few women who were farming. The researcher helped the formants irrigate their home gardens, sow and also weed. Most of the time the researcher participated in the daily running of the community old age and disability centre where she helped with cooking, cleaning etc. Because there was very low agricultural participation there were not many agricultural activities to participate in.

### **3.5.2 Key-Informant Interviewing (Basic interview)**

Key-informant interviewing can be used to best advantage if it is closely integrated with participant observation. Whenever the researcher himself has observed an event and has most of the relevant information at hand, he is in a position to improve vastly the quality of the data by systematic checking and cross-checking with the informants (Oke, 1990:61). In the opinion

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<sup>14</sup>See Babbie and Mouton, 2010:292

of Oke (1990:60), the key- informant technique is mostly used for recovering information about ways of living that have ceased to exist or have been sharply modified by the time the field-worker arrives.

As suggested by Oke (ibid) the researcher used this technique to collect data for the aspects discussed in the next chapter (historical socio-economic orientation of the study population).Interviews for this study were conducted at the homes of the informants. The target population was women of different age groups (old, middle-aged and young women). This classification was necessary since in the different age groups, priorities and levels of participation in the development process are also different, according to the needs, aspirations and expectations of individuals. The interviews dealt specifically with socio cultural factors related to agricultural participation. Interviews were also centered on the issues affecting rural women's participation in development, for example their social right to access to agricultural related resources or rather the social constraints inhibiting their access to resources. The basic interviews were aimed at finding out among other things the historical socio-cultural constraints inhibiting women's participation in agriculture related activities.

The interviews were conducted in the form of a conversation where the interviewer was able to establish the general direction of the conversation and pursue specific topics related to the study enquiry. This research tool was chosen because it allows for informal conversation between the researcher and the informant about the topic at hand. During data collection it was discovered that this research tool was also advantageous because it enabled the

researcher to engage in informal and unthreatening conversation with informants in their home language (Xhosa), while in the meantime, trying to establish answers to the enquiry.

The basic individual interview is explained by Babbie *et al* (2010:14) as an open interview which allows the participant to speak for him/herself instead of responding to predetermined hypothesis based questions. They further argue that, the basic individual interview is mainly an interaction between the interviewer and the participant in which the interviewer has a general plan of inquiry but not necessarily predetermined questions which must be asked in particular words and a particular order. A basic individual interview therefore is a conversation in which the interviewer establishes a general direction for the conversation and pursues specific topics raised by the informant.

**Figure 3.1 Khwezana old aged and disability centre.**





### **3.5.3 Sampling Method**

The study specifically targeted 100 women (young, middle aged, old) who are invisible in agricultural activities and also women who are practicing agriculture in the study village. This selection was done so that the researcher was able to identify agricultural issues currently affecting those women who are active agricultural practioners. The researcher also looked very closely at the factors affecting the women who are not involved in agriculture. This type of sampling method is termed opportunistic sampling or judgmental sampling<sup>15</sup>. This sampling method is used when researchers want to find informants who will provide the relevant information (De Vos *et al* 2005:15).

The aim of judgmental sampling is to select the units that are most likely to answer the research question at hand. Because there were some aspects of the study that required an understanding of the history of Khwezana, the researcher made use of elderly men who knew a bit more about the study village. These people included the chairperson of the village, and other older informants who are the members of the study village.

### **3.5.4 Life Histories**

Basic individual interviews were used throughout the course of data collection in conjunction with participant observation. Interviews were also used to capture the life history of the study group and, past stories about one's traditions and culture were gathered. The interviews mainly focused on historic role of agriculture in the life of ama-Xhosa. For example it was asked "what significance did crop production and cattle play in the lives of people". Even though the main

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<sup>15</sup> See Bless *et al* (2006:26)

focus of the study was on socio-cultural factors affecting women in agriculture, the issue of cattle was discussed generally in the study. These interviews usually occurred after hours, between six in the evening and ten in the evening. This is when informants were done with their daily chores and had collected and locked her livestock away in the kraal. At that time there was time available to sit down and have a conversation without being disturbed.

### **3.5.5 Reviewing Secondary Data**

To complement the primary data, the review of secondary material was also used in the course of data collection for this study. Materials from scholarly literature such as books, journal articles, dissertations, reports from The Agricultural and Rural Development Research Institute (ARDRI), the food organization agency (FOA), provincial and national reports (from the Department of Education and the Department of Land Affairs, DLA) were used in the study. Wolcott (1995:56) cited in Songelwa (2009:103) refers to this technique as the “art of doing fieldwork”, which comprises not only ‘being there’ with the display of courtesy and common sense, but also ‘getting nosy’ through aggressively seeking information, and making the ‘best use of the work of others’ through perusing archival documents and libraries. This technique allows the researcher to ‘represent fairly the various multiple realities’ (not only with people related to the project, but also with other researchers through their work) and to trace “patterns or trends and styles of behavior” (Yin, 1993: 61).

### **3.5.6 Field Notes**

During participant observation, notes were taken at different times depending on the situation, for example, notes were not taken when the informants were present at the old age and disability centre. This was because it was rather awkward and it made the informants

uncomfortable. Again the researcher was not able to take notes at times when she was helping with the daily activities of the centre. In such cases the researcher had to wait until the people had gone home to start writing field notes or wait until activities were completed by the researcher. However, in some cases the women who were working at the centre were fine with the researcher writing notes immediately after conversations or at any time. Notes were also taken after home visits, or where the researcher conducted interviews, and informants did not have problem with this.

### **3.8 Data Analysis and Interpretation**

The analysis of data brings order, structure and meaning to the mass of data collected (De Vos 1998:63). Interpretation on the other hand involves making sense or creating meaning from the data collected. In this study, the data collected through participant observation and interviews were analyzed through “a content analysis approach”. According to Babbie *et al* (2010:56), content analysis allows the researcher to examine written documents or transcriptions of recorded verbal communication. Babbie *et al* (2010:23) assert that, through content analysis, a researcher is able to make inferences by systematically and objectively identifying special characteristics of the message. Palmquist (1993:12) argues that when a researcher uses content analysis he/she has to examine words and phrases within a wide range of texts, including: books, book chapters, essays, interviews, speeches as well as informal conversation or headlines. By examining the presence or repetition of certain words and phrases in these texts, a researcher is able to make inferences about the philosophical assumptions of a writer, a written piece, the audience for which a piece is written, and even the culture and time in which the text is embedded. Roller, Mathes and Eckets (1995:126) add that, on the most general level,

content analysis is any technique for making inferences by objectively and systematically identifying specified characteristics of messages. Traditionally, content analysis is usually divided into types, namely conceptual analysis and relational analysis. Conceptual analysis is also sometimes known as thematic analysis, but this term is longer favored among qualitative researchers.

During the fieldwork, the notes taken during participant observation, focus groups and casual conversations were important in analyzing the qualitative data. An impression from each interview and each observation was added to the recorded data collection. At irregular intervals emerging ideas and insights about the meaning of information was recorded. This means that the data was analyzed as it was collected and the analysis continued in an ongoing manner. The aim was to find the main themes in the data and to see where the evidence would lead. This enabled the researcher to gain an understanding of what happened in the study area and why it was happening. Again this method is referred to as content analysis.

### **3.9 Ethical Considerations**

Blanche *et al* (2009:56) assert that the purpose of research ethics is to protect the welfare of the research participants. They argue that research ethics also involve not only the welfare of the informants but extend to areas such as scientific misconduct and plagiarism. The researcher took steps to safeguard the rights, interests and sensitivities of informants. During the course of data collection, the researcher thoroughly explained the aims and the purposes of the study to the informants.

The researcher explained to the informants prior the commencement of the research that participation was voluntary and that they should not hesitate to tell the researcher when they were uncomfortable with the research techniques or when questions made them feel uncomfortable. As a result, some informants did not feel comfortable with having their pictures taken but they were happy to answer questions. The researcher recognized that because of her age and the cultural practices among the Xhosa, asking certain questions about some participant's source of income could be sensitive. The researcher allowed informants to participate on a voluntary basis. Confidentiality, anonymity and informed consent was implemented during the writing of this study<sup>16</sup>.

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<sup>16</sup> See Babbie and Mouton, 2001:23

## **Chapter Four: Historical and Socio-Economic Orientation of Khwezana Village**

### **4.1 Introduction**

The aim of this chapter is to orientate the reader in respect of aspects of the early history of the study area, some aspects of culture, agricultural practices and infrastructural organization, aspects which all, according to Bembridge (1984:41), appear to be relevant to a study of this nature. The purpose of this chapter is to provide only some of the history of Eastern Cape (former Ciskei), with special reference to the Mfengu and Xhosa.

### **4.2 Geographical Location**

The Eastern Cape Province is situated on the south-eastern coast of Southern Africa, between the South African harbor city of East London and the coastal resort of Port Alfred. From the coast it stretches away in a generally north-north westerly direction to the point of Queenstown. Its geographic position is between southern latitudes 32 and 32 35', and eastern longitudes 26 20' and 27 48'. Its western boundary is marked by the Great Fish River and further inland by the Kat, while the northern and north eastern borders are the Swart Kei and Klipplaats rivers respectively. The eastern border is a winding, manmade line (Benso, 1981:45). Khwezana village is situated 21,3 kilometres away from Alice town, near the Hogsback. Its geographic situation is -32. 700933, 26.9237(GPS coordinates)<sup>17</sup>.The following figure shows the geographical location of Khwezana village.

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<sup>17</sup> See googlemaps.Available at <http://maps.google.co.za/> .Retrieved: 01/05/2011.

**Figure4.1 : Geographical Location of Khwezana village**

### 4.3 Early History

Ciskei is inhabited by the Cape Nguni. These inhabitants are mainly Xhosa and Mfengu.<sup>18</sup> All evidence from written as well as traditional Xhosa antiquaries transmitted orally, point to the gradual migration of the Xhosa-speaking peoples, commencing in the sixteenth century, from a locality north of the Zambezi (Theal, 1904: 128-144).

#### 4.3.1 The Xhosas

Raum *et al* (1972:6) and Soga (1931:8) agree that the origin of the Xhosa is not quite clear exactly. Raum *et al* argue that, there are speculations claiming that, the Ciskei is the original habitat of the Xhosa. They go on to conclude that, the Xhosa who were named after their chief, chief Xhosa the successor of chief Mnguni migrated from the North-East of Central Africa to where in the South, is still not clear, but generally, they migrated from the North- East Coast of Africa to Northern Natal before Europeans came into the country, and they settled close to the Drakensberg mountain range , at a point which is now difficult to pin-point but supposed to be the sources of u-Mzimvubu (St. Johns River). Later they moved southwards towards what was known as the Cape Province.

The first wave of Bantu speakers reached Southern Africa about 400 AD to about 700 AD. During the second wave of migration, the ancestors of the Nguni, Sotho and Tsonga arrived in southern Africa around 1200 AD. An adaptation to the diverse ecology of South Africa was necessary, producing different agricultural and social traditions. The Nguni took over the land

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<sup>18</sup> Moyer (1976:145) defines Mfengu as refugees of Nguni stock, driven from Natal by Shaka's wars known as Mfecane.



occupied by the San who survived on gathering and hunting and particularly the Khoi (also known as the Hottentots) who were a pastoral people. The Khoi occupied the coastal zone of South Africa between the Mzimvuburiver in Kwa -Zulu Natal and the Cape. By 1736 the Nguni had cleared all the land North- East of the Keiskamma River of independent Khoi tribes (Henbick, 2007:35).

Henbick, (2007:35) suggests that, around 1820 a group of people under the leadership of a man named Jama, decided to move from Zululand to escape the turmoil caused by the “Mfecane”. They migrated through the east territory of the Great Kei River controlled by the Xhosa Chief Hintsa. Here the group split in two. Jama decided to stay and align with Hintsa, while Mqalo the current Chief’s great –grandfather, migrated further with his followers across the Great Kei River, to an area west of the Great Fish River (close to where Port Elizabeth is today) and then to Ndabathemba where they stayed for a while. During this migration, migrants from other clans joined them. They moved with their cattle, surviving on their milk, continuously looking for good grazing land. From the Port Elizabeth area they moved to Fort Beaufort, on to Ndabexirhe and later to the Amatole region.

Around 1830 they arrived in the Tyume valley, which at that time was still controlled by Ngqika Xhosa. According to the current Chief, Mqalo and his group were given permission to settle in the valley by Chief Tyali, son of Ngqika and brother of Maqoma. The area became their tribal area called Makhuzeni and Mqalo subsequently became their chief. Prior to the arrival of Mqalo and his people, the Makhuzeni region must have looked different. Mqalo, the father of the current chief, subdivided and allocated the Makhuzeni area to different groups, and a

number of settlements, located close to each other, were established. This subdivision was overseen by the colonial administration. In addition to Guquka, these settlements included the present-day villages of Gilton, Msobomvu and Mpundu. To this day, the people of these villages share the same communal rangelands. Mqalo originally established more settlements, including Khwezana, whose residents were relocated by betterment planners to one of the other villages between 1930 and 1950 (Herbinck , 2007:35).

#### **4.3.2 Mfengu**

According to Steyn (1988:35), the Mfengu were refugees of an Nguni tribe, driven from Natal by Shaka wars, known as the Mfecane. They slowly moved westwards and spent some time among the Gcaleka in what is now known as the Transkei. These refugees having left their homes in a state of turmoil and with few possessions suffered hardship on their journey to the Cape. The people they met they reported as having initiated communication by saying *siyamfenguza* meaning we are hungry and seek shelter). This gave rise to the name Mfengu.

It was the growing prosperity of the Mfengu that initiated misunderstandings between them and the Gcaleka's. The so called emancipation of the Gcaleka in 1835 which led to the departure of the majority (16 800),who crossed the Kei river towards the end of the six frontier war, stemmed from the belief that they were ill-treated in Gcaleka land and that they were in a unique situation of degradation and servitude. The military alliance the Mfengu made with the whites was yet another development which generated greater hostility between the Xhosa and the Mfengu (Steyn,ibid).

Steyn (ibid) narrates that, once in the colony, the Mfengu immediately resumed the process of economic and social rehabilitation and undertook those cultural modifications which they assumed would make them more acceptable to the white colony. They became the first large scale Bantu- speaking community in the Cape to accommodate them to the colonial economy, to accept white leadership, to attend mission schools and to prepare for conversion to Christianity. These refugees originally settled in the district of Peddie, where they pledged allegiance to the colonial government. They were given infertile land which could not get enough to sustain them. They tried to escape the land and migrated to the Tyume valley. Unfortunately they were sent back to the Peddie district as they were ordered to abandon the Province of queen Adelaide except for Peddie.

Eventually, many Mfengu crossed the old colony. After several years in the Cape colon, many Mfengu acquired sufficient wealth in cattle to live independently. Some Mfengu continued to adhere to traditional agricultural practices; others adopted new techniques from white farmers. They changed from their traditional crops and planted variety of vegetable crops and fruit crops. These crops became beneficial to the Mfengu. The Mfengu assimilated more into Western culture, as they adopted Christianity they soon adopted education, and they become “schooled people” or educated people. They later dominated paying jobs such as teaching, clerical jobs, trading etc. According to Steyn (Ibid) the Xhosa on the other hand rejected all Western influences. They adhered to their traditional agricultural practices, rejected Christianity and remained conservative (Steyn, ibid).

#### 4.4 Social Identity

Khwezana is one of the small communities surrounding Alice, Eastern Cape, with a population of about 235 people. Khwezana is one of the communities that lie along Tyume River. There are many tales that members believe of how the name of the village came about. According to the elders of the community, the village was named after a lake that branched from the Tyume River to this village. The name of the lake was “ikhwezana”. This village was given the name because the lake delivered water into the village. An informant also narrates that, the majority of the villages in the area are named after the first clan to inhabit the area. She explains that, *Emajwarheni*<sup>19</sup> is named after the clan of its first inhabitant, as well as another village just a few kilometers away called *Emazotsweni*<sup>20</sup> and so as the study village which is also known and called as *Emabheleni* by the neighbouring villagers. She further adds that, even nowadays these villages are mostly populated by the members of the clan for whom the village was named.

Khwezana village is dominated by Xhosa speaking people. There are four main groups to which the Xhosas belong. They are Aba Nguni, AbaThembu, Aba Mbo and AmaBhaca. The Xhosa speaking Bantu are originally from the Eastern Cape which consists of what used to be called Transkei and Ciskei. Khwezana village is made up of Xhosa speaking people who are originally from the four main groups mentioned above and also the Mfengu social group<sup>21</sup>.

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<sup>19</sup>Emajwarheni is one of the neighboring villages only a walking distance from khwezana village.

<sup>20</sup>Emazotshweni is one of the neighboring villages few kilometers away from khwezana village.

<sup>21</sup> See Raum et al (1973:3).

According to one key informant, mam- Tshawe,<sup>22</sup> the residents of Khwezana were not all born at Khwezana. Some of them came to live in Khwezana because of marriage, while others moved to Khwezana because they were attracted by the rich geographic conditions. Other (4 percent) members of the village confessed that, the reason that their village moved to Khwezana was because the village had a good source of water which was from the Tyume River.

#### **4.5 Marriage and Family Life**

Schapera (1937:64) explains Xhosa marriage as an “affair between groups, involving two families concerned even more than the individual”. He proceeds to note that the personal predilection of the couple do not carry nearly the same weight as the good name of the family of the girl, her ability to bear children, work well, and get on amicably with her mother in law, for whom she will at first have to work. For the Xhosa people marriage did not entirely rest on the love of the bride and the groom but also the parents of the groom have to fall in love with the potential bride. Seymour (1970: 175) defines Xhosa marriage as a verbal agreement between the young man’s family and the girl’s family and the promise of marriage is given in the form of a dowry<sup>23</sup>. Traditionally, this is in the form of cattle.

There are three generations in a family group namely: the father’s family and the eldest son’s family living together, with each member of the group performing particular functions. This situation gradually changed into a nuclear family, of the parents and their children living together (Steyn1988:41). According to Steyn (1988: 43) in the past, only men had to go to

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<sup>22</sup> Mam-Tshawe is not real name of the informant.

<sup>23</sup> Dowry also known as lobola can be understood as the exchange of gifts from the groom’s side of the family to the brides side, traditionally these gift can preferably in the form of cattle (Soga, 1934:263-285).

urban areas to look for work. Women had to stay behind and look after their children and also look after the land. The latter included looking after the crops and the livestock of the family. According to Steyn (1988:43) , although it is the father's responsibility to sometimes look for someone particularly a man, it could be his brother or his neighbour to supervise the economy of the homestead, but it is the wife who receives the remittances, and she is entrusted to purchase at the local store on credit up to a certain amount. Some women were also given the authority to sell certain stock (Raum *et al* 1971: 13).

The culture of marriage in the study village has evolved over the years and adapted more from Western culture<sup>24</sup>. Marriage in the study village is not only an affair between a man (the groom) and the family of the future bride as it was in the olden days (see Schapera 1971:64). Marriage nowadays also involves the girl's consent. Actually, a lot of the decision depends on the groom and the girl. In most cases, parents are not involved in the initial stages of the marriage; the boy and the girl initiate the marriage. The parents are merely there to advise their children but not to make a full decision for them. One of the main informants, who is the mother of the girl, reported that:

“My daughter rejected three marriage proposals from different men, the reason is that she does not know the gentleman and that she was not ready to get married as she was only eighteen years old. Her father and I cannot make a decision for her. We are waiting for her to make up her mind, but she swears that she is not going”. The informant later explained to the

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<sup>24</sup>Western culture in which marriage is initiated in conditions of true love (Schapera, 1905:43-53.)

researcher that she, herself did not know her husband before she got married. She claims it is because of her Christian belief<sup>25</sup>. She further, tells me that love grows with time<sup>26</sup>.

Family life has also changed in the study village. Presently, in the study village, grandparents live with their grandchildren, while their grandchildren's parents live alone in urban areas. In some households, children live alone without their parents, taking care of each other while the parents are in urban areas, or in some cases, dead<sup>27</sup>.

## **4.6 Food Production**

### **4.6.1 The Origins of Food Production in General**

As hunters benefiting from an abundance of big game, bands of foragers gradually spread through the Americas. As they moved, these early Americans learned to cope with a great diversity of environments. Thousands of years later, their descendants independently invented food production, paving the way for the emergence of states based on agriculture and trade in Mexico and Peru. New World food production emerged 3,000 to 4,000 years later than in the Middle East, as did the first states (Kottak, 2002:225).

To understand the origin and evolution of crops, it is necessary to consider the processes that occurred in the development of agriculture (Yamaguchi, 1983:15). According to Yamaguchi (1983:15), attempts to cultivate plants started about 8000-10,000 years ago, only in the last five percent of man's development history. In Yamaguchi's view (1983:15), it took so long mainly

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<sup>25</sup> Christian belief – is religious doctrine that believes in the teachings of Jesus Christ, Christianity is also about believing that Christ died on the cross as payment for the sins of people and rose again. Our sin debt is paid and we can have fellowship with God (Got questions.org, 2002).

<sup>26</sup> Fieldwork notes taken from fieldwork at khwezana village.

<sup>27</sup> Observation notes from fieldwork at khwezana village

because man lacked ideas to build on and had little time to think about how to grow crops. Man's time and thoughts were spent mostly on survival. The tools developed were for survival rather than for planting.

Prins *et al* (2011:402) believes that with the advent of plant domestication, some societies took up **horticulture**<sup>28</sup>(from the Latin *hortus*, meaning 'garden') in which small communities of gardeners cultivate crops with simple hand tools, using neither irrigation nor plough. Typically, horticulturists cultivated several varieties of food plants together in small, hand cleared gardens. According to Prins *et al* (2011:402), one of the most widespread forms of horticulture, especially in the tropics, is **slash-and-burn cultivation**<sup>29</sup> or *swidden farming*, in which the natural vegetation is cut, the slash is subsequently burned, and crops are then planted among the ashes.

Steyn (1998: 44) reasons that both the ama-Xhosa and the Mfengu were pastoralist and agriculture people with a strong bias towards pastoralism. Every household owned a residential site as well as arable land. The agricultural plots were small because hoeing was carried out by hand. Every member of the tribe was entitled to make use of commonage but there was a restriction on the number of stock that one could keep.

Millet and sorghum were the most important cereals but they were later supplemented by maize when this grain was introduced, probably through the mix with other races comparatively later in Xhosa history. Maclean (1858:156) cited in Sobahle (1982:15) observes

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<sup>28</sup>Prins *et al* (2011:402) defines **horticulture** as cultivation of crops carried out with simple hand tools as digging sticks or hoes.

<sup>29</sup>Prins *et al* (2011:402) concludes that **slash-and-burn cultivation** is an extensive form of horticulture in which the natural vegetation is cut, the slash is subsequently burned, and crops are then planted among the ashes also known as *swidden farming*.



that among the Xhosa communities “cultivation commences if the rain falls early in August but ordinarily not until September when the Indian corn is first sown. Kaffir corn is sown until the end of October after which only very scanty crops can be expected. Indian corn can however, be sown until the end of November. The green Indian corn is fit for use till about the middle of January but near the coast, it is sometimes earlier”.

#### 4.6.2 The Origins of Food Production at Khwezana

The informants are not certain about the exact period in which agriculture emerged in the village. The oldest informants in the village Mam’ Ntande<sup>30</sup> and tat Mbele<sup>31</sup>, who are about 80 years old recall that, when they were still young, agriculture and livestock keeping were the main sources of subsistence in their homes. This means that, by the early 1930’s and before, agriculture was already the source of subsistence in the village. They further narrated that, “males were mainly responsible for looking after the cattle” which involved taking them to the veld and to the dipping tank<sup>32</sup>. Tat’u-Mbele, narrates that “boys used to wake- up at dawn to take the livestock to the veld and they had also come back in time for breakfast<sup>33</sup> before everyone could go to the fields”. “Girls in the meantime were busy preparing breakfast and women were mainly involved in field preparation, ploughing, sowing, weeding or harvesting”.

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<sup>30</sup> Not her real name.

<sup>31</sup> Not her real name.

<sup>32</sup> In reference to the local language, dipping is when the boys or the men of the village take the cattle to the separated area usually away from the village where the ants known by local residents as *amakhalaneare* removed by detergent like liquid.

<sup>33</sup> According to the informant, breakfast, lunch, and supper was substituted around three. The main staple foods were samp and sour milk and African salad (*mpokoqoonamasi*). He explains that, flour to make bread was one of few things that was bought but was compulsory otherwise they happily lived by maize from their garden and milk from their cows.

As stated in chapter one (statement of the problem), food production is still practiced at the study area despite the fact that local female farmers continue to face cultural and social challenges. Informants pointed out during fieldwork that they could not abandon food production because it was the main driving force of household livelihoods and the reduction of poverty in rural areas. All informants expressed a concern that the current situation could lead to a decline in agricultural activities if it was not addressed with immediate effect.

#### **4.7 Production in the Household**

In 2010, Ferraro *et al* reflected on the significance of households in food production. They wrote:

“In most non-industrialized societies, the basic unit of production is the household. In these small-scale societies, most if not all, of the goods and services consumed are produced by the members of the household. The household may be made up of a nuclear family (husband, wife, and children) or a more elaborate family structure containing married siblings, multiple wives, and more than two generations. While household members are most often kin, they can also include nonrelatives as well” (Ferraro, 2010:185).

In a horticultural society, household members produce most of what they consume. Their work includes planting, tending, and harvesting the crops; building houses; preparing and consuming food; procuring firewood and other fuels from the environment; making their own tools; keeping livestock; making their own clothes; and producing various containers for storing and cooking foods (Ferraro, 2010:185).

In the study village, the households are made up of an extended family structure (which includes, parents, grandparents and children) and the nuclear family structure (parents and their children). In the following figure, the informant (the one with green and white t-shirt) shows the researcher (the one with brownish top) household production.

**Figure 4.2: Household Production**



**Photo: By one of the informants**

#### **4.8 Land Preparation**

Land preparation is explained by the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) (2009:4) as a process which typically involves ploughing, harrowing, and leveling the field to make it suitable

for crop establishment. Animals, such as buffalo and oxen, 2-wheel tractors or 4-wheel tractors, renovators can all be used as power sources in land preparation. Steyn (1988:45) states that, ploughing time among the Xhosa's is noted from a number of signs which were showed by nature as the progress of the season rather than by fixing the mere date. He further explains that some of these signs were taken from birds and other farm animals. For example, when the Cuckoo (*lungalegwaba* or *phezu-komkhono*) was heard, and also when the Hoopoe (*u-Bhobhoyi*) made its appearance. The Xhosa people knew that the summer season had come. Summer is also noted by beautiful birds with bright colours making their appearance. When the bull frog (*isanyankomo*) began its croaking then it was summer.

At present, various land preparation methods are used in the study area to prepare the soil so that is ready to grow crops. These methods include the above mentioned methods, but mostly, they make use of hoes (see figure 4.3 below) to dig the soil to prepare it for crop planting.<sup>34</sup> Only a few residents own tractors and oxen<sup>35</sup>. Approximately one out of fifty (4percent) informants owns a tractor (see figure 4.4 below) and oxen, the majority of the informants use the traditional methods of land preparation which include hoeing and harrowing. The informants reported that the methods they use are traditional methods which were used by their great grandparents.

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<sup>34</sup>Hoe also known as "igaba", by the local residents, has been used as an agricultural tool for land preparation for many generations and is still used by the local residents of Khwezana village. Informants explained that this tool was mostly used by women for land preparation while men used tractors or oxen.

<sup>35</sup>A tractor owned by one of the local male residents. The owner is a well-known farmer in the village. He owns livestock (cows, sheep, pigs and chicken) and also own his own fields (*amasimi*)

During land preparation certain actions need to be taken before planting to ensure the long success of crop production. One of these actions involves the initial land preparation which should be done prior to planting. First the farmer opens little holes around the garden where he/she will put the seeds. Then a small amount of fertilizer or cattle manure is poured into the little opened holes every day for about a week or more. This is a way of preparing the soil so that it is fertile enough to produce crops. Klein *et al* (2010: 42) explain that the purpose of land preparation is to provide the necessary soil conditions which will enhance the successful establishment of the crops.

**Figure 4.4: Hoe**



**Photo: By the researcher**

**Figure 4.4: Tractor used by local farmers**



**Photo: By the researcher**

#### **4.9 Time of Planting**

The researcher started visiting the village during the first week of the June school vacation in 2010.. While observing the gardens of the residents, the researcher noticed that, almost similar crops are planted in different gardens of different households. The informants reported that different crops were planted in different seasons. It was realized that there are some crops that cannot survive in winter but can survive in spring and summer. The researcher noticed that

crops such as spinach, garlic and beetroot etc. were planted in the majority of the gardens. The following photo shows different crops grown in the study area.

**Figure 4.5 Different crops produced by local farmers**



**Photo: By the researcher**

Agriculture guide (2010:15) explains that the growth of fruits and vegetables are highly dependent on the climatic conditions. Certain vegetables were produced well into winter while others were produced well in summer. It might be difficult to grow certain vegetables in winter and to grow certain vegetables in summer. There are particular types of vegetables which must be grown in winter. The winter vegetables may be sown as early as March or as late as May.

Garlic and chillies are not only used for sustenance in the rural areas. These plants are also used to kill small insects which destroy the crops. The informant told the researcher that garlic and chillies specifically are grown to destroy those insects that damage their crops at night and also those small insets which they cannot see but are in the soil. The informant explained that adding garlic, chillies, mvabafana<sup>36</sup> and vumbambuzi in a bucket full of water makes a good remedy for pests. *Vumbambuzi* also known as *tswele lo mlambo*<sup>37</sup>, is a plant which is common in the neighbourhood. Residents use it for a variety of purposes but most relevant to the study the plant is also used to kill dangerous crawling and flying insects which destroy crops.

During the data collection, informants explained that is it important to scatter the plant around the garden so as to catch insects from different directions. The informant explained that, when a farmer does not have these plants in her garden, the crops do not develop to harvest stage. They are destroyed by the insects. Some other families do not even know that the garlic and chillies in their garden are edible, as the garlic is not the same as the one that is eaten. It is

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<sup>36</sup>Mvabafana is a green leafy plant mainly by the local residents for pets' control.

<sup>37</sup>*Vumbambuzi* also known as *itswle lo mlambo* is a green leafy plant which grows by the river by its self. The informants take the plant it from the river and plant it in their gardens, and also by their houses. The informants hold a superstitious belief that, the presence and the smell of the plant protects them against evil spirits referred to *astokoloshe* by the local residents.



in the form of leaves.<sup>38</sup>The informants revealed that pest control plants have been used for decades in the village. They themselves adopted the pest control plants from their forefathers.

Smith (1893) cited in Steyn (1998:45) argues that among the Xhosa people planting time was noted by the flowering of another type of ragwort, with a rather broad leaf for the size of the plant, *indwara*. The flowering of the wild chestnut, *umbaba*, seen afar from the profusion of lilac blossom it has, shows that it is time to plough the fields. According to the informants, their forefathers used to start planting around August. She further explained that, schooling was never on the list of priorities for their parents or their great grandparents. Instead, children were taught how to keep livestock, plant melies in the fields (*emasimini*<sup>39</sup>) and be self-sufficient through agriculture. The informant explained that, in the olden days they mainly survived on milk, meat and millies.

During investigation, local farmers reported that they grew various plant species as shown in the table below:

**Table 4:1 Plant species grown at Khwezana**

Plant Species	Sowing Time	Harvest Time
Spinach	Winter	Three months
Beetroot	Winter	After two months

<sup>38</sup> Field notes from fieldwork at khwezana village, June 2010.

<sup>39</sup>“ Large area of land put aside, usually at a distant from the village houses mainly used for crop production” (definition by an informant).

Cabbage	Winter	After two and half months to three months
Garlic	Early in winter	Slow growth up until beginning of spring
Lettuce	End of spring	Grows throughout winter
Onion	Winter	Three months

#### 4.9 Use of Manure and Fertilizer

Various ways of fertilizing the soil are used at Khwezana village. One of the most famous and easily accessible fertilizers is cow manure. However, the majority of the village residents do not own cattle. Although it is not the best option and does not yield to the most desirable results, goat, sheep, and sometimes chicken manure are used to fertilize the soil before crop production in the study village. Because the majority of the residents do not own their own livestock, they resort to making use of any type of manure they can to be able to access good planting soils. Van Averbek and Yoganathan (1997:56) argue that kraal manure is the most easily obtainable fertilizer for rural people who do not have money to buy modern fertilizers. Manure is especially easily obtainable for those households which own cattle or any kind of domestic animal. Those who do not own domestic animals can always ask for some from those

who have it. Sobahle (1982:50) argues that, sometimes rural people hold superstitions that discourage them from sharing manure, as it is believed that, when one gives out the manure from his/her kraal that he/she is giving away the wealth and luck given to him/her by his/her ancestors and to another family.

Another fertilizer that is easy to access is what is called by the residents “compost”. Compost is made from a variety of things i.e water that has been used to wash dishes, water to wash the body, water to wash the clothing, peeled potato skins, rotten potatoes, and rotten tomatoes or anything other rotten foods that can be found around the household. All this mixture has to be thrown next to the garden or inside the garden just next to the fence so that when the rain comes it can move to the garden or when someone adds water to the compost it can move into the garden to fertilize the soil. According to the local farmers this is the easiest fertilizer to make and is inexpensive because it is practically made out of the waste material they use around the household and it is effective<sup>40</sup>.

In addition, an informant also mentioned another type of homemade fertilizer; he explained, “to make one of the best fertilizers you need to grind bones, any type of dried animal bones, grind them until they are a smooth powder and mix them with cow dung, then after you sprinkle just a little portion of the mixture on the leaves of the crops”. The informant told the researcher that, the cow dung and bone mixture acts as nitrogen to the leaves and it is good for the leaves.

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<sup>40</sup> Fieldwork notes from khwezana village, November 2011.

Some farmers in the village mix two green leafy plants that are also known by the local farmers as the *Rhawu* and *Khemvri* in a bucket full of water and after few days when the leaves are soft they sprinkle it around the garden. This, according to the informants is meant to fertilize and keep the soil productive<sup>41</sup>.

#### **4.10 Farm Labour**

The study shows that about 57.9 percent of women at Khwezana village are either single or widowed, whilst 5.3 percent of women are qualified professionals, leaving 37 percent of women to depend on farming, social grants and money from their husbands who work in urban areas. The study shows that the majority of women at Khwezana are heads of households. This basically suggests that the household and gardening chores are divided between the women and the children.

However married women whose husbands have returned from labour migration share the household responsibilities with their husbands and children. Men take over the responsibility of ploughing with oxen and tractors. In those households which do not own livestock and machinery like tractors, ploughing is executed by women and children. Women also take responsibility for sowing, hoeing the weeds in the garden and harvesting. Children carry the responsibility of hand planting, throwing the seeds into the rows after the ploughing and they also perform the chore of irrigating the garden. Most of the agricultural activities in Khwezana village are executed by women.

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<sup>41</sup> Observations obtained during participant observation, November 2011.

A study conducted by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (2000:12) in Kenya shows that, agricultural labour in Kenya is mostly executed by women. The study illustrates that male tasks include the felling of trees, ploughing with oxen or tractors, digging holes, the purchase and use of chemicals, looking for markets and the sale of produce. While women usually undertake sowing, harvesting, head loading of produce, crop-drying, winnowing, seed selection, pig and poultry-rearing and bartering sunflower seeds for oil. Other tasks, such as weeding, bagging and crop storage, are almost equally undertaken by both women and men. It is estimated that women do 85 percent of the planting, 85 percent of the weeding, 55 percent of land preparation and 98 percent of all food processing. However, decisions to market are usually made by men (70 percent), or are made jointly (fifteen percent). In the rural areas of Kenya, it is estimated that women's workloads considerably exceed those of men.

#### **4.11 Crop Rotation**

Crop rotation is explained by Unger and McCalla (1980:16) as a practice of growing different types of crops in the same area. This is done for various reasons. It is done in order to eliminate pests that occur when same species of plants are continuously cropped in the same area in consecutive years. These pests may cause damage to the soil and other crops in the garden. Crop rotation therefore seeks to eliminate the production of these pests and balance soil fertility and soil nutrients. With crop rotation, a crop that uses a particular nutrient in the soil is followed during the next growing season by a dissimilar crop that returns that nutrient to the soil or draws a different ratio of nutrients, for example, alternating soya beans and maize. Through crop rotation farmers can keep their fields under continuous production, without the

need to let them lie fallow, and reducing the need for artificial fertilizers, both of which can be expensive.

Crop rotation is practiced by the farmers at Khwezana village. The farmers plant different crops in their small gardens all year but the plants differ from season to season. For example, in winter, they plant crops such as cabbage, lettuce, garlic, spinach etc. In summer they plant crops such as maize, tomatoes, beans and in spring they plant crops such as carrots, cabbage and onions. They plant these different crops all year round. The researcher discovered that they did not practice crop rotation because they were not aware of the positive effects that crop rotation has on the fertility of the soil but they practice it because they do not have a choice. Their space to farm is limited to the small garden they have, so they are obliged to utilize the same small portion of land they have throughout the different climatic seasons.

## **4.12 Infrastructure**

### **4.12.1 Water supply**

Water is distributed via taps at Khwezana village. Villagers do not have their own taps, they use community taps are only a few minutes away from where they live. This is convenient for the villagers because they are able to maintain their home gardens. Although a visitor may not notice this, the village is divided into community sections and these sections are considered one village. However, they are very far apart. All these sections have their own taps which are closer to their homes. I have noticed that those who have the means to build taps in their yards do so.

#### **4.12.2 Roads**

The roads in the village are not in a good state. The roads all the over the village are gravel roads. This becomes a problem during the rainy season because it is difficult to walk around and the majority of the working land is wet and muddy. During one of the visits to the village the researcher spent more than 30 minutes trying to find a firm piece of land she could walk on. The researcher eventually had to take an alternative road to the household she was going to because the road she used to take was muddy and no one could walk in it.

The villagers complained that because of poor condition of roads in the area they struggle to drive their cars into the village, because they get damaged. The situation is more difficult for those who commute to work every morning and have to come back again in the evening.

#### **4.12.3 Rail**

There are no rail facilities in the study area. There are two types of road transport that cater for the villagers: the bus and the taxi. The bus only comes twice or sometimes once a day. Informants told me that this form of transport is convenient for the villagers because it is affordable and most of the villagers can afford it, but it is inconvenient because it comes at a fixed time and some people cannot reach it in time. They said that the taxi is convenient because it comes to the village four times a day, but it is expensive and unreliable. For example, if there are no people in town who want to come home by taxi it does not even come.

#### **4.12.4 Electricity and Telecommunication**

There is adequate provision of electricity in the study village. All the households the researcher visited during data collection were connected to electricity. The village also has an extensive telephone network.

**Figure 4.6: Infrastructural organization of Khwezana village**



**Photo: By the researcher**



## Conclusion

It is clear from the study that, the earliest known habitats of the Eastern Cape Province after the Bushman and the khoi-khoi are the Nguni speaking tribes -ama-Xhosa and the different clan groups. Hence, they adopted the economic techniques of hunting, gathering and pastoralism of the early inhabitants. Although some of them have been modified, some of the socio- economic practices have been retained i.e agricultural practices, gathering, pastoralism and as well hunting are still practiced by some Nguni even to the present day.

The researcher has observed that some women in the study area still engage in gathering wild plants called “U-tyuthu”. The plant grows on its own and does not need people to irrigate it. An informant explained that the plant grows well after the raining season and harvesting it requires very sound knowledge of the plant because it may resemble other plants which are dangerous and can cause death. The techniques of agriculture practice are not the only things that have evolved in the study area. Some other traditions such as the marriage ceremony and its practice and also the family life, family structure and the roles of family individuals have visibly changed as well.

Generally, one of the most important restrictions to agriculture is the lack of rainfall referred to as *imbalela*<sup>42</sup> by the local residents. Nowadays we find that there also other major factors influencing agricultural practices apart from climatic changes. Social or rather cultural stereotypes prove to be one of the leading limitations to agricultural development in rural

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<sup>42</sup>*imbalela – drought is scarcity of water or rain*

areas. However the pressing issue in the study village is the lack of infrastructural development. The government seems to have neglected this form of development in the study area as a result residents are suffering.

The majority of Khwezana village residents do not own or even need additional labour to help with their everyday work. This is because most of these residents do not own or even make use of large plots for crop production. They only use small plots as their garden. However, two of the fifty informants make use of additional labour, one of the informants is involved in commercial farming and the other one is a community gardening project. The workers who are volunteers in the community project help with cleaning the community garden, planting the crops (*ukulima*), irrigation (*ukunkcenceshela*) and during the time of harvesting (*ukuvuna*)

## **Chapter Five: Characteristics of the Study Population**

### **5.1 Introduction**

According to Lionberger, (1960:3) “social factors such as neighborhood, communities, family social cliques, reference groups and formal groups; cultural factors such as values and attitudes, personal factors including age, education; psychological characteristics, and situational factors, including farm size, tenure status, community prestige and level of living are among the forces that encourage or discourage change in the behavior of rural people”.

Recent studies have shown a great link of significance between the personal characteristics of informants, their socio-economic status and their involvement and participation in agricultural development (Kongolo, 2002, Baiyegunhi 2010 etc). These studies emphasize that, in order for women to be successful in agricultural participation, there needs to be the provision of essential resources. As long as there is still a need for socio-cultural resources, agricultural activity still is going to be low, or even worse, invisible in rural areas, especially among women because they are the less resourceful group compared to their men folk (Steyn 1988:120).

Bembridge (1987:29) argues that the human element is the key factor in agricultural and rural development because of their decision making abilities, which are of paramount importance to good management, successful and innovative farming. Farming is the function of men, but personal, socio-cultural factors and socio-economic factors influence the complexity of men and consequently their success as farmers. These factors need to be studied extensively to bring about successful farmers.

There are a number of personal, and socio- economic factors which influence participation in agricultural development, for the purpose of this chapter we will only focus on personal and socio-economic factors.

## **5.2 Personal Characteristics of the Informants**

### **5.2.1 Sex of Informants**

The research specifically targeted 100 women who are actively involved in farming in the study area, women who are not practicing agriculture and also those who have retired, for example old women who cannot practice agriculture anymore because of their age.

The study shows that, the majority of women who are permanent residents at Khwezana are old women whose subsistence depends of social grants provided by the government. There are also a few young and middle aged women who are between the ages of 21-30 and 31-40. The majority of the young women in the village have migrated to the city to find other means of supporting themselves and their families. As a result few agricultural activities take place in the study village. Those women who still practice agriculture use more of the old traditional agricultural methods than contemporary agricultural methods. They are reluctant to try other innovative methods. Bembridge (1986: 34-36 ) remarks that factors such as age, educational level and sometimes gender and cultural constraints can have an influence on the success of farmers. He concludes that younger farmers are more adaptive and therefore more willing to learn new methods than older farmers.

In many (46 percent) of the households, especially those with older women, are headed by women. These women range in age from 41-50 and 51-60. 26 percent of these women are widows and 32 percent are single women living alone because their families are in the urban areas working or looking for jobs and some have parents who have passed away, leaving them with the responsibility of looking after their younger siblings.

**Figure 5.1: Female informant harvesting her garden**



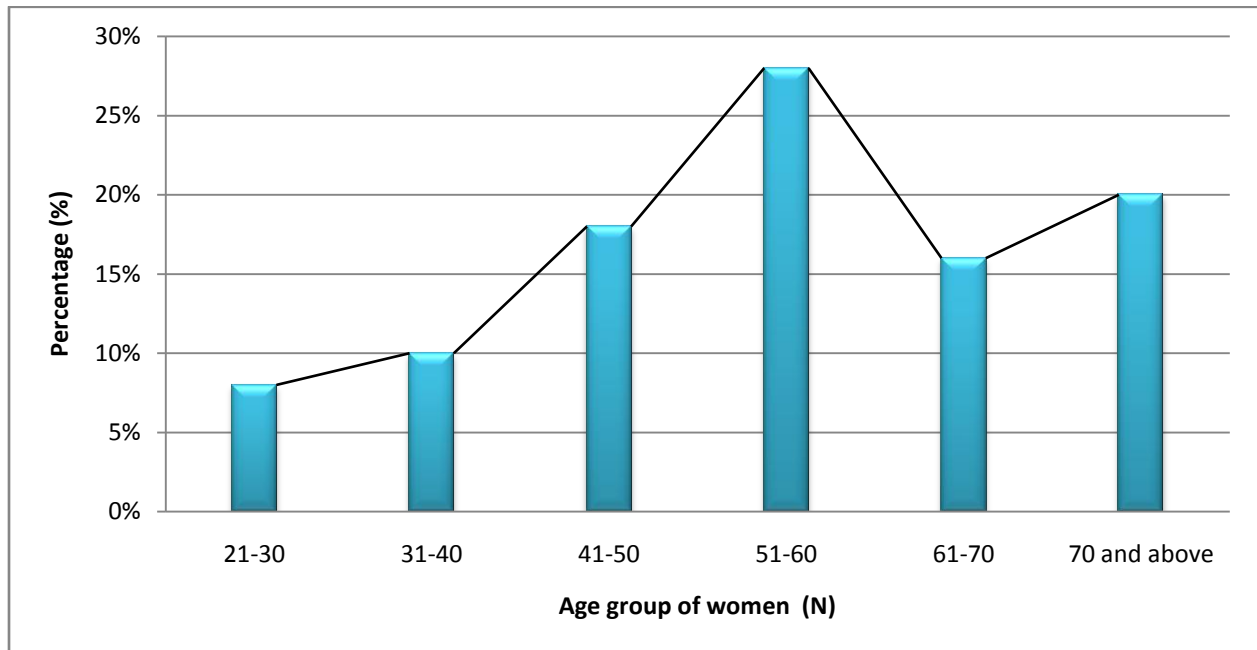
**Photo: By the researcher**

### **5.2.2 Age of Informants**

The study focused on young women between the ages of 21 to 30, middle aged women between the ages of 31 to 40 and also the old women who are 50 years and above. The sample was chosen in order to capture the perspective of women, both young and old. Even though, agriculture at Khwezana village is executed by both females and males females are the one who practice less agriculture and are less knowledgeable about new and innovative ways of practicing agriculture than their male counterparts. Some women especially those between the ages of 31-40 and above have shown little interest in practicing agriculture. They rather depend on other ways of living such as selling chips and sweets to the children at school. They also depend on the social grant provided by the government.

Bembridge (1987:34) argues that, an individual's age is one of the foremost factors pertaining to his/her personality make-up. He explains that people's needs and the way in which they think and behaves are all closely related to the number of years they have lived. Which may imply that, the older the person is the wiser he/she gets. This also may imply that the more education the person gets the more he/she is able to rationalize.

**Chart 5.1 Age groups of informants**



**Source: By the researcher**

### **5.2.3 Marital Status**

As shown in the table below, 5.1, 32 percent of the sample are single women, 42 are married women and 26 percent women are widows. These women sustain themselves and their families through minor home gardening, child support grants, old age grants and doing piece jobs in the village. The majority (about 86 %,) of the women however are solely dependent on social grants and the money given to them by their siblings who work in town and in urban areas.

As illustrated in the table below, table 5.1, the majority of women (about 42 percent) in the study village are married; they have husbands to help them in sustaining the economic status of the family. They argue that they do not need to depend only on farming all year around. They

only farm traditional crops such as mealies, spinach while their husbands take care of other food needed to sustain the household, for example rice, potatoes and cabbage.

**Table 5.1: Marital status of informants**

<b>Marital Status</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage %</b>
Single	16	32(32
Married	21	42 (42
Widow	13	26(26
Total	50	100.00

**Source: By the researcher**

#### **5.2.4 Education Level**

Education has long been recognized as a central element in the socio-economic evolution of the under developed and developing countries<sup>43</sup>. It has further been noted that education is a basic need, which in turn, is seen as a means of meeting other basic needs such as accelerating overall development through training skilled workers at all levels. Wharton (1963: 120) and Dun (1971: 86) argue that, education is one of the crucial variables in achieving economic growth, agricultural development and human progress. Rogers and Burdge (1972:185) concur with the latter sentiment that, basic education can be a crucial factor in changing the attitudes

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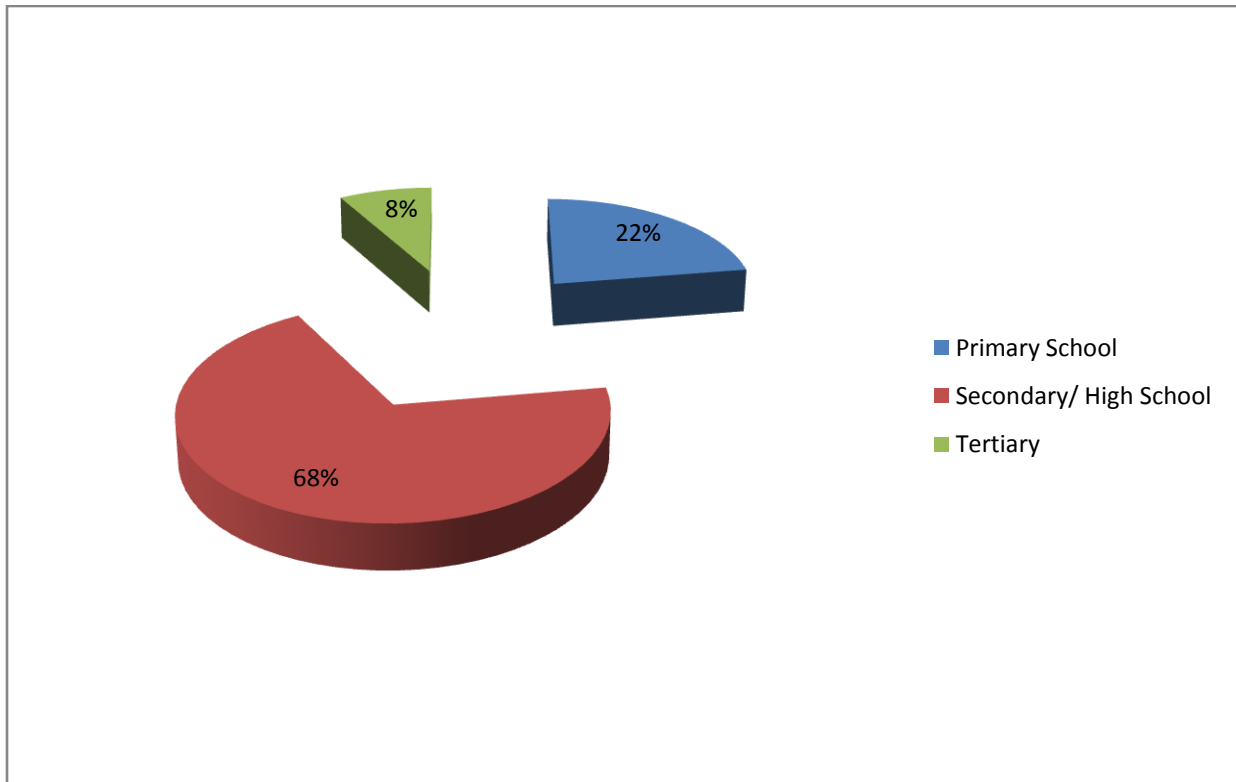
<sup>43</sup> See Bembridge (1987:35).



of a traditional farming society, attitudes of mutual distrust in inter-personal relations, the dependence on the hostility towards government authority, the lack of innovativeness, fatalism and limited aspirations.

Blang (1970:248) asserts that, the main effect of literacy is to provide people with additional means of communication, and hence literacy may contribute to economic development by motivating the farmer to innovate his/her ways for example change traditional ways of practicing agriculture to the modern and more effective ones.

**Chart 5.2: Educational levels of informants**



**Source: By the researcher**

In the present study, chart 5.2 above illustrates that, 22 percent of the women at Khwezana are illiterate<sup>44</sup>. Some of these women have not been able to acquire primary level of education, while others have not even had the opportunity to start formal education. The study shows that the majority of women who have not finished primary education are mostly old women from the age of 50 and above. As illustrated in chart 5.2above, about 68 percent of Khwezana women are literate meaning that they are able to read and write as they reached the secondary level of education. The majority of the women (about 68 percent) have secondary education while the remaining 22 percent only have primary education level. The majority of women have gone through some secondary education but did not graduate from secondary school.

The women reported that one of the reasons why they have not progressed or even attempted formal education is the socio-cultural constraints that forced women not to pursue formal education. According to informants, in the olden days women were not encouraged or sometimes even given a chance to go to school. Girls were not given a chance to go to school even if they showed good potential at school. The informants explained that, the elders believed that educating a girl is a waste of money, because she will go and marry and her husband's family will reap the fruits of the education.

As a result, only few women had the opportunity to pursue formal education. Those who were lucky enough to pursue their studies were mostly those whose parents owned a lot of livestock and good grazing land. Their parents would sell their cows to send their daughters to school. The informants further told the researcher that, instead, girls were taught household chores

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<sup>44</sup>Illiterate person is defined by Concise Oxford Dictionary 10<sup>th</sup> edition (2000:60) as a person who is unable to read or write.

and were trained to be obedient and to respect the elders. In this way they were being prepared for marriage. Her parents wanted to be sure that she would not disgrace them to the family she would be marrying into by not being able to perform household chores.

In some instances, it was the child's choice to stop schooling. The researcher found that, even those cases, the children were forced by socio-economic circumstance to choose to stop school and work in the fields, get married young or sometimes be housemaids. One informant narrated:

*"We had to wake up every day very early in the morning to go to the fields. The time would pass by so fast while you are in the field that you will end up not going to school. Finally when you get a chance to go to school you will be far behind at school, you would not know any of the recitations done by other pupils. During those days, a teacher would embarrass you by asking you to stand in front of the class. Imagine, you would be standing in front of a full class with no shoes on and no proper clothes. After school you tell yourself you are never going back because of the embarrassment"<sup>45</sup>.*

Education was never the first priority among the members of the village. One informant told the researcher that, sometimes they would not attend school, but wait by the river for other children to copy whatever they had written on their own slates. Their parents would not even notice that they had been absent from school, and did not even ask about the educational progress of their children at the end of the year. The educational progress of the child did not seem important, as they themselves were not educated.

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<sup>45</sup>Narration by a sixty five year old widow.

The study showed that the low level of women's progression to tertiary education in the study area is caused by a variety of factors, such as:

- I. Poverty (no money to go further).
- II. The lack of knowledge about the availability of educational resources, (bursaries and educational loans etc.)
- III. And negligence<sup>46</sup>.

Some women in the village have passed high school level but they could not pursue their studies because of financial constraints and other reasons already mentioned above. As stated earlier on, the majority of households' sustenance depended and still depends on agriculture and social grants. The money received from social grants and the money they get from selling their agricultural products is not enough to pay for higher education. Some other women who have graduated from high school are sitting at home, because they are not aware of the bursary opportunities that are available for those who are interested in furthering their studies.

In some cases informants do have relatives who are educated, who can help them get the financial support they need from bursaries and students' loans but they are just not interested in finding out about the ways in which one can get into higher education<sup>47</sup>. These are just of the reasons why the level of tertiary education in Khwezana village is very low.

In addition, women at Khwezana are not motivated to engage in community agricultural projects let alone their own gardens which can help them to earn a living and develop

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<sup>46</sup>Interviews with members of the village.

<sup>47</sup>Interviews with youth and field notes from participant observations (June 2010 and December 2011).

themselves. There is only one gardening community project which is active in the village and only a few women participate in it<sup>48</sup>.

The lack of innovativeness and limited aspirations is a direct result of a lack of higher education<sup>49</sup>. As it is the case in the study village, the village women are not motivated to participate in agricultural practices because they lack innovative thinking. The small number of women who still practice agriculture in the village still use agricultural techniques used by their great grandparents. Consequently, their gardens do not produce bountiful crops and they abandon agriculture to rely on easy incomes like social grants. They are not exposed to new and effective methods of practicing agriculture. If these women were to be educated not only formally, but orally and informally about the impact they can have on the socio-economic status of their household and of the country, they can be motivated to learn and most importantly engage more in agricultural development.

Figure 5.2 below, attest to the claim that there are informants in the study area who can read and write. These are the notes of one informant who attended an agricultural workshop held in the Hogsback aimed at empowering the local farmers. Hogsback is about 10 kilometers away from the study area.

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<sup>48</sup> Field notes (June 2011 and December 2011).

<sup>49</sup> See Burges (1972:69)

Figure 5.2: Agricultural notebook of one of the informants

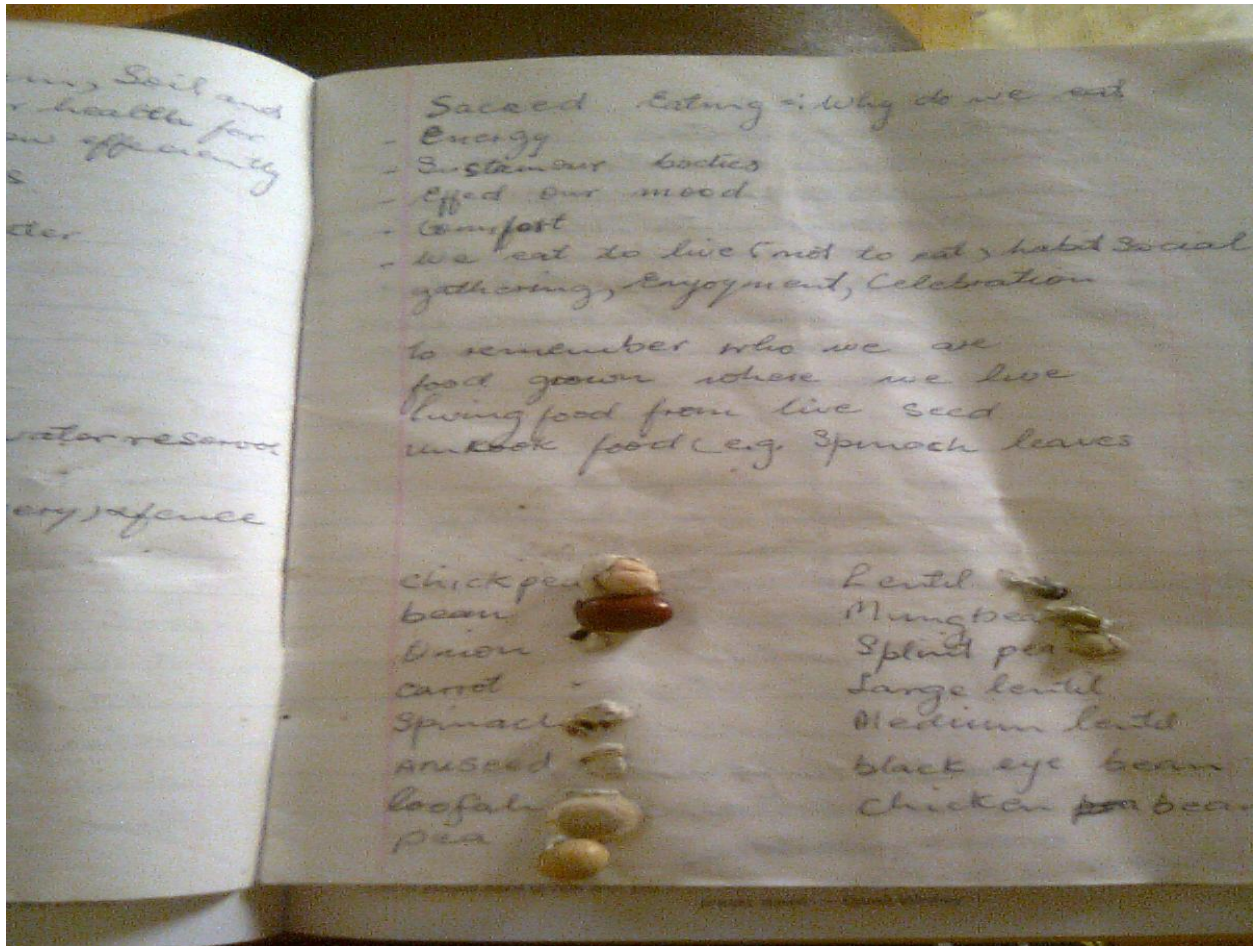


Photo: By the researcher

### 5.2.5 Vocational Training

According to Lipton (1977:261) rural farmers with some form of vocational training are more likely to be progressive farmers than those who do not have any form of vocational training. At the study village, two (four percent) females had some form of training. They were both school teachers in the nearby primary school. Moreover, the study also revealed that there are three male farmers who are exposed to the some agriculture training. One male informant reported

that he had attended training that was hosted by one of the organizations in Hogsback. The programme was called “earth harmony innovators”. It teaches household farmers about new and effective techniques of farming, like fertilizing, types of effecting fertilizers and how to use them, types of crops which must planted in different seasons, soil preparation techniques, soil rotation, types of crops which are good for planting in certain types of soils. The informant reported that, there are few women who take an interest in this program. The majority of those attending are male. The program seems to have a good impact on the motivation and knowledge of farmer. The informant seemed to have learnt a lot about farming in general and also about herbs which can be medical. The informant told the researcher about some herbs which can cure certain types of sickness such as tonsillitis and, tooth ache. The informant also reported that there were some herbs which could be used to kill pests which destroy the garden.

Figure 5.3: Certificate attained by the informant



### 5.2.6 Ethnic Influences

The study population is mainly dominated by the Nguni tribes of Southern Africa. According to Raum et al (1972:7-8) there are four groups in the Nguni tribes, namely:

- I. Swazi
- II. Natal Nguni (Zulu's)
- III. Cape or South Nguni
- IV. and the Transvaal Ndebele



The study population is dominated by the Cape or South Nguni. They are the Xhosa speaking tribe of the Nguni tribe. They are also sub-divided into four groups. They are ama-Xhosa, aba-Thembu, aba-Mbo and what Raum called “the later group of immigrants”. For the purpose of this study we will not go any deeper into the history of the Nguni tribe. We will mainly focus on the Xhosas, of whom the study population mainly consists.

The study population is comprised of amaXhosa who according to Raum(1972:7-8) mainly consist of amaNgqika, amaRharhabe, amaNdlambe, amaGcaleka and various other smaller groups. The study population is also mixed up with a few Mfengu women, who reported that, they had moved from former Transkei to the study area because of marriage. Most of the Mfengus in the study population originate from the Transkei more specifically ku-Tsomo. The data provided to the researcher during fieldwork in respect of ethnic groups that comprise the study population was analyzed by the department of statistics (University of Fort Hare) as follows.

**Table 5.2: Ethnic influences**

Ethnic Group	Frequency	N.	Percentage (%)
Xhosa	40		80
Mfengu	10		20
Total	50.00		100.00

**Source: By the researcher**

### 5.2.7 Churches

The study village is mostly dominated by the traditional religious belief. These are people who believe in ancestral worship. Anthropologists have shown that in traditional societies and in mostly rural areas, religious denomination may have a great influence on the social activities which may include adoption and use of technology (Van den Ban, 1981 cited in Bembridge 1988: 37).The latter writers are of the view that religion is a major influence in development.

In the study village however, the researcher observed that both the traditional and the Christian religions do practice agriculture. Another significant difference is that, the Christians mixed the traditional techniques and the new agricultural techniques. Unlike the traditionalists who were only interested in spinach and maize, they also planted crops like carrots, beetroot.

**Table 5.3: Churches in the Study Area**

<b>Churches</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>N.</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>%</b>
Traditional Religion	25		50	
Roman Catholic	1		2	
Presbyterian	2		4	
Methodist	5		10	
Baptist	7		14	
Pentecostal	10		20	
Total	50.00		100.00	

### 5.3 Socio –Economic Factors

#### 5.3.1 Traditional Leadership

The Xhosa nation is a hierarchical and patriarchal society. The head of a homestead is subordinate to a chief. Xhosa chiefs answered to the head of the royal clan, who was referred to as the Paramount Chief or King. Chiefs accumulated wealth by receiving tribute in the form of cattle and fines. They, in turn, redistributed parts of their wealth to their supporters, who in most cases were those who had managed to obtain influence and prestige among dependents or adherents of the chief (Henbick, 2007:36).

The chief played the role of father and served in the best interest of his subjects. He also kept himself informed of tribal affairs. The chief was expected to be fair to all his subjects and also to protect and defend them. Most importantly, the chief was expected to listen to his subjects without discrimination. Schapera (1937:175) contends that the chief spent most of his time in his court yard resolving all matters that were brought before him by his subjects.

In contrast to the above assertion, the researcher discovered that the role of leader has since changed. The fieldwork conducted at Khwezana village revealed that a chairperson also known as "*usihlalo-welali*" is actually in charge of supervising the village instead of the chief. Interestingly, the chairperson did not wield much power in comparison to the past traditional structures. The transition from traditional structures to government leadership has transferred most of the power to the latter. Most villagers indicated that they were more answerable to government laws than the chairperson. As a result, the chair person only oversees minor issues

like general behavior, However, when it comes to bigger issues such as crime, it is the responsibility of the government to intervene.

### **5.3.2 Rural Youth**

Youth is the stage between childhood and adulthood. It can be between the age of fifteen and twenty four (Oxford dictionary tenth edition, 2000:125). During the research it was established that only a few young people were engaged in agricultural activities. It was observed that only a few boys participated in herding livestock and most agricultural chores were conducted by elders. The elders performed chores such as hoeing, planting seeds, irrigation etc. Some boys contributed a little by fetching water from the water source (tap) which is few meters away and irrigating the gardens.

Boys spend most of their time with group of friends watching television, playing games chatting etc. Girls on the other hand spend the majority of the day helping their mothers in household chores like cleaning, washing dirty clothes and cooking. Just a few show interested in doing or learning about agricultural activities. The study revealed that, little boys and little girls are the ones who are enthusiastic about helping around the garden.

### **5.3.3 Land Tenure**

The women at Khwezana village are faced with similar challenges as those that are faced by other rural women in the Eastern Cape. The data gathered for this study revealed that Khwezana women do not own land. The factors responsible for this were mainly socio-cultural. It was discovered that women were transferred from their maiden homes through marriage

without ever owning land. They then join their in-laws where they continue to work the land but do not own it. In Xhosa culture, property belongs to the man, who is regarded as the head of the household. Because of the patriarchal nature of Xhosa society, the land and other valuable property belongs to the man and must reflect his name even if he has not paid for it. The justification for this practice is that it is cultural and has been passed from one generation to another.

One informant explained that unmarried women were not given ownership of land because their community was patriarchal<sup>50</sup>. She further revealed that men did not only control the land but also had a say in money issues. For example, in the past, women could not carry large sums of money without being accompanied by men. It was the role of the husband, the elder son or a trusted relative to accompany women to the market if they were carrying large sums of money<sup>51</sup>.

Some of the informants reported that it was very difficult to own land because collateral security was required. In order for one to be able to purchase a piece of land, one must have collateral security which may include cattle, sheep, goats, and so forth. According to the informants before one can buy or be given land she must show that she will be able to use the land she is given, by planting crops or even keeping livestock. These requirements ensure that she will be able to pay for the land she has requested. The informants indicated to the researcher that one of the reasons why they do not own land is that they do not have money requested by the traditional chairperson. Others complained that there are too many

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<sup>50</sup>Interviews with the housewife informant at Khwezana village.

<sup>51</sup>Narration by an informant.

procedures and protocols that are frustrating and confusing. In some instances the procedures can drag on for a very long time. The other issue working against the right to own land amongst Khwezana women is the lack of education and formal employment. As a result, it is very difficult for them to meet all the requirements needed to purchase land. The required collateral for purchasing land is also too much for most of them.

One informant said, *"I have no time to go through all the stressful ups and downs that are required. It is better if I stay in this house and wait for my grant"*.

The frustration that the majority of women endure in trying to acquire land has served as a demotivation factor. Most women lose interest in bigger pieces of land and find solace in their small gardens. After failing to get land, some women find other alternative means of survival besides farming. Social grants have proved to be the other important survival strategy.

Although women in this village are faced with all challenges relating to landownership, land remains one of the most important natural resources which is key to crop production and agriculture development. Therefore, without access to land, there can be no agriculture activity growth and this will negatively impact on the lives of the women and their families. Bembridge (1987:95) further contends that this can affect their participation in agricultural development.

In some instances the researcher observed that some rural women did not even try to buy their own pieces of land, they were discouraged by cultural factors that discouraged women from owning land. They believed that it is not their right to own land.

The researcher observed that men tended to be more successful in farming in comparison to women. The researcher encountered three successful male farmers in the village who own several pieces of land. One informant complained that, she could not plant the variety of crops she wanted to because the land in her garden was too small. She complained that her beetroot did not do very well because of the size of the land. The poor quality of her land also badly affected her crops<sup>52</sup>. This was one of the few women who seemed to be passionate about agriculture in this village.

According to this informant, they would not be given more land than they already had, even if they asked for it from the village chair person. The informant further highlighted how land issues had changed in the village when compared to the Sebe period. During the period when Sebe was president of the Ciskei, people in the village were given large tracks of land known as *amasimi*<sup>53</sup> in isiXhosa. Above that they were also given tractors to help them work in the fields. After the Sebe governance, all this stopped and people resorted to home gardens because they did not have enough money to buy equipment, seeds and manure to work on large lands.

#### **5.3.4 Migration**

Migration can be defined as the physical movement by humans from one area to another, sometimes over long distances or in large groups. Historically, this movement was nomadic, often causing significant conflict with the indigenous population resulting in their displacement or cultural assimilation<sup>54</sup>.

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<sup>52</sup>Interviews with informant at khwezana village.

<sup>53</sup>*Masimi large area of arable land.*

<sup>54</sup>See Koket *al* (2009:26)

The international labour office (1984) reports that, migration of individuals or families from rural areas to urban areas follow a variety of patterns. The fundamental reason for migration is typically a search for work. Chant (1992:16) highlights that, men are often the ones who migrate to urban areas looking for work while their families are left behind to look after themselves.

Kok *et al* (2003:13) postulate that the economic pressure and a desire for a better life is one of the main reasons for rural-urban migration. The urban areas are considered to offer better job prospects, better entrepreneurship opportunities and a better quality of life.

The neo-classical economic theory as stated in Kok *et al* (2003:14) also supports the argument that people's migratory patterns are mostly influenced by economic considerations. The theory further argues that migration is caused by geographic differences in labour supply and demand and by the resultant wage differentials. The key assumption of this theory is that, the elimination of wage differentials will decrease the rate of rural-urban migration.

Chant (1992:17) further reports that while men are out there in urban areas, the family's survival strategy still continues to depend on farming in rural households. For example, in countries such as Kenya, women headed households are estimated to vary from 30 to 40 percent. Chant further observes that some of the men who are in urban centres are either still unemployed or are in jobs which do not pay them enough to even support themselves. These men can only afford to stay in and look for a better paying job with support from the subsistence base back home.



Male migration has affected the demography of rural populations. A good example is that of Malawi where male migration led to a drop of 21.8 percent in rural population in Malawi between 1970 and 1990. Women on the other hand declined by only 5.4 percent. This resulted in more women having to compensate for the missing men's labour by taking over most of the work. Women who are left behind to supervise the household and the farming are left with little infrastructural support. These women have to perform both the household and the farming chores under very difficult conditions which limit their chances of access to land (Sweetman, 1999:56).

The findings of this study also show that the people of Khwezana migrate to urban and semi urban centres in search of jobs. However, those who are left behind to look after the family are women. At Khwezana village, the women who are left behind not only depend on crop production to provide for their families but they also depend on social grants provided by the government. In fact crop production plays a minor role in the sustenance of the households. The study also showed that Khwezana village residents migrate to urban areas for economic reasons. They migrate to urban areas in search of jobs in order to provide for their families. It was observed that in most households males are the ones who migrate to urban centres. Fathers migrate in search of jobs in urban areas. In some household it is the older son who goes to the city to work in order to support his family.

Women in the study village also have migrated to urban centers to pursue their studies and find jobs to sustain their families. This enables the families who have siblings who work in the

urban centres to have enough money to sustain them without depending on crop production<sup>55</sup>. Those women who have not migrated stay at home and look after the family (ageing parents and the younger siblings). She is responsible for the household chores like cleaning, cooking etc. The researcher also observed that some households in the village are headed by children because both parents would have migrated to the city to earn a living. In such cases the children are the ones who care for the day to day household chores including agricultural tasks<sup>56</sup>.

As a result of migration people are able to support themselves financially with the money they get from their relatives who work in the city. They do not see the need to plant crops because the remittances they get are able to satisfy all the subsistence needs of the family. This results in a decline in their dependency on crop production.

### **5.3.5 Household Economy**

The economic status of the Xhosa people in the material sense depended on agriculture together with hunting and gathering<sup>57</sup>. Agriculture among the Xhosa speaking people had two main components namely: the production of livestock consisting of cattle, goats and sheep and the production of crops and vegetables in small fields along the river and in the homestead gardens. The production was divided into the male domain which included all aspects of cattle rearing whereas the female domain worked with crops. In each homestead, male and female spheres together constituted a unity with the means of production: cattle, pasturage, and

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<sup>55</sup>Interview with informants of the study village.

<sup>56</sup>Fieldwork notes (June 2010-December 2011).

<sup>57</sup>See Schapera (1937:69)

arable land. Male control over all aspects of cattle management made women dependent on men because even for sustenance cattle occupied a more important place than did crops (Henbick, 2007:37).

As shown in the table below (table 5.4), the majority of the household income in the study area comes from the government. 72 percent of informants make their living from social grants. Of the 72 percent, 30 percent is made up of pensioners who receive an old age grant from the government and the remaining 42 percent is made up of people who receive a child support grant, a disability grant or a sickness grant. Sickness and disability grants are received by people who cannot work for a living. In the study village these people include the HIV/AIDS [Human Immune Virus/Acquired immune Deficiency Syndrom] infected and those who are physically disabled. This category includes people who are deaf, people with epilepsy and physically deformed (people who use wheel chairs).

Fourteen percent of women at khwezana village are women who practice some form of agriculture. This includes crop production, poultry and those whose husbands are involved in cattle keeping. Women in the in the study village do not own or take care of cattle themselves. Their husbands and sons are the ones who take care of the cattle. The remaining fourteen percent is those women who earn a wage.

**Table 5.4: Household Economy**

	<b>Frequency (N)</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Agriculture income	7	14

Wage income	7	14
Pensioners	15	30
Social grant (children grant, disability grant, sickness grant e.g (HIV/AIDS) grant	21	42
<b>Total</b>	<b>50.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>

**Source: By the researcher**

### **5.3.6 Credit**

The study showed that the majority of informants have not attempted to make use of bank services such as borrowing funds and also acquiring information from bank officials on how to apply for a loan from the bank. Some of these informants have not used bank services because they did not know that they were available to everyone. They thought that only people with money and the educated are able to use these services. It was noticed by the researcher that some of the women especially the illiterate are intimidated by going to the bank to inquire about bank services. They said that they would not know who to talk to when they got there. Berger and Buvinic (1990: 256) contend that illiteracy plays a major role in the rural women's access to credit. They argue that rural women get intimidated by entering the formal building and inquiring about bank services.

One informant said *"I was nervous that if I cannot afford to pay back the loan, my valuable goods which I have worked for would be possessed by the bank and I will be left with nothing."*

The statement above shows that, Khwezana village women do not go to the bank to borrow money not because they do not need it, but because they do not have sufficient relevant information about the conditions for borrowing money from the bank. The study shows that, there are some factors hindering women's access to and use of bank services at Khwezana village. Such factors include the following: cultural factors and low level of education, little or no knowledge about the procedures for borrowing money and the lack of information about bank services.

The lack of knowledge about how to use bank services, has negatively affected crop production in the study village. Large areas of land are not being used due to a lack of resources to buy agricultural input such as money to buy seeds, machinery, fertilizers and the tools used in crop production to make use of the land.

One informant, who was part of the building group of the disability centre and the community gardening project in the village, also agreed that it is not easy to start a project of any kind. She explained that when she and other community women started a community gardening project they had to contribute money from their own pockets just to get started on buying things like seeds etc. The project went on for a while without financial support and they eventually gave it up because they could not finance it.

Now, women are only focusing on a disability centre which is supported financially by the Department of Social Development (DoSD). The women, who are care givers, cook and distribute food to the disabled and elderly local residents three times a day. They then receive a monthly income. The informant further mentioned that, when she and eight other members

started the centre they had nothing. The garden was the only source of food they got to cook for the members of the centre. They then decided to go out to seek financial support.

Fortunately, among them there was one literate woman who is now the project manager. She was able to point them to relevant people and dealt with paper work of the center.

The lack of financial assistance is also one of the major factors which blocks the development of women in the village, which continues to hinder their full participation in agricultural development. This lack of financial support does not only challenge the progress of farmers who want to get their projects off the ground, but also farmers who have already started and need to maintain their farming activities. As a result, the much needed projects led by women die and do not progress not because of a lack of commitment or any other factor but because the women are not getting the financial support needed to help them grow.

### **5.3.7 Transport**

Transport is one of the most critical needs in agricultural development. Transport is useful for moving agricultural materials to and from the farm. These include fertilizers, seeds, and equipment. Households that sell their farm produce need transport to facilitate the movement of products from the farm to the market place. Most rural women have limited access to a means of transport. Similar cases have been noted elsewhere in Africa. For instance, transport is a huge burden for women in the rural areas in Ghana, women use donkey carts to transport the millet they produce to the market centers (GRTI Ghana Country Report, 2006:25). Similarly, Max and Der Walt (1993) believe that, for products to be able to move from the farm to the market at the appropriate time they need to be transported.

Women at Khwezana reported that they needed transport for various reasons. One of these includes transporting their crop production from their homes to the market place. Getting transport in the village is very difficult. One needs to hire transport and in some cases there is no available transport at all. Due to financial constraints, they cannot afford to get their own transport which of course will make things a lot easier and better. The unavailability of transport in the village affects the residents, because they are not able to transport their crops from the village to town where they sell their crops. As a result their crops end up rotting. The situation gets better when the residents sell the produce to other villagers because they can use other less expensive forms of transport such as wheel barrows (*kiriva*) to transport the crops to their local customers.

The forms of transport used in this area are reflective of the socio-economic status of women in the village. The majority of the informants (about 56 percent) had no form of transport of any kind and 20 percent had the lowest form of transport a wheel barrow, which can only transport them around the village. Residents who own transport such as bakkies and kombis are at an advantage since they are able to transport people and goods commercially to make extra money. They get contracts to transport workers and children to and from their work place and schools.

**Figure 5.4: Mode of transport commonly used by the local farmers**



**Photo: By the researcher**



**Table 5.5: Modes of Transport in the Study Area**

Type of land transport	Frequency ( N)	Percentage (%)
None	26	52
Donkey cycle	0	0
Car	5	10
Bakkie	5	10
Kombie	1	2
Wheelbarrow	10	20
Tractor	2	4
Total	50 .00	100.00

**Source: By the researcher**

#### **5. 4 Conclusion**

Many factors contribute to the lack of participation of women in agricultural development in the study village. Culturally, women are only responsible for taking care of the household chores like cooking and bearing children, but the production and provision of food is culturally not their main responsibility. Men are the ones who are responsible for the provision of food in the household. However this has changed in the study village, women are the ones who are faced with challenges in acquiring the necessary resources to meet the everyday subsistence of

the household. However, women at Khwezana village are still faced with socio-cultural boundaries which hinder them in acquiring resources to become crop producers. It was established during this research that cultural background which is comprised of certain values, aspirations and customs which originate from ethnic orientation have an impact on the role an individual plays in the society.

The study revealed that factors such as a low level of education, inadequate transportation, land tenure issues, difficulties in getting credit from the bank, and inadequate knowledge about how to acquire such resources are the major socio-cultural factors hindering women's progress in crop production in the study village

Although the social grant system was a generous initiative from the government meant to cushion poor South Africans, it appears that it has to a certain extent discouraged women from engaging in agricultural production. The study has revealed that rural women do not see the reason to find other productive ways of subsistence like forming progressive agricultural projects etc. because they receive an income at the end of the month.

In the study village there is less agricultural activity and even less use of innovative ways of farming. It can be concluded that there is a need for adult basic education for the adults, middle aged and young women in the study village. This programme will aim to motivate and teach women about the need to learn about a variety of innovative ways of practicing agriculture. There is a special need to design more practical ways of agricultural education which will also be able to reach the illiterate women, who cannot read or write. It is also evident that, women in the study village can learn a lot about sustainable agricultural techniques and innovative

ways of maximizing their outputs from their pieces of land. This learning must not include only programmes on food production but people must also learn ways of providing and healing themselves by making use natural resource which can grown in the land their own.

## CHAPTER 6: Impact of culture change on agricultural development

### 6.1 Introduction

We have already seen that the socio- cultural factors<sup>58</sup> discussed in the previous chapters of the study (chapters four and five) i.e education, land , credit etc. play a significant role in limiting or rather inhibiting the participation and progress of women in agricultural activities in the village. However, after spending two years visiting the study group the researcher observed that, although the socio-cultural factors mentioned above contribute significantly to the manner in which women participate in agricultural activities these are not only the factors that are responsible for the invisibility of women in agriculture in the village.

The researcher has observed that culture change in the roles of women in the village also contributes to the invisibility of women in the agriculture in the area. Culture<sup>59</sup> has a way of shifting the behavior of individuals. Individuals act in a certain way because of what is expected of them by societal culture. However when culture changes, as a result of various external and internal forces, change in the behavior of individuals also occurs. Changes in one aspect of culture may have an effect on other aspects of that culture as well (FAO,1995:3). It has been observed that social structures and cultures are never completely static; they can and do

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<sup>58</sup> Socio-cultural factors are things that can affect our lifestyles as a society. They can have an influence on individual behaviors depending on one's social values. Some of them could be religion, economic status, education, family, politics, cultural values etc. They are the facts and experiences that influence individuals' personality, attitudes and lifestyle. Socio- cultural factors involve both social and cultural elements of the society (Kottak, 2000:16-19 and Ember and Carol, 2004:197-2000).

<sup>59</sup> "The culture of a society is the accepted way of doing things in that particular society. It is the way in which people live, their customs, traditions, methods of cultivation and so on. The culture of a society is learned by each individual member of that society and later transmitted to offspring. Children are not born with this knowledge; they learn by seeing how older children and adults behave. As they grow up, older members of their family or kinship group teach them about the customs and traditions of the group and the society" (FAO:2009:9).

change. The rate at which change takes place depends to a large extent on the contact people have with other cultures and new ideas, and on the ability of individuals within the society to initiate and accept change.

The literature on rural development and women and development also identifies the socio-cultural factors as having a significant impact on the well being of women. This study also reached a similar conclusion. The traditional roles of women in relation to agriculture in the study village have changed away from depending solely on land and its resources for sustenance to continue to be sought.

As discussed earlier in chapter four, agriculture has always been the basis of sustainable livelihood in the village for over 60 years<sup>60</sup>. Many rural development studies in Africa and abroad have also reported that women have always taken the front line when it comes to participating in agricultural ways that support their livelihoods and those of their loved ones<sup>61</sup>. Findings from a study financed by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) revealed that women make up some 60-80 percent of the agricultural labour force in Nigeria depending on the region and they produce two-thirds of the food crops.

Women are known to be more involved in agricultural activities than men in sub-Saharan African (SSA) countries, Nigeria inclusive. As much as 73 percent were involved in cash crops, arable and vegetable gardening, 16 percent in postharvest activities and 15 percent in agroforestry. Their involvement in agriculture in Nigeria has attracted greater attention in

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<sup>60</sup>Interviews with the informants.

<sup>61</sup>Recent studies in Nigeria are still documenting about the significant contribution that women farmers play in the sustainable lives of their families and their communities. As a result they have also been able to acquire the credit resources they need (Ogunlela Y. I. and Mukhtar A. A.: 2009:1).

recent years. The reasons for their involvement are as many as they are diverse. They vary from socio-economic to socio-cultural. In some states rural women have virtually taken over the production and processing of arable crops, being responsible for as much as 80 percent of the staple food items. Estimates of women's contribution to the production of food crops range from 30 percent in the Sudan to 80 percent in the Congo; contributing substantially to national agricultural production and food security, while being primarily responsible for the food crops<sup>62</sup>.

Studies by different scholars show that agriculture was and is still in other parts<sup>63</sup> of the world the major livelihood strategy that women engage in, these include countries such as Nigeria, Zimbabwe, Malawi etc . This is mainly affected by the fact that culturally, women in Africa in the past were not taught other alternative ways of providing for their families and there were limited alternatives. However, the study reveals that depending solely on agricultural output has changed in the study village. The study revealed that women in the study village are finding other ways of sustaining their livelihoods. This chapter therefore aims to specifically explore culture change as a socio-cultural factor that contributes to the limitation of women's participation in agricultural development. Furthermore the chapter will discuss how change in socio-cultural roles of women plays a role in the invisibility of rural women in agricultural activities at the study village.

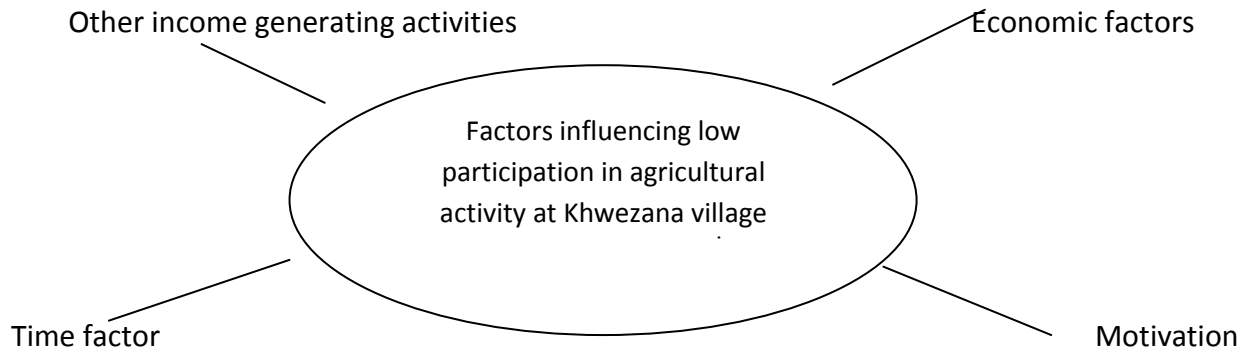
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<sup>62</sup>F.A.O. 1995. A synthesis report of the African Region:

<sup>63</sup>Ogunlela Y. I. and Mukhtar A. A.2009, Prakash D. (2003),Jamali K.(2009) etc.

## 6.2 Changes in the Socio-Cultural Roles of Women

**Figure 6.1<sup>64</sup> Factors influencing low participation in agricultural activity at Khwezana village**



**Source: By the researcher**

### 6.2.1 Other Income Generating Activities

As observed in the area, some socio cultural roles of women have changed. Nowadays, women's lives are not spent in the field ploughing as narrated by the old local residents<sup>65</sup>. Instead women are finding new ways of earning an income to sustain their livelihoods. The researcher has observed that some women in the village engage in other forms of income generation activities like sewing clothes for the other local residents consisting of traditional

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<sup>64</sup> Figure 6.1 illustrates the various socio-cultural factors that play a role in limiting women, participation in agricultural development at Khwezana village. The study shows that the above mentioned factors have an impact in the low participation of women in agricultural development.

<sup>65</sup> See chapter four.

dresses<sup>66</sup> for traditional events and jackets and dresses for formal wear<sup>67</sup>. Others are involved in the taxi business while others are doing small business activities like opening “*Spaza shops*<sup>68</sup>”. These activities are helping the women to earn a basic living which can add to the social grant support they get from the government. The women in the village are now depending on such strategies for survival thereby abandoning the old socio-economic strategy used by their forefathers-agriculture<sup>69</sup>.

### 6.2.2 Time Factor

Some informants reported that, they do not have time to commit to crop production activities or other kinds of agricultural activities, because they have other responsibilities they need to take care of. As indicated in chapter five, there are some women (about 8%) who are trained professionals, and have full time jobs. They explained that between household responsibilities, working full time jobs and taking care of their children and husbands they do not have enough time to dedicated to farming as well<sup>70</sup>. Other women argue that their huousehold responsibilities which include taking care of the whole family are too demanding to also maintain home gardening, which requires a lot of time.

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<sup>66</sup> The tradition dresses specifically include, *imibhaco* which is old traditional attire for women and also what is referred to by the local residents as the “darkie” and “blou”. The “darkie” and the “blou” usually made up of skirt and an apron.

<sup>67</sup> Observation from the khwezana village.

<sup>68</sup> A spaza shop is a small super market which the residents small things in the middle of the moth, some other residents soley depend on the spaza shop to purchase food because of them are old and they cannot go to the Alice town.

<sup>69</sup> Field notes from khwezana village from June 2010-December 2011.

<sup>70</sup> Some of these women, even though they unemployed they have household chores and other household responsibilities to take care of, hence they do not have time to fully commit to agricultural activities.



During the researcher's last visit to the village she learnt that, some members of the community gardening project with who she had been working had stopped and were now only focusing on the disability center project. They explained that they could not handle the responsibility of the community centre, the community garden as well as their family responsibilities.

### **6.2.3 Lack of Motivation**

The rationale behind the rural development strategy is that people can be motivated by a variety of factors, and the motivation can lead to different perceptions and actions. Man's motivation is not solely influenced by economic consideration, or psychological motivations. Socio-cultural factors also play a major role in the motivation of man's actions in the community. The lack of motivation therefore contributes significantly to the actions of individuals<sup>71</sup>. Bembridge (1987:89) maintains that approximately 25 percent of women were not motivated to learn anything new about farming. This apathy is probably partly induced by malnutrition. The remaining showed enthusiasm, which positively showed in their crops outputs. In his study he explains that, different factors act as motivational stimulus. He reported that women who wanted to get more than what they had and those who were content with what they had were revealed in the farming activities.

As mentioned earlier in the study, the socio-economic status of the Xhosas was mainly depended of agriculture. Ninety percent of the chores of children basically revolved around agricultural activities. The informants explained that, most of their farming skills were passed on to them informally by their parents. They were taught the need and importance of planting

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<sup>71</sup> See Bembridge (1987:89)

and providing meals for their families. One informant narrated that, almost all their livelihoods depended on agriculture. She explained that the food they ate, which were mainly maize products such as milies and samp, came from the fields and also milk, which they got from their cows. According to the informants this was the only way that could sustain them.

One of the reasons why Khwezana women are not fully active in agricultural development is that they are not motivated to do so. An informant<sup>72</sup> reported that she does not really need to plant crops to get food because she can get what she wants when she wants it. Her mother works in the urban areas and pays for everything including food and clothes. As narrated by the informants, in the olden days women were taught to be strong and work in the field for long hours and still come back to take care of the house chores. These values were passed from one generation to another.

#### **6.2.4 Economic Factors**

Economic development leads to changes in many aspects of people's lives and culture. The growth of towns and cities and the development of mines and industries have created new kinds of work in new places. People leave their rural homes to find work. In southern Africa, many men go to work in the mines and cities for a year at a time, leaving their wives to look after their farms. Jobs on the farm that were traditionally done by men were shifted and had to be done by women<sup>73</sup>.

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<sup>72</sup> An 18 year old girl, not working and is not going to school she passed her matric in 2009 and her parents did not have money to send her to university. She now stays with her grandmother and her brother in the village, the grandmother is earning old aged grant and also receiving money from her children who work in blue collar jobs in Cape Town.

<sup>73</sup> See FAO (2009:1)

In other parts of South Africa, farming is only a part-time occupation. Most families' main income comes from jobs in the city, but they keep their farmland as insurance against unemployment and as a source of food<sup>74</sup>. In the study village some families have totally given up crop production and solely depend on the money sent by their relatives from urban cities. This has negatively affected crop production activities in the village.

The growth of towns and the change in the economic needs of the country affects other aspects of culture, as well as the pattern of farming. Inheritance and land-tenure rules change as people no longer have to rely on farmland to make a living. Instead, they work in the urban areas to earn money in other professions. In the study village, a lot of people work in towns, so they are unable to come back and claim their inheritances such as land which may mean that they have to stop their urban jobs and work on their forefather's land. Consequently, many have left their family's land unattended and permanently moved to the cities. The ones who have family left behind bring money and new possessions back from the towns to the village. These may seem to improve rural living standards but they greatly influence the decreasing rate of rural dependency on agriculture<sup>75</sup>.

Bembridge (1987:91) concludes that, rural women are not homogenous groups with regard to their socio-economic status. He further reveals that factors such as their socio-psychological and socio-economic characteristics determine their need to engage in agricultural activities.

He asserts that the lack of understanding of roles and the lack of support and services to those women who were left behind on the land when their men went away to work in urban areas

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<sup>74</sup> See Nompozolo (2009:98)

<sup>75</sup>Field notes (June 2010- December 2011).

because of insufficient farm income, exacerbated the decline agricultural production in the Ciskei. Rural development in the Transkei has failed as a result of the lack of participation of women.

### **6.3 Conclusion**

From the evidence drawn from the chapter, there are growing factors that influence the participation of women in agricultural development. As noted by Bembridge (1987:91), the resolution of the new and upcoming issues against the practice of agriculture will not only come from simple measures, they will require more severe actions to be taken, as the issues grow stronger every day. Educational workshops aimed at promoting agriculture are cultivating interest among rural dwellers and could go a long way in forming this sector which is on the decline. The women need to be taught that agriculture is not a backward technique but a strategy which could foster sustainable rural livelihoods.

## **Chapter Seven: Conclusions and Recommendations**

### **7.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents the summary of the conclusions of the study on the socio-cultural factors affecting the participation of women in agriculture at Khwezana village. It also provides recommendations for agricultural development in the study area. The main objectives of the study were as follow:

- I. To identify the social-cultural constraints faced by women in agriculture at Khwezana village.
- II. To examine the influence of socio-cultural factors in limiting women's participation in agricultural development at Khwezana village.
- III. After examining the influence of socio-cultural factors in agricultural development at Khwezana village the study will suggest ways on overcoming such constraints.

### **7.2 Summary of the Conclusions and Recommendations**

#### **7.2.1 Traditional Agricultural Techniques**

As discussed in chapter four, it can be concluded that the majority of old women in the village are not aware of new agricultural techniques. They mostly use traditional methods they have learnt from their fore fathers. One of these is their fertilizing techniques. The majority of them still rely on and strongly believe in manure produced by their livestock i.e sheep, goat, chicken etc. which according to other educated farmers is not as effective as new and innovative ones such as compost. It was also discovered that some women in the village are not aware of the pest control methods which are used by other farmers.

**Introduction to modern agricultural techniques is needed in the village. Planning to create modern agriculture must include attention to both technological and institutional change. This new type of agriculture must involve new methods of farming, new forms of local and national organizations and policies. Some of the needed technological changes might affect methods of farm production: new crops varieties, new pest control materials, new implements, and new sources of power.**

As highlighted in chapter four, Xhosa people used to base their farming calendar on nature. They depended on clues from nature that told them about the beginning and the end of the seasons. The researcher noticed that some of these natural signals have stopped as they were mostly dependent on animals. The reason for this is not known by the informants. However, there are supernatural explanations for it. As a result, their farming calendar is disrupted, they plant inappropriate crops in wrong seasons and their crops do not flourish, which discourages their planting interest.

As much as some of the traditional agricultural techniques are effective in the study area, there are those which are a seat back in terms of positive output in crop productions. **It is recommended that the Department of agriculture(extension officers) should unite and work with local farmers to identify such techniques which disadvantage agricultural development and find better ways of improving the techniques and introducing innovative ones where needed.**

### **7.2.2 Infrastructural Development**

The findings of the study suggest that easy access to near-by sources of water differs from one household to another. As stated in chapter four, there are some households that are headed by old women that do not have taps in their yards. This becomes a problem because these women cannot carry 25 liter buckets of water anymore, making it difficult for them to access water to irrigate their gardens. As a result, their crops do not grow properly. The scarcity of water discourages the elderly from planting their own vegetables.

Infrastructure such as roads and railway stations are scarcest in the study area. Roads to and around the village are in poor condition, as a result it is difficult for private cars to reach the village without being damaged, as the road is made of gravel. In addition to roads that are in a poor state, there is no railway station in the area.

**It is recommended that, clean and easily accessible water be provided to the rural population. The department of water affairs and the department of social development need to work together to provide the rural population with water tanks where they can keep water, which can be easily accessible to the old women as well. The local municipality together with the relevant stakeholders must urgently work on improving the infrastructural conditions of the rural areas.**

### **7.2.3 Personal Characteristics**

The study was based on women who are permanent residents of Khwezana village. Based on the findings of the study, it can be concluded that the majority of women in the village are

between the ages of 51-60 years and 70 and above. These are the women who are legally able to get financial support in the form of a social grant from the government. As evident in the study, some of these women are old and do not have energy to engage in community agricultural projects it is even difficult for them to work in their own gardens. They complain that they are old and cannot work anymore.

As noted in figure 5.2.3 in chapter five, the majority of women (42percent) are married. They have husbands in their lives that play the roles of bread winners, leaving women with the responsibility of taking care of household chores such as cooking, cleaning and taking care of the children. As a result, they do not see the need to depend on farming for their subsistence.

From the findings of the study education is one of the most significant factors in agricultural development. Education sharpens and broadens the perspective of farmers, such that, they are able to willingly try innovative ways in agriculture production. However it was noted that the lack of formal education as well as informal education about agriculture negatively affects agricultural development in the study area. Women are not very committed to agricultural activities as they do not recognize the importance of agriculture in their lives. Their livelihoods seem to be mainly depended on the financial support they receive from the government and their families in urban areas. As noted earlier on, in the study village, the majority of women are old and illiterate. As a result of illiteracy, these women are not informed about the need to invest in agriculture as a source of income and food.

**It is recommended that, more projects which are agriculturally related be developed in the study village. Financial support and other forms of support by relevant organizations which**



can assist in the development of local residents in agriculture must be provided. The department of social development specifically must help the local residents in keeping the already existing projects going by providing them with the necessary resources.

It is therefore recommended that, the department of agriculture together with department of education work together to implement a school curriculum that will make pupils aware of the importance of agriculture as a source of livelihood that also plays an important role in developing the economy of the country.

It is also important that the children or students be exposed to various fields of agriculture which may interest them. This might eliminate some of the negative attitudes that some young people have about agriculture.

It is recommended that extension services, non-governmental organizations (NGO's) and other organized initiatives to combat illiteracy be actively involved in this community. The adult basic education which is generally known as ABET should be encouraged and extension personnel should play an active role in connecting literacy and farming. This is because farming is an ongoing occupation for many illiterate farmers. Research needs to be conducted to find ways of teaching these women skills such as farm management, pricing and marketing their products.

It is also recommended that since agriculture is the backbone of the Eastern Cape economy, farmer support centers be established as a matter of urgency to address all agricultural needs of women farmers and other emerging small scale farmers. The department of social development could play an active role in disseminating agricultural information by holding

**educational awareness campaigns and distributing pamphlets in schools, clinics and community halls.**

### **7.3 Socio Economic Factors**

#### **7.3.1 Credit**

From the findings of the study it can be concluded that access to credit facilities is a challenge in the study village. This is caused by the lack of knowledge about how to utilize bank services. As a result, the villagers end up drawing their own sometimes false conclusion about the conditions for borrowing money from the bank. However, the study shows that, there are other socio-cultural constraints which also play a role in hindering women's use of bank facilities. In the study village, for example, there is a cultural belief that a married woman cannot be allowed to borrow from the bank without the consent of her husband. Women in the study village are unable to utilize these bank services because their husbands do not want them to. Thus, progress is retarded in women headed agricultural projects due to lack of financial support.

**It is recommended that, more information be provided to rural residents about how to acquire and utilize bank services. The institutional changes mentioned above in section 7.2.1 may include new ways of extending credit to farmers, new patterns of operation for organizations that market farm products and that distribute farm inputs.**

### **7.3.2 Land Tenure**

The study shows that the majority of informants in the study village were satisfied with size of land they were living on. This, of course, excludes those informants who practice commercial farming because they need more land for farming, to keep livestock and also for grazing. For these farmers, the land they have is not enough to meet all their agricultural needs. As a result informants had to limit their crop and livestock production.

Security of land tenure is necessary for both men and women as it encourages investment in the land. It is recommended that land tenure arrangements be fairly distributed among all the members of the community.

**It is therefore, recommended that all residents who are interested in commercial farming be accommodated in issues relating to land rights. Both men and women should be given a chance to buy more arable land if it is available in the village or in other nearby villages. The department of land reform and rural development also should intervene and help the informants who are interested in commercial farming in acquiring the land they require. It is also recommended that based on the contribution of women to family food security and how the pattern of access to land hinders their capacity for agricultural production and income generation, there is a need for a re-evaluation of property ownership including inheritance customs and practices with greater emphasis on statutory laws. Because the active participation of women is critical to agricultural prosperity, policy design should ensure that women benefit equally from development efforts.**

### **7.3.3 Migration**

The migration of men to urban areas in search of better ways of providing for their families has been found to be one of the reasons that women find themselves pursuing agriculture in South Africa. Nowadays, the migration of family members to the cities to look for better job opportunities is found to be one of the reasons that their families are able to sustain themselves without depending solely on agriculture leading to a decline in agricultural dependency for the rural population.

### **7.3.4Transport**

Lack of transportation in the village hinders commercial women farmers in transporting their crop to and from the market place such as Alice town. As a result their crops end up rotting and financial loss occurs.

**It is recommended that the department of social development and other relevant stakeholders lend a hand by providing transport to these growing commercial farmers at least four or five times a month especially during the days when workers get their salaries. This should be done in order to help these farmers to grow and be independent.**

### **7.3.5 Household Economy**

About 72 percent of the household income in the village comes from social grants, and 14 percent is dependent on both agricultural activities and social grants. Consequently these do not see the need to put an effort in planting crops.

### **7.3.6 Rural Youth**

The rural youth in Khwezana village show no major interest in agricultural activities. They are mainly preoccupied with other household chores. Very few showed an interest in pursuing agricultural studies.

It is recommended that workshops be held in the village to educate and empower young women (who are still at school, have graduated from high school and those who have dropped out) to be self-sufficient, and also to teach them to follow agriculture related professions. Through workshops, negative attitudes carried by youth against agriculture might be eliminated.

### **7.4 Cultural change and agricultural development**

Cultural change is one the major factors that contribute to the invisibility of women in agricultural activities in the study village. The study shows that culture change specifically in the traditional roles of women in the village has negatively affected the participation of women in agricultural development in the village. As a result of culture change, women do not see the urgent need to engage in crop production.

This has pushed women to concentrate more on other responsibilities such as taking care of the children, household chores and full time jobs; hence, they do not have the time to commit to crop production activities as well. In addition, the study also revealed that women at Khwezana do not seem to have female role models when it comes to farming. They lack motivation, having observed the same trend in their mothers. This lack of role models to find inspiration

from has negatively impacted on crop production in the village. Both the elderly women and the young in the village seem to be motivated to follow other career paths at the expense of agricultural production. Social grants also seem to be supporting the local residents to a certain extent. Consequently, the local women do not feel motivated to engage in crop production.

The availability of alternatives means of survival in this local village seems to be one of the factors contributing to the invisibility of women in agricultural production. Women in the village rely on money sent by their family members in the urban centres. They do not only depend on their family members who engaged in formal employment but generate extra income by running their spaza shops, and selling a variety of products that range from traditional attire to formal wear.

## **7.5 Conclusion**

A variety of socio-cultural constraints have been found to be responsible for the invisibility of women in crop production in the village. The study has showed that, factors such as limited access to land, the unavailability of credit to pursue farming interests, the lack of education and of innovative farming techniques and a general shift in agricultural culture continue to impact negatively on the involvement of women in farming.

Agriculture has been a way of putting food on the table for many generations in the Xhosa community. Scaphera (1937:96) also confirms that agriculture has been the sole economic structure in the social lives of the Xhosa people. This picture, however, has changed in the study village. The study shows that monthly income from professional jobs and especially social grants have discouraged women from participating in agricultural activities. It was found that

approximately 72 percent of the income in the household comes from some kind of financial support from the government. As a result, households are able to buy their monthly groceries and do not have the urgent need to grow crops.

It was observed that at Khwezana village tradition continues to influence the way villagers relate to land. Some informants were very reluctant to abandon their family traditions. The agricultural values that were upheld by their great grandfathers were still important to them. This was evidenced by the use of the same traditional agricultural methods that had been passed from one generation to another. This is mostly observed in those people who did not go far in formal education. Sobahle (1980:101) argues that there are farmers who still believe in the old tale that a black person, specially a Xhosa farmer, cannot live without maize. He asserts that no amount of persuasion can ever remove that belief among the Xhosa farmers. The researcher also reached a similar conclusion after observing how some informants grew maize in each and every garden.

Limited access of women to resources which are fundamental to agricultural production were found to make a significant contribution to the invisibility of women in agricultural development in the study village.

The study shows that, women at Khwezana village are not open or flexible enough to try new techniques. Some of them still make use of the same types of fertilizing agents which were used by their forefathers. They are not exposed to new methods which are proven to be more effective. They also use the fertilizer which is produced by their livestock because it is easy

access and available. They state that they do not have time and money to try new “complicated” or “modern” agricultural methods.

The lack of agricultural education and knowledge has de-motivated a lot of people from exploring the potential of agriculture in securing sustainable livelihoods. The agricultural culture continues to be on the decline at Khwezana village. However, as suggested earlier on, targeted interventions could improve this status quo.

New and innovative agricultural techniques can be facilitated in this village in an attempt to revive the full potential of agriculture. This could be done in the form of community workshops. In these workshops women could be taught new agricultural techniques which are more effective than the traditional ones. In the long run, these workshops can inspire and motivate women to actively participate in agriculture.

Another constraint that hinders women’s agricultural development in the study village is the limited financial resources to develop their community agricultural projects and personal gardens. Some of the women (94.7 %) at the study village are unemployed, or are housewives. Although they are willing to start and to develop agricultural related projects, the lack of financial support is a limiting factor. As a result of cultural constraints those women who are married cannot apply for personal bank loans without the consent of their husbands. In the Xhosa culture the father is regarded as the head of the household hence all financial decisions rest with him. The wife cannot make financial decisions alone otherwise she will be regarded as disobedient.



There are more women especially young women who need to be taught about the advantages and the need to support themselves through agricultural activities. It is therefore strongly suggested that women at the village be educated about the importance of agriculture. By engaging them more in crop production and cattle rearing and providing the relevant support, the women in the villager will be able to produce for enough for themselves and contribute immensely to socio-economic development and poverty alleviation.

Although agricultural production is generally on the decline at Khwezana village, there are some women who still value it. If the necessary support is channeled towards these women, they could develop even further and contribute positively to the efforts directed at food security.

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## Appendices

### Appendix I

#### *Interview schedule*

**UNIVERSITY OF FORT HARE**

**Department of Anthropology and Sociology**

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I am VuyisekaMajali, Master of social science student from the department of Anthropology and Sociology. I am conducting an academic study, which aims to investigate socio-cultural factors affecting the participation of women, a case study of Khwezana village. I kindly request you to assist me by answering questions that I need to ask you. The research is totally for academic purposes not for any illegal purposes. Your participation and input will contribute greatly to the body of knowledge which may be used for any subsequent development initiatives aimed empowering and understanding rural women's need in development.

#### **A. Personal Information**

Age

21-30    31-40    41-50    51-60    61-70     
70 and above

Ethnic Group

.....

Marital Status

Single    Married    Widowed    Divorced

Education

No Education    Primary Education    Secondary    Tertiary

education

education

Where do you go to church ?

.....

**B. Socio-cultural Factors**

How many people living in your home?

.....

Who is the breadwinner?

.....

How does the breadwinner provide for the family?

.....

How much is your monthly income?

.....

Is there any agricultural education/training you are receiving?

.....

If no, Why?

.....

Do you own the land you are farming or living in? If no, who does it belong to?

.....

If yes, what issues did you come across when you purchasing the land? If any

.....

Are you currently practicing agriculture?

.....  
If not, why are you not? Explain.

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

If resources would be available to you would you practice more agriculture / would you start practicing?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

Are you involved in any kind of local farm association?

.....

If no, Why?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

Have you made use of credit facilities i.e banks/and accredited credit provider available to you

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

If no why?, explain

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

If yes, what challenges did you encounter?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

Are there any other reason why you are not actively involved in farming except for, land, credit issues and education reasons? If yes please state them.

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

.....Thank you for your cooperation.....

## Appendix II:

### Guideline question for participant observation

#### Introduction

The researcher introduced herself to the informant or a group of informants depending on the situation and the setting. (The researcher was conducting participant observation to women at Khwezana old aged centre and also paying casual visits to women in their households who were doing various household activities in some cases that will include farming activities<sup>76</sup>). The researcher explained to the informants that she seeks to understand the socio-cultural factors<sup>77</sup> that inhibit them from fully engaging in agricultural activities. Questions below were the guiding questions asked to informants.

1. Are you involved in any type of agricultural activity?

*(This question is basically aimed at separating women who are practicing some kind of agricultural activity and those who do not).*

2. Why you are not involved in crop production, give a reason(s)?

*(This question aimed to explore various socio-cultural factors affecting women in agricultural development and the reasons behind these women's invisibility in agricultural activity).*

3. What challenges are you facing in agricultural activities that are discouraging the growth/progress of agricultural activity?

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<sup>76</sup> Some of these women were doing their household chores, some of them were busy with their small business duties and other with their small garden chores. These are the activities the researcher would frequently participate in.

<sup>77</sup> The term "socio-cultural factors" was rephrased to meet the informant's mental capacity.