

**SELF-EFFICACY IN VOCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF WOMEN IN LOW SOCIO-
ECONOMIC COMMUNITIES**

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DECLARATION

I, **Morongwa Florence Masakona** hereby declare that this thesis entitled, '***Self-Efficacy in Vocational Development of Women in Low Socio-Economic Communities***', is my own work and has not been submitted in any form for another degree or diploma at any other university or institution of tertiary education. Information derived from the published or unpublished work of others has been acknowledged in the text and a list of references is given.

Signature _____

Date _____

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to all women in low socio-economic communities in Vhembe District, all young girls in Calvary Christian Church International and my babies Vhuthuhawe and Muvhuso.

ABSTRACT

This study sought to investigate self-efficacy in vocational development of women in low socio-economic communities. The main aim of the study was to investigate the socio-contextual factors influencing self-efficacy of women. The objectives were fourfold: to examine the levels of self-efficacy of these women; to ascertain the extent to which self-efficacy influences vocational development of women and to propose a pragmatic women developmental model for acceleration of access to vocational development. The study utilised Self-Efficacy Theory (SET) as its theoretical frame-work which originated from Bandura's (1986) Social Cognitive Theory (SCT). The study employed the qualitative phenomenological approach which is concerned about the everyday experiences of individuals and how human beings experienced a certain phenomenon. The population of the study comprised of women in low socio-economic communities, traditional leaders; Community leaders; health workers and religious leaders. The sample for this study was 60 participants. Data were collected through interviews; participant observation; and focus group discussions. The study recommended the pragmatic Partnership of the Family, Church and the Society (F.C.S) Women Developmental Mode. The model emphasizes the importance of teamwork between all the community structures to help in building up the confidence of women in low socio-economic communities.

Keywords: Self-efficacy, Vocational, Development, Socio-economic status.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

| | |
|-------|--|
| ABET | Adult Basic Education Training |
| DISC | Dominance; Influence; Steadiness and Conscience |
| DWCPD | Department of Women, Children and People with Disabilities |
| EPWP | Extended Public Works Program |
| FCS | Family, Church and Society |
| FGD | Focus Group Discussions |
| FGDH | Focus Group Discussions from Health Sector |
| FGDR | Focus Group Discussions from Religious Sector |
| FID | Feminist Identity Development |
| IT | Individual Interviews |
| SA | South Africa |
| SCCT | Social Cognitive Career Theory |
| SCT | Social Cognitive Theory |
| SET | Self-Efficacy Theory |

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

1.1. INTRODUCTION

Self-efficacy is a strong positive belief that one can do something. This can be strongly influenced by positive thinking and perception about oneself. The way one thinks about and sees herself can either build or destroy her. The construct of self-efficacy, derived from the theory of Bandura (1977; 1997, quoted by Brown, Concannon, Marx, Donaldson, & Black, 2016), states that the capacity of an individual to obtain a good result or to achieve a specific task is due to their belief in their capacity to accomplish it. This belief in oneself allows more motivation to perform and therefore, they have more probabilities to obtain the expected result, unlike an individual who does not believe that their work will succeed. It is important for every woman to be careful about how she thinks and perceives herself. If women can have positive beliefs about their capabilities and skills, then they are likely to succeed in life. They would not in all fairness be bogged down by difficult situations they might experience in life. Conversely, doing something under stress and uncertainty does not make them discover their real self because of emotions.

This study focused mainly on self-efficacy in vocational development of women in low socio-economic communities. Self-efficacy is about the accuracy which a person predicts his/her ability to produce the intended results or performs specific tasks. Hemmings and Kay (2009) viewed self-efficacy as significant since it impacts on the lives of people. Self-efficacy, therefore, involves individuals' confidence in their ability to reach set goals, the degree of effort individuals put in performing tasks such as learning, hence achievements because of their actions. It is defined as one's self-evaluation of his/her competence to successfully execute a course of action necessary to reach desired outcomes (Bandura, 1977, 1982, 1986).

Scholars such as Pajares and Miller (1994); Jinks and Morgan (1999); Zimmerman (1995); Papalia and Olds (1992) mentioned five key components that constitute self-efficacy. First, it was an assessment of one's competence to perform a task, not a

judgment of personal qualities. Here, individuals judge how well they can perform given tasks; they were not concerned about their personality traits, physical features or how a task makes them feel or think. Second, self-efficacy is domain-specific. That is, individuals can be high efficacious in one domain (for example numeracy) but display low self-efficacy in another (for example literacy). Third, it is context-dependent, therefore, the execution of a task can be influenced by aspects such as competition, physiological state and environment. As such, in self-efficacy, one's beliefs are influenced by the environment. Fourth, self-efficacy was determined prior to performing the task, thus it reflected one's perception of his/her capabilities considering what the task demands, rather than how one feels after the activity. Fifth, self-efficacy measurements do not depend on normative data. Its questionnaires, for example, may require that participants rate their level of certainty about their ability to perform tasks without referring to others' performances.

Mullikan, Bakken and Betz (2007), stated that research into self-efficacy show the rate of people's confidence in their competences. Self-efficacy is related to the motivational levels for the highest endeavors levels which have been self-identified. Turner and Mairesse (2003) showed the significance level of personal factors on research efficiency; their findings were to the effect that those who positively believe in their competences have better educational functions, while those with negative attitudes (low self-efficacy) had poor educational motivation and functions. Nielsen (2009) showed that educational motivation and self-efficacy have positive effects on students' function.

Zimmerman (2000: 25, 82, 91) established that in the past decades, self-efficacy emerged as a highly effective predictor of students' motivation and learning. In the late 1970s, researchers assessed self-belief in a more task-specific way, and they discovered that one of the most important sources of effort was self-efficacy. Thus, Zimmerman defined self-efficacy through describing its role in academic motivation and learning and highlights its susceptibility to instruction and other socio-cultural influences.

Papalia and Olds (1992:436) argued that people are so used to saying, "You cannot teach an old dog new tricks", yet, this does not apply to people. That is, people can and do continue to learn "new tricks", new facts and new skills, and they can remember vividly

those they already know at whatever age. In fact, there is no evidence of any decline in many types of intellectual functions before the age of 60. Rather, there are increases in such areas as vocabulary and general information accumulation. The truth is, middle-aged people can learn new skills, unless they doubt themselves. People show a distinct advantage in solving their daily problems, and this is attributed to their ability to synthesis knowledge and experience.

Singh and Kaur (2016:901) spoke about inferiority complex, a part of the self-efficacy concept. Inferiority complex is the magnification of natural feelings of inferiority overcoming self-confidence. Anything in and by an individual that is below average, or gives one a feeling of impotency or ineptitude, leads to inferiority complex. Women who failed to achieve expected goals in life tend to develop inferiority complex, and hence excessive demands and expectations from family members and friends might lead to the development of inferiority complex. Individuals with inferiority complex display a tendency towards overcompensation and over-reaction. Inferiority complex or lack of self-esteem leads to negative or risk-seeking behaviours in many women. A woman's awareness of her inability to satisfy her drives and her failure to achieve the goals she set for herself, makes her helpless and causes her to suffer from an injured pride, leading to frustrations.

Bailey (2003:388) described self-esteem as a simplistic term for varied and complex mental states pertaining to how one views himself or herself. The foundation for self-esteem consists of the mental building blocks called 'self-meaning', 'self-identity', 'self-image' and 'self-concepts' combined with regard, respect and appreciation. Self-esteem is the summary judgment of everything a person can think about himself/herself. Low self-esteem, Bailey (2003) noted, is the self-consciousness which makes one feel like a "small and inferior person who does not mean much to him/herself". He continues that many with low self-esteem engage in "self-selling" as the price for "borrowing" their group's identity. Low self-esteem that stem from cumulative trauma due to bad environment is the result of fundamental erosions. Erosion may cause permanent damage, for example, by killing the initiative to achieve. From feeling overwhelmingly controlled and burdened, women who are low "achievers" make no attempt to discover, develop or find a niche for their talents. According to Adams (2009), self-esteem includes the plurality of associated

concepts due to a multi-disciplinary approach in sociology, psychology, social care and social psychology. Mondrea (2006:89) stated that self-esteem is “our image about what we are, what we want to be and what we have to be”. What he said reflects that there are three images; how one sees himself/herself; how others see them; and how they wish others to see them. Those with high self-esteem are easily mobilized and have greater success; they interpret new situations and challenges and are not threatened; they prefer independence; take risks and responsibilities; they accept the consequences of their actions; and they are proud of their achievements. Those with low self-esteem are generally dissatisfied with the person they are. Self-efficacy or self-esteem, thus accounts for the nature and degree of success and failures one has in life. In vocational development, it affects people intentionally.

The Personal Development Profile Report (1977) identified four ways in which a person interacts with the environment based on how he or she perceives it. A person sees the environment as either favourable or unfavourable and sees him/herself as either powerful than the environment, depending on those he/she spends time with. Each combination of the four perceptions explains the dimension of behaviour known as Dominance (D), Influence (I), Steadiness(S) and Consciousness(C) (DISC Dimensions of Behaviour). This shows that self-efficacy in vocational development occurs intentionally because if one thinks negatively about him/herself, one can be easily dominated by others and be wrongly influenced. This affects one’s behaviour in one way or the other.

South Africa has a long-standing misconception that women in the country are less important and deserve less power than men. Around 1950, apartheid imposed new restrictions on African women. Women used to follow their husbands into cities or mining areas and lived illegally in inadequate quarters. Many women were forced to do domestic work near these industrial compounds and dwellings. They often left their families to commute long distances in search of jobs in the domestic market in white neighborhoods.

After the fall of apartheid in 1994, many changes were made to address gender-based oppressions, patriarchy, sexism, racism, ageism and structural oppression while creating a conducive environment for women to take control of their lives and responsibilities. In May 1994, President Mandela appointed two women cabinet ministers, while another succeeded the late Minister of Housing, Mr. Joe Slovo in January 1995. Three women

were made deputy ministers in early 1995, one of whom was President Mandela's former wife, Winnie Madikizela Mandela who was appointed Deputy Minister of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology.

According to Statistics South Africa (2010), women then made up 51% of the estimated population of 49.99 million people. At the core of government policies on women is a dual strategy aimed at dealing with the legacy of apartheid one hand, and the transformation of society, particularly the transformation of power relations between women and men on the other. To this end, former President Jacob Zuma's administration established a department that deals with women's issues, known as the Department of Women, Children and People with Disabilities (DWCPD). The DWCPD largely champions the cause of women and ensures the alignment between government structures and social partners on matters related to their emancipation and development.

The year 2012 marked 18 years of democracy in South Africa, and the post-apartheid government has empowered women in several aspects. The new South Africa expect women to be visible in all aspects of life. There are, however, bottlenecks and challenges to this effect, for example: from our African culture, women are not used in leading but, to follow somebody, especially males. For a long time, African women were known to be dependent on their employed husbands, meanwhile they are housewives who just bear endless children. Despite the challenges the researcher has just mentioned, the post-1994 regime has maintained its position of giving women every platform to express their opinions without fear or favour, to capacitate them to better their situations. The post-1994 government initiated some positive programs aimed at women empowerment, and there are few such community empowerment projects that are still on.

In the Limpopo Province, particularly in the Vhembe District, a number of female related projects have been established in different municipalities, such as; catering projects, air-pollution cleaning project, construction tenders, DWCPD, EPWP and few others. These projects were meant to empower women. This was done to eradicate the apartheid legacy that had seen several job categories denied women. The local municipalities now empower women through awarding them construction tenders. With such efforts, however, most women in this district still suffer from dependency syndrome. That is,

millions of them depend on children social grants (Mutshaeni 2009). Women with dependency syndrome, look like they are not confident enough on themselves, hence, some of them do not take part in any project. Such observations motivated this study.

The need for recognition for women in society

Women need recognition and acknowledgement in society. Their presence and influence in most aspects of community life, be it funerals, meetings or weddings cannot be ignored. Masakona (2012: 9) pointed out that women are people with confidence and believe that they can make it in life. He always regarded them as 'healing medicine'. Masakona (2012) further states that women are determined to explore opportune avenues all by themselves for survival. That is, they do not sit and wait for a partner to contribute or make a difference in their lives. Women, by nature, are capable individuals who could make a difference if given an opportunity. It is their responsibility to see to it that they take their rightful positions in society despite their detractors. Women, through their abilities and influence in society, can contribute to positive change in society.

This stance is supported by Cooley (1983; 1902) who indicate that a woman was created as a man's counterpart. Fowler and Fowler (1992:264) describe a counterpart as a person who is extremely like another, a person who forms a natural complement or equivalence to another. Women are created to complement men by doing something that adds value to life. This shows that there is hope for every woman in South Africa. Researcher argues that to understand self-efficacy, one has to distinguish it from related concepts. Zulkosky (2009:98) provides some related terms to self-efficacy, like 'self-esteem' and 'self-confidence'. Self-esteem is a "realistic or favourable respect for one-self". It refers to a general feeling of self-worth and self-value. Self-confidence is defined as "confidence in oneself or one's abilities".

According to Bandura (1997), self-efficacy makes a difference in how people feel, think, behave and motivate themselves. In terms of feeling, a low sense of self-efficacy is associated with stress, depression, anxiety, and helplessness. Such individuals also have low self-esteem and become pessimistic about their accomplishments, personal development and quality of decision- making and, their academic achievement can be highly compromised. When it comes to behaviour, self-efficacy can either increase or

hamper motivation. People with high self-efficacy approach difficult tasks as challenges and do not try to avoid them (Bandura, 1989:176).

The tendency to take the worst view or expect the worst outcome about what happens around oneself diminishes one's hope, thus one ends up helpless. Such a person becomes indecisive in whatever she does, and her academic achievements are negatively affected. It is important for women to strive for high self-efficacy in life so that they cope with every difficult situation they might face. Difficult situations may include divorce, widowhood and barrenness. High self-efficacy enables women to turn challenges into life changing opportunities. In contrast, pessimistic women take challenging moments as their last Chapter in life. In one of his motivational speeches, Masakona (2012) said; "One's present condition is not one's conclusion".

Looking at women's lives in the context of families, churches and community engagements in the Vhembe District, one realizes that women are affected by self-efficacy daily. In other words, women are the community's strong pillars due to their being in the majority. It is imperative to find ways and means to help boost women's self-efficacy. Women's beliefs in their abilities to perform specific tasks is an important predictor of how they operate in terms of choice, effort, expenditure, thought patterns and emotional reaction (Lenz & Shortridge-Baggett, 2002:14). In short, their belief in self-efficacy influences how they think, feel, act and motivate themselves. The consequences of low self-efficacy when applied to the general population is linked with the diagnosis of heart failure, ulcers and other incurable diseases (Lenz & Shortridge-Baggett (2002). Women with low self-efficacy may have lower motivational levels because of their negative thoughts about their capabilities. Ziegler (2005:82) acknowledged that the key to promoting self-efficacy is to help patients learn new behaviours through modelling to modify existing maladaptive behaviours to enhance the anticipated reinforcement. Behaviour is changed and taught through observational learning and modelling respectively.

It is paramount to help women of lower socio-economic status in the Vhembe District to learn new behaviours that promote self-efficacy. This is something that requires patience and positive attitude from everybody willing to help as change does not happen overnight.

Since women are in the majority, many helpers with positive attitudes towards the former should be readily available. Also, there should be positive perceptions from all those prepared to help and speak on behalf of those who are hopeless or less fortunate. The prospective helpers in this regard should be people who are ready to make an impact in the lives of women in this district.

Maddux (2000) spoke about encouraging changes that enhance psychological adjustments in people's control over important life events. Discouraged people should be encouraged to believe in themselves, to understand that they are competent enough to accomplish what others have achieved two-fold. In this way, such people are prompted into actions that lead into efficacy-enhanced success. In this case, positive psychology and the social cognitive theory both emphasizes the social embeddedness of the individual (Maddux, 2000). Thus, encouraging people to have a positive attitude towards life in general should be embraced by all.

No man or woman can live in isolation, and there are limits to what humans can accomplish individually. No one is a know-it-all in life, hence we need one another. Women of low socio-economic status in the Vhembe District should be urged to believe that there are other people who can help them overcome their negative thoughts. It is important for us to develop positive human qualities rather than negative ones. The notion of social embeddedness shows that the individual's success and happiness depend to a large degree on his/her ability to cooperate and live in harmony with others.

1.2. AWARENESS OF THE PROBLEM

This study is a culmination of a long-time observation of a specific female group in Church who seem to have decided to do nothing to develop or capacitate themselves in a manner that would help to sustain their livelihood and themselves. The women are mostly and solely relying on freebies provided by the members of the congregation. The observation made by the researcher resonates well with what Kumar (2014:195) and De Vos, Strydom, Fouche' and Delport (2012:330) refer to as a qualitative research procedure that studies the natural and everyday set-up in a particular community or situation. It is worth noting that the researcher works closely with women in Church where she always addresses different female groups from within the communities. The need to undertake

this study arose when she observed, over a long period of time, and peculiar group of women in Church who have now become constantly dependent on help from the Church for their daily survival. The women make no efforts to develop themselves or do anything about their lives. Notwithstanding those who solely dependent on church for survival, there are also another group of women who are more reliant upon their husbands' meagre income, while others on their children's social grants. It is on this basis that has culminated into the need for this study to investigate self-efficacy in vocational development of women.

1.3. PROBLEM STATEMENT

Despite several initiatives by the government to develop women, low self-efficacy, low self-esteem, inferiority complex, dependency syndrome and lack of confidence are most likely, challenges still faced by some of the women in the Vhembe District. The main research question for this study was: "How do the socio-contextual factors influence women's self-efficacy in their vocational development in the Vhembe District?" Not much studies on self-efficacy in vocational development of women have been conducted particularly in South Africa. Hence the researcher undertook to conduct such a study to contribute meaningfully to the self-efficacy and the socio-contextual factors that are influential on the vocational development of women in the Vhembe District.

1.4. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study was to examine the socio-contextual factors that influence women's self-efficacy in their vocational development in low socio-economic communities of the Vhembe District.

1.5. STUDY OBJECTIVES

The following objectives underpin the main purpose of the study:

- i. To identify the socio-contextual factors that influence self-efficacy in women of low socio-economic status.
- ii. To establish the levels of self-efficacy among women of low socio-economic status.

- iii. To ascertain the extent to which self-efficacy influences women's vocational development.
- iv. To propose a pragmatic women development model for acceleration of access to vocational development.

1.6. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study answers the following main research question:

How do the socio-contextual factors influence women's self-efficacy in their vocational development?

The following are the study' sub questions:

- i. Which socio-contextual factors influence self-efficacy among women of lower socio-economic status?
- ii. What are the levels of self-efficacy among women of low socio-economic status?
- iii. To what extent does self-efficacy influence women's vocational development?
- iv. What model can be used to help pragmatic women to have access to vocational development?

1.7. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study is underpinned by the Self-Efficacy Theory (SET) from Bandura's (1986) Social Cognitive Theory (SCT). The SET theory posits that the perception of efficacy is influenced by four factors, namely mastery experience; vicarious experience; verbal persuasion and; somatic and emotional state (Bandura, 1994, 1997; Pajares, 2002). Bandura's social cognitive theory suggests that humans can learn through observation without necessarily imitating the observed behaviour. The unique features of the Social Cognitive Theory is its emphasis on social influence and, external and internal social reinforcements. The SET considers the unique way in which individuals acquire and maintain behaviour, while also considering the social environment in which they perform that behaviour. The theory considers the person's experience, which influences whether a certain behavioural action will occur. These experiences influence reinforcements and

expectations which shape whether a person will engage in a specific behaviour and, if so, why that person engages in that behaviour. Self-efficacy is the belief that one has the power to produce some effect by completing a given task or activity related to his/her competency. It thus relates to people's perceptions of their ability to reach certain goals. Bandura (1995) referred to self-efficacy as a belief in one's capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to manage prospective situations. In other words, self-efficacy is what an individual believes he/she can accomplish using his/her skills under certain circumstances (Snyder & Lopez, 2007). According to Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory, there are three factors that influence self-efficacy which are the behavioural factors (skills, practice and self-efficacy), environment factors (social norms, access in the community, and influence on others), and personal/cognitive factors (knowledge, expectations and attitude). These affect each other, although the cognitive factors are more significant as they have much influence on thoughts and actions and play a major role in self-efficacy. The SET is fully expanded on in Chapter two.

1.8. DEFINITIONS AND KEY TERMS

1.8.1. Self-efficacy

According to Bandura (1986:391), self-efficacy refers to, "People's judgments of their capabilities to organize and execute courses of action required to attain designated types of performances." Simply put, one might say that self-efficacy involves what one believes he/she can do with his/her skills to accomplish a certain task. For this study, self-efficacy is considered as the confidence women have so that they can do something through their natural ability.

1.8.2. Vocational

Van Den Aardweg & Van Den Aardweg (1988:105) see 'vocational' as the means of enhancing an educand's sense of her own value and her chances of obtaining a certain social status. It will offer him or her the possibility of self-realization, creative occupation and the realization of goals and of ideas. It relates to an occupation or employment; education or training directed to a specific occupation and its skills.

1.8.3. Development

Van Den Aardweg and Van Den Aardweg (1988:60) defined development as a gradual, perceptible change or unfolding which is empirically manifested as one can accomplish more and more tasks on the road towards the realization of the goal of becoming, which is ultimate adulthood. Development includes maturation, and is also dependent upon learning as in social, moral and religious development. It should through one's interaction with his/her environment as he/she develops and becomes a contributor to that environment. Here, it is a stage of growth or advancement, which involves women growing from one level to the other.

1.8.4. Socio-Economic Status

Socio-economic status refers to a person's social status based on the family's level of education, occupation and income. It can be placed on a continuum from the lowest socio-economic level to the highest one. The higher the level of education, the greater the possibility of job opportunities that result in one's economic stability being enhancement (Van Den Aardweg & Van Den Aardweg, 1988:218). This relates to and concerns the interaction of social and economic factors which include rank and social position. In this study, women should be encouraged to develop themselves educationally so that they have a better chance of getting jobs that will ensure their economic stability. Higher levels of education will contribute positively to women's lives.

1.9. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The study attempts to contribute theoretical and practical ideas which could be of significance to women in low socio-economic communities. Again, it will be beneficial to communities, families and women by providing an insight on family structures (and other stakeholders) to understand the socio-contextual factors that influence self-efficacy in the vocational development of women of low socio-economic status in the Vhembe District. Furthermore, it might assist the local municipality to develop strategies in mitigation of self-efficacy in the vocational development of women by instilling positive thinking. The study will contribute to the body of knowledge in this field of study.

1.10. DELIMINATION OF THE STUDY

The study focused on identifying the socio-contextual factors that influence self-efficacy in women of low socio-economic status in the Vhembe District. The study was conducted at the Vhembe District of the Limpopo Province in South Africa. The researcher focused much on low-socio economic communities of the Vhembe District

1.11. METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH DESIGN

1.11.1. Methodology

According to Polit and Hungler (2004:233), the term 'methodology', refers to ways of obtaining, organizing and analysing data. The research methodology section presents the materials, equipment or instruments to be used and the methods or techniques including the sampling procedures that will be employed. Research can take a quantitative, qualitative or a mixed method paradigm. This depends on a number of factors but chiefly on the nature of an inquiry and a researcher's orientation. In this study, a qualitative research paradigm was chosen based on the nature of the study at hand which sought to explore participants' views on the self-efficacy in vocational development of women in low socio-economic communities. In brief, the study followed an interpretivist paradigm as it sought to understand how individuals give meaning to their lives and work. The study strove to make sense of the social practices in which such individuals partake.

1.11.2. Research Design

Creswell (2003:53) note that a research design is a procedure for collecting, analysing, interpreting and reporting data in research studies. Generally, the design of any research should relate to the stated questions, which reflect the problem that the researcher wants to investigate. This study's design is ethnography which is one of the different types of qualitative research. Creswell (2007:242) defined it as the study of intact cultural (or social group for an individual or individuals within that group) based primarily on observations over a prolonged period spent by the researcher in the field. According to Schulze (2005:13), in qualitative designs, data are in the form of words than numbers and the researcher finds meaning as she comes into contact with data. In this way, the researcher understands the meaning people attach to their everyday lives. Qualitative research

design usually involves just a few participants aiming at understanding and describing a phenomenon.

De Vos, Strydom, Fouche' and Delpont (2002:280), explain that in qualitative research design, the focus is on the everyday and natural experiences of the participants. So, the researcher should always strive towards gaining feelings, impressions and experiencing the circumstances of the real world of the participants, by living alongside them. Qualitative research design is always flexible and not fixed. It involves sustained interactions with the people being studied in their own language and in their own surrounding than collecting data from a distance and not participating in the events under investigation.

The researcher chose qualitative method in this study based on Mertens' (2010:225) argument which indicated that qualitative methods are used in research that is designed to provide an in-depth description of a specific program practice or setting. It consists of a set of interpretive material practices that make the world visible. They turn the world into a series of representations using field notes, interviews, conversations, photographs, and recordings. Qualitative research involves the studied use and collection of a variety of empirical materials- case study, personal experience, introspection, life story, interview, artefacts, cultural texts and productions, observations, historical reviews, interactional and visual texts that describe routine and problematic moments and meanings in individuals' lives.

Patton (2002) indicated that the choice of qualitative method is appropriate in three conditions. First, because many educational and psychological programs are based on humanistic values, the intended uses of the research may prefer the type of personal contact and data that emerge from a qualitative study. Second, qualitative methods may also be chosen when no acceptable, valid, reliable, appropriate quantitative measure is available for the desired outcome of a program. A third reason might be to add depth to a quantitative study already conducted on the topic.

1.11.3. Research Site

This study was conducted in the Vhembe District of the Limpopo Province. Vhembe District is composed of four municipalities, namely Thulamela, Makhado, Mutale and Musina. It is one of the five districts of the Limpopo Province of the Republic of South Africa. It is located to the northern parts of the Limpopo Province. It shares its borders with three countries, namely Botswana, Zimbabwe and Mozambique. According to Statistics South Africa (2010), the Vhembe District has a population of 119 9338 spread over 603 villages and towns and cities. The researcher conducted the study using women from low socio-economic communities in the Vhembe District communities that are in disadvantaged areas.

1.11.4. Research Population

According to De Vos *et al.* (2002:198), population is a term that sets boundaries on the study units. Tuckman and Harper (2012:267) explain that the population for a questionnaire or interview study is the group about which the researcher wants to gain information and draw conclusions; a group of individuals in the universe who possess specific characteristics. Mertens (2013:185) suggested that once the general nature of the participants has been identified, the researcher becomes more specific about the information sources.

As highlighted above, the population in this study were all the women from low socio-economic communities in the Vhembe District. The population of this study was therefore comprised of the Health workers, community, traditional and religious leaders, and women of low socio-economic status. The reason for choosing these other groups was that they have contact with women of low socio-economic status in one way or the other. Moreover, the researcher believed that these groups have observed women's behaviour and its consequences when faced with different situations.

1.11.5. Sampling

According to De Vos *et al.* (2012:390), sampling is utilized in qualitative research, although it is less structured, less quantitative and less strictly applied than in the case of quantitative research. Patton (2002:244) said that there are no rules for a sample size in qualitative inquiry. Sample size depends on what one wants to know, the purpose of

inquiry, what is it at stake, and what can be done with the available time and resources. In qualitative research, non-probability sampling is mostly used. The researcher used purposive sampling procedure as it aimed at selecting sample based on characteristics of a population and objectives of the study. The rationale for choosing purposive sampling is to focus on characteristics of a population that is of interest, which would best enable the researcher to answer the research questions. Though Morse (1994:225) recommends 30-50 participants and Bernard (2000:178) provides a sample range of 30- 60 interviewees, the sample in this study were comprised of sixty (60) participants in which forty-four (44) of them are women from low socio-economic communities as the main candidates of this study.

1.11.6. Data collection methods

Mouton (2012:104) states that data may be gathered through a variety of data collection methods. According to Mertens (2012:241), qualitative researchers use three main methods for collecting data: participant observation, interviews and record review. For the success of this study, the researcher used e observation and interviews meanwhile taking some field notes so that she can be able to know and understand her participants better. By so doing, the researcher was able to be closer to all the participants in the study. This enabled the participants to freedom to share whatever information they have.

a) Observation

Observations were also used for data collection. Field notes were also taken during interviews. The researcher felt that it is essential to have a prolonged period of observing women's behaviours and attitudes in different situations. This enabled the researcher to mingle with women from different family backgrounds and their environments. De Vos *et al.* (2012:330) mention some of the most important characteristics of observation, namely;

- The phenomenological approach is an important part of observation. Through this, the researcher endeavors to gain an in-depth insight into *the manifestations of reality. This usually takes place over a long period* of time.

- The focus is on the everyday and natural experiences of the participants. The researcher should always strive to gain feelings and impressions and experience the circumstances of the real world of the participants by living alongside them, and by interpreting and sharing their activities.
- In observation, the researcher endeavours to become part of the life and daily routine of the participants.
- As an observer, the researcher becomes part of the situation being observed and even contributes to it.

The above-mentioned characteristics of observation convinced the researcher to adopt it as one of the ways of gathering information.

b) Interviews

Tuckman and Harper (2012:395) state that one direct way to find out about a phenomenon is to ask questions of the people who were/are involved in some way. Each person's responses reflect his/her perceptions and interests. There are different types of interviews, namely; unstructured or informal interviews. These will be used in this study because they are flexible in structure, are in-depth in their search, free from rigid boundaries, and one is at liberty to deviate from their pre-determined schedule if need be. The second is the structured or guided interviews, in which the interviewer resolves issues of questioning, sequence, and topic coverage in advance of the actual interview in the form of providing an outline (interview schedule). The third type is the semi-structured interviews and the last ones are the focus groups discussions. Interviews helped the researcher to understand people's impressions or experiences and their own personal views. Face-to-face interviews as well as focus groups discussions were conducted. People experience situations differently, and hence different interpretations. The type of data collected were descriptive as they were collected through unstructured face-to-face interviews

- **The unstructured face-to-face Interviews**

De Vos *et al.* (2012:348) note that face-to-face interviews between the researcher and the informants will be directed towards understanding the informants' perspectives on their lived experiences or situations as expressed in their own words. It is also sometimes

referred to as the in-depth interview, merely extends and formalizes conversation. It is referred to as a “conversation with a purpose”. Tuckman and Harper (2012:408) say that with qualitative research, data includes field notes that the researcher will write during the interviews. The responses will be recorded. This technique benefitted this study as participants were provided time to freely express themselves, share their experiences without any restrictions.

- **Focus Group Discussions**

Krueger and Casey (2000) describe focus groups discussions as group interviews that rely, not on a question-and-answer format of interview, but on the interaction within the group. These reliance on interaction between participants is designed to elicit more of the participants’ points of view. In this study, this technique was used when interviewing the health workers and religious leaders. The researcher used this technique to minimize time and cost. In relation to data collection, this technique promoted teamwork and unity among the participants.

1.11.7. Data analysis and interpretation

Mouton (2012:108) states that data analysis involves “breaking up” the data into manageable themes, patterns, trends and relationships. The aim of the analysis is to understand the various constitutive elements of one’s data through an inspection of the relationships between concepts, constructs or variables. Thematic data analysis approach was adopted for data analysis purposes.

The researcher used the following eight steps as provided by Turner (1981) in Tuckman and Harper (2012:408):

- Assess the collected data and construct labels for classifying them.
- Establish enough examples to completely define or saturate each category.
- Based on the examples, bring into existence, a summary definition of each category.

- Use the definitions created as a guide to both data collection and theoretical reflection.
- Seek to establish additional categories that suggest themselves based on those already existing.
- Find connections between categories, construct hypotheses about the connections and follow up on them.
- Establish and specify the conditions under which relationships between categories occur.
- Where suitable, link the collected data with previously existing theories.

1.12. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Welman, Kruger, and Mitchell (2011) and Mertens (2012) pointed out that the matter of ethics is an important one to all the researchers because their subject of study is the learning and behaviour of human beings. The nature of such research may embarrass, hurt, frighten, impose on and negatively affect the lives of the people who make the research possible by their participation. According to Flick (2011:215), research ethics address the question of which ethically relevant issues caused by the intervention of researchers can be expected to impact on the people with or about whom they research. It is concerned, in addition, with the steps taken to protect those who participate in the research, if this is necessary. The above information shows clearly that before the researcher starts conducting any research anywhere, there are important rules and regulations that need to be followed. Nothing should be done behind the backs of those in authority. It is the responsibility of the researcher to see to it that first issues have been done first before any implementation. Researchers must take the necessary steps to prevent violations and damages arising from doing their project-and be able to do so before they begin the project. The main idea behind the issues of ethics is that researchers must respect all the current regulations on data protection.

The researcher ensure that the study did not overindulge any information from the participants, as ethics dictates how research should be conducted. In this research, the

researcher adhered to the highest possible standards of research planning, implementation and reporting. Permission was obtained from relative authorities to conduct this study. The research was conducted peacefully without any misconduct, fraud or acts of bad faith at any stage of the research process.

- **Confidentiality**

Mertens (2013:342) stated that confidentiality means that the privacy of individuals will be protected in that the data they provide will be handled and reported in such a way that it cannot be associated with them personally. In this study, confidentiality and anonymity was ensured by not mentioning the names of the participants in the research report.

- **Privacy**

De Vos *et al.* (2012:119) state that privacy is to keep to oneself that which is normally not intended for others to observe or analyze. In addition, privacy means that a person can think and behave without interference or the possibility that private behaviour or thoughts may be used to embarrass or demean the person later. In this study, the participants' privacy was ensured during interviews.

- **Informed Consent**

Informed consent was sought from the participants in writing after information about the research has been given to them. Furthermore, the participants will be informed about their rights to withdraw from the research at any time. Mouton (2012:245) posit that the anticipated consequences of research should be communicated as fully as possible to the individuals and groups likely to be affected. Voluntary participation should be offered to every participant and no one should be forced. Permission to conduct research was sought from the following:

- Department of Health
- Community leaders
- Traditional leaders and
- Religious leaders

1.13. MEASURES TO ENSURE TRUSTWORTHINESS

Lincoln and Guba (1985:39) consider credibility as confidence in the truth of findings. Techniques for establishing credibility will be prolonged engagement, persistent observations, triangulation and member-checking. Dependability is showing that the findings are consistent and could be repeated. The main techniques for establishing dependability is enquiry audit. Transferability is showing that the findings have applicability in another context. The main technique for establishing transferability is thick description. Confirmability is the degree of neutrality or the extent to which the findings of the study are shaped by the participants and not by the researcher's bias, motivation or interest. Techniques for establishing confirmability are confirmability audit, audit trails reflexivity and triangulation.

To ensure that all these checks are in place, the researcher took time of collecting data from different participants to be sure that the information given has true evidence.

1.14. ORGANIZATION OF CHAPTERS

This study is organized as follows:

Chapter One: Introduction

This introductory chapter provides the background to the study, awareness of the problem, problem statement, purpose of the study, study objectives, research questions, theoretical framework, the significance of the study, delimitation of the study, methodology and research design, ethical consideration, measures to ensure trustworthiness, definition of key terms and conclusion

Chapter Two: Literature review: Self efficacy in vocational development of women

In this chapter, the researcher brings to light the origin of self-efficacy, its importance, sources of self-efficacy, its consequences, role, its socio-contextual factors of influence and its related concepts which include, self-esteem, self-confidence and self-concept.

Chapter Three: Research Design and Methodology

This chapter clearly and concisely describes how the study was conducted. Major issues examined are the research design, sampling techniques, research instruments, trustworthiness and other methodological issues.

Chapter Four: Data Analysis, Presentation and Discussions

The data gathered from the research participants are presented in this chapter. The presentation and analysis incorporated the literature reviewed in Chapters two and three linking it with the objectives and research questions of the study. This chapter covers the data presentation and discussion according to the outstanding themes. The presentation follows a thematic approach based on the data collected.

Chapter Five: Summary of findings, conclusions and recommendations

In this Chapter, focus was given to the responses of the participants to the research questions in which their verbatim statements were a priority. A summary of the research study was made, followed by the research findings anchored on the research questions. Conclusions were then drawn from the findings. The conclusions gave birth to the recommendations of the study

1.15. CONCLUSION

Self-efficacy is not concerned with what women will do in future, but with what individuals believe they can do with their skills under certain conditions. It shows that every woman has beliefs about herself. These beliefs are influenced by aspects such as behaviours, environment, personal or cognitive factors, *inter alia*. Cognitive factors are the most important, hence self-efficacy relates to a person's perception of their ability to reach a certain goal. It is important for every individual to be careful of what they believe about themselves. This does not concern what other people say about somebody, but what an individual says about him/herself. One's beliefs and perceptions play a major role in self-efficacy. Thus, everyone should take note of negative beliefs about oneself as breed negative effects. Conversely, positive beliefs will benefit every one of us.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

SELF-EFFICACY IN VOCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF WOMEN

2.1. INTRODUCTION

The previous Chapter dealt with the background of the study. This Chapter explores self-efficacy in the context of its origin, role, sources, consequences and importance. In addition, related concepts such as self-esteem, self-confidence and self-concept are also examined. Also, the chapter looks at the different social factors that influence self-efficacy in women's lives. Understanding self-efficacy and its related concepts would help this study to address the theoretical and practical issues that concern women in low socio-economic communities. Moreover, this Chapter explores Self-efficacy Theory (SET). The last section of this Chapter provides conclusion on self-efficacy in relation to the feminist identity.

2.2. OVERVIEW OF SELF-EFFICACY INTERNATIONALLY, NATIONALLY AND LOCALLY

Schwarzer and Jerusalem (1995), Sherer, Maddux, Mercandante, Prentice-Dunn, Jacobs and Rogers (1982) said that self-efficacy is commonly understood as being task-specific or domain-specific. They conceptualized a generalized sense of self-efficacy that refers to a global confidence in one's coping ability across a wide range of demanding or novel situations. Internationally, self-efficacy in developed countries, post-communist developing countries might vary in terms of culture, in ways that reflects their differences in economic development, religion and current and previous social and political situations.

Schwarzer and Jerusalem (1995) further indicated that across countries, findings provided evidence for associations between perceived general self-efficacy and the selected variables. The highest positive associations were with optimism, self-regulation and self-esteem whereas the highest negative associations emerged with depression and anxiety. The replication across languages or cultures played a role. Thus, perceived general self-efficacy appears to be a universal construct that yields meaningful relations with other psychological constructs. The following section focusses on self-efficacy internationally, nationally and locally

2.2.1. International Context (Global)

Li (2012:157) stated that many of the researches restrained “academic achievement” to Mathematics only and very few of them focused on the individuals in low socio-economic status. Although many researches were already conducted on studying self-efficacy, there are still flaws in individuals’ understanding as there is no consensus on the relationship between self-efficacy, vocational development and lower socio-economic status.

In August 2014, a consistent structural model of leadership self-efficacy for Asian American students was developed: examining influences of collective racial esteem and resilience. Asian American were found that they do not perceive themselves as leaders and that they believe that others do not perceive them as leaders as well because of their race (Balon, 2005; Hyn, 2005; Kwon, 2009; Lo, 2011)

Regardless of how Asian American students self-identified as leaders, studies showed they overwhelmingly perceived a negative societal perspective on Asian American leadership as either invisible or ineffective (Balon, 2004; Kwon, 2009; Lo, 2011). Even the Asian American who felt supported in their own leadership development did not feel that society valued the talents or contributions of Asian American leaders (Kwon, 2009; Lo, 2011). For some students, these negative perceptions by others fueled their desire to become.

Asian Americans are thus negatively viewed as capable leaders in United States society. This is supported by the research of Sy, Shore, Strauss, Shore, Tram, Whiteley, and Ikeda-Muromachi (2010), who found that Asian American professionals were perceived less competent leaders than Caucasian Americans in both engineering, sales occupations and both by college students and working professionals.

Research has found differences in leadership development by gender (Dugan, Garland, Jacoby & Gasiorski, 2008; Dugan, Houze, LeBlanc & Odegard, 2013; Eagly & Chin, 2010) including specifically for Asian Americans (Balon, 2004; Lin, 2010). Balon (2004) found that women were less likely to believe they could be leaders but had higher levels of comfort with diversity in leadership. Women were also more likely than men to believe that cross-cultural skills were important to effective leadership (Balon, 2004).

Lin (2010), however, found a significant, negative effect of gender on socially responsible leadership development, which is contrary to other research which has found women to have higher levels, though those samples were not disaggregated by race (Dugan & Komives, 2010; Dugan *et al*, 2013).

In the second Asian Conference on Education gender differences on computer experience and computer self-efficacy among high school teachers, it was discovered that male teachers had more computer experience than female teachers and they therefore showed more positive computer self-efficacy than females did. Male teachers tended to have more positive self-efficacy toward computers compared to female teachers. The results of this study indicated that male and female teachers' self-efficacy is very different. As Bimber (2000) argued, the gender difference may come from a fundamentally socio-economic status issue in which limits women's frequent use of Internet. This supports the results of Roy, Taylor & Chi (2004); Vekiri & Chronaki (2008) and indicates that males have more positive computer self-efficacy than females. Vekiri & Chronaki (2008) examined relations between boys' and girls' computer experience, social support for using computers, motivational beliefs, to explore possible causes of gender differences in students' self-efficacy and value beliefs. Results showed that boys had more positive self-efficacy and value about computers compared to girls and were more likely to engage in computer activities such as programming and Internet search. For example, Hattie (1990) suggested that males feel that they are in greater control when using a computer, in comparison with females. Yates & Chandler (1991) showed that if a student has a wide range of prior knowledge and experience, this may contribute to his or her confidence in learning to use computers.

Furthermore, the Malaysian Government designated Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) particularly those with women entrepreneurs as the backbone of the national economy. Because women entrepreneurs play vital role in the development of the economies of their families and countries, it is arguable that their performances are lower than those of male entrepreneurs (Akanjie, 2006); Fairlie & Robb, 2009, Ocholah, Ojwang, Aila, Oima, Okelo & Ojero, 2013. Studies have shown inconsistent findings regarding the performances of women entrepreneurs. Some have reported that the performances of

male entrepreneurs were greater than those of their female counterparts (Watson, 2002; Akanjie, 2006) and that most female businesses remained small (Marlow & McAdam, 2013). On the other hand, Watson (2013) has noted that female-owned businesses performed slightly better than male-own ones. Meanwhile other studies did not find gender-based differences in terms of entrepreneur.

In order to have a broader understanding internationally, studies on self-efficacy of African American Women in leadership roles were conducted where Pearson & Bieschke (2001) described the way in which demographic variable such as parental SES, educational level, career decisions and aspirations can affect individual SES and also positively associated with occupational status. To understand this phenomenon, the African American women in Pearson & Bieschke's study, found that the relationship between family dynamics and individuation appeared to influence the career decision-making process. Individuals from closely connected family environments had difficulty developing a clear sense of their identity, and their decision making relevant to their careers often became emotionally based reactions to parental expectations (Pearson & Bieschke, 2001).

Although motivation can predict high self-efficacy, if families do not have high expectations of the female African family members, the ways in which they use their capabilities and talents become limited (Pearson & Bieschke, 2001). Self-efficacy cannot play a major role in common psychological problems (For example: anxiety)

Cayleff, Herron, Cormier, Wheeler, Chavez-Artega, Spain & Dinguéz, (2011), indicated that mentoring programs help to cultivate self-esteem and self-actualization by offering individuals the opportunity to strengthen their talents, skills, confidence and academic success from healthy identities. Girls Voices is a collaborative research project involving systems of support, community and university-based mentorship and a Young Women's Studies Club (Cayleff *et al*, 2011). Questions asked by Girls Voices were related to roles within the participants' families, ethnic and racial identities, support networks, educational goals, non-school activities and the impact of self-perceptions and choices. The Young Women Studies Club has helped many women, including African American women, to gain self-awareness, strengthen their parenting skills and improve their self-esteem

(Cayleff, *et al.* 2011). By partnering with this organization, these women obtained overall support and a way to establish mentoring relationships.

In recent study by Allison & Broadus (2009), two female educators expressed their approaches to their academic endeavours with spiritual vows such, “We walk by faith, not by sight” (II Cor. 5:17, King James Bible). As educators teaching at the university level, they found that their spirituality shaped and guided their lives and they trusted God to direct them in their personal and professional path (Allison & Broadus, 2009).

According to Mirsaleh, Rezai, Kivi & Ghorbani (2010) to cope with conflicting emotions and adversities in the workplace, African American women often draw upon their spirituality which they consider a source of serenity and foundation of their lives. In the workplace, African American women often connect with other African women for support.

DcMarco, Kendricks, Dolmo, Dolan, Looby and Rinne (2009:284), on developing new interventions, local capacity-building and research action, stated that based on the literature, primary interventions directed to women need to be innovative, relevant, culturally based, and evidence based. The courageous public acceptance and willingness to put effort on expanding the self-efficacy in vocational development especially women in low socio-economic communities in order to empower them to be open and share their experiences in order to be helped.

When looking at how self-efficacy impacts individuals’ lives, it seems like self-efficacy of women in low socio-economic communities is an aspect that cannot be localized. Self-efficacy is something that should not be ignored in every individual whether locally, national and internationally. It looks like human’s life compass that shows direction, hence this study.

2.2.2. National Context (South Africa)

South Africa has long-standing beliefs concerning gender roles and most were based on the premise that women in South Africa are less important, deserving less power than men. After the democratic government in 1994, so many changes were made with the aim of addressing gender oppression, patriarchy, sexism, racism, ageism and structural oppression while creating a conducive environment to enable women to take control of

their lives and responsibility. So, the democratic government established a department that deals with women issues, known as the Department of Women, Children and People with Disabilities (DWCPD).

The year 2012 marked 18 years of democracy in South Africa and the post-apartheid government is empowering women in all aspects. The new South Africa wants women to be visible in all aspects, however, there are bottlenecks and challenges. Despite all the challenges, the post-1994 regime is trying to give women every platform to express their opinions without fear and favour, and to capacitate them to better their lives. The present government has initiated some positive things aimed at women empowerment and there were such community empowerment projects that were established especially in urban areas.

2.2.3. Local Context (Vhembe District)

In Vhembe District, some few projects focusing on women were established in different municipalities. Most of the projects were deliberately given to women in order to empower them though is not like in urban areas. The local municipalities even gave women construction projects. With all these efforts, there are women who are still suffering from dependency syndrome such as those who depend much on children's social grants without thinking of developing themselves because of lack of confidence. There are also those women who depend much on their husbands hence the researcher was motivated to come up with this study.

A review of the literature reveals that not much has been investigated on the topic as compared to urban areas and worldwide. Owing to dissimilarities in social norms and cultural values, most of the findings may not be applicable to explain the case locally particularly in Vhembe District since there are very few studies on the self-efficacy of women in low socio-economic communities, hopefully, the present study will be of help in addressing this issue in order to help the communities.

2.3. SELF-EFFICACY THEORY (SET) AS THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

As noted earlier on in Chapter one, this study is underpinned by the Self-Efficacy Theory (SET) from Bandura's (1986) Social Cognitive Theory (SCT). The SET theory posits that

the perception of efficacy is influenced by four factors, namely mastery experience; vicarious experience; verbal persuasion and; somatic and emotional state (Bandura, 1994, 1997; Pajares, 2002). Bandura's social cognitive theory suggests that humans can learn through observation without necessarily imitating the observed behaviour. The unique features of the Social Cognitive Theory is its emphasis on social influence and, external and internal social reinforcements.

The SET considers the unique way in which individuals acquire and maintain behaviour, while also considering the social environment in which they perform that behaviour. The theory considers the person's experience, which influences whether a certain behavioural action will occur. These experiences influence reinforcements and expectations which shape whether a person will engage in a specific behaviour and, if so, why that person engages in that behaviour. Self-efficacy is the belief that one has the power to produce some effect by completing a given task or activity related to his/her competency. It thus relates to people's perceptions of their ability to reach certain goals. Bandura (1995) referred to self-efficacy as a belief in one's capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to manage prospective situations. In other words, self-efficacy is what an individual believes he/she can accomplish using his/her skills under certain circumstances (Snyder & Lopez, 2007). According to Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory, there are three factors that influence self-efficacy. These are;

- Behavioural factors: skills, practice and self-efficacy.
- Environment factors: social norms, access in the community, influence on others.
- Personal/Cognitive factors: knowledge, expectations and attitude.

These affect each other as shown in **Figure 1** below, although the cognitive factors are more significant as they have much influence on thoughts and actions and play a major role in self-efficacy.

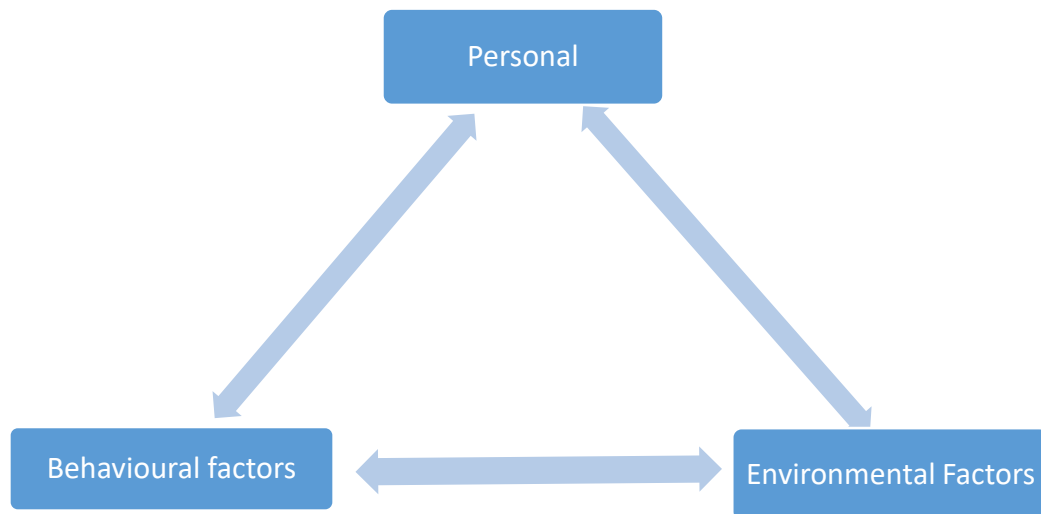


Figure 1: The model of the relations among the three classes of determinants in Bandura's (1986) conception of triadic reciprocity.

Furthermore, people's behaviour is influenced by their thought and actions. The interaction between the environment and people's behaviour is formed by the latter determining his/her environment, which in turn affects his/her behaviour. In any environment, there are physical surroundings, different conditions, family members, friends and other social influences which affect an individual's behaviour. The interaction between the person and the environment involves beliefs and cognitive/competencies developed and modified by social influences. People's behaviour is shaped by the way they think, their beliefs and their surroundings. These, therefore, will be important elements in this study. Papalia and Olds (1992:214) stated that the development of self-efficacy is a mental process and that there is a link between gender concepts and cognitive development.

In addition, Moriarty (2011:56) postulates that there are compelling reasons why self-efficacy should be defined in specific rather than global terms. Bandura (1986) argued that specific measures of self-efficacy are better predictors of levels of subsequent performance than global measures the concept. These can conceal underlying

differences between separate dimensions of self-efficacy. In this theory, Bandura (1986) identified four main influences of self-efficacy. These are one's prior experiences in the area of interest; observing others completing similar tasks and; feedback and encouragement received about the execution of a task and the participant's emotional state. Receiving encouragement and feeling positive about the prospect of undertaking a task can also boost one's confidence. In fact, Bandura (1994) found that self-efficacy improves when one is positive and is lowered when one is despondent. Previous experience and what one thinks about it was found to be the most influential source of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1986)

According to Bandura (1997:193), self-efficacy is assigned a central role in analysing changes achieved through a fearful and avoidance behaviour. The theory assumes that psychological procedures, whatever their form, serve as a means of creating and strengthening the expectations of personal efficacy. The theory distinguishes between expectations and responses (outcome expectancies). An outcome expectancy is a person's estimate that a given behaviour will lead to certain outcomes. The relationships among the person, behaviour, and the environment operate as interacting determinants that influence one another, bi-directionally. Their influence varies for different activities and under different circumstances. In Bandura's model (1997), the environment represents a broad network of socio-structural influences that both provide restraint and resources for personal development and everyday functioning. In **Figure 1**, the model shows that the variables are interactively embedded in the external environment.

In addition, the theory asserts that self-efficacy beliefs work through the following four major psychological processes to produce actual performance:

- Cognitive processes: These include the self-appraisal of capabilities, skills and resources, goal selection, construction of success and failure scenarios in the goal accomplishment processes, generation and selection of problem-solving options and, sustaining the necessary attention and functioning for task completion.
- Motivational processes: Self-efficacy beliefs affect one's self-regulation of motivation. Three cognitive motivators, namely; attribution, value of the expected

outcomes and, clarity and value of goals were identified as being influenced by self-efficacy beliefs.

- Affective processes: A person's self-perception of coping abilities affects their arousal threshold and tolerance of emotional threats like anxiety and depression. Even the process and outcome of threat management can be affected by procedure like guiding the imagery to adjust anxiety symptoms when encountering stressors.
- Selection processes: Decisions such as choice of residence, career, family setup and use of time can directly influence a person's functioning. In order to attain the outcomes, they are interested in, people with high self-efficacy are proactive in selecting and creating a physical and social environment that matches their perceived capabilities and resources. Their chances of a successful goal attainment and personal development are maximized in the process.

The researcher chose this theoretical framework because the way people behave can be influenced by the environment in which they find themselves in, which end up controlling their perceptions and the way they think about themselves. People behave in ways that execute their initial beliefs. Thus, self-efficacy functions as a self-fulfilling prophecy. Women's behaviour, thinking and actions are influenced and shaped by the environment around them.

Consequently, they end up affecting everybody in the community. This theory is relevant here as it would help in analysing the factors that contribute to self-efficacy in vocational development among women of lower socio-economic status in the Vhembe District.

Masakona (2012) once said that whoever you spend time with, has a portion of influence in your life; the influence can either be negative or positive. Unfortunately, in most cases, the negative influence dominates most people unaware. It is important to help women with self-efficacy in vocational development as cognitive factors play a vital role.

2.3.1. The origin of self-efficacy

Greenhaus and Callanan (2006:719) indicate that self-efficacy originated from Bandura (1986). Bandura (1986) indicates that self-efficacy is a cornerstone of social cognitive theory of human behavior. He introduced the concept 'self-efficacy' as a judgment of personal capabilities to produce specific attainments and staying power that allows an individual to master academic skills and, develop and sustain a wide spectrum of social behaviors. Self-efficacy can also be defined as a personal judgment of how well one can execute actions to deal with specific situations (Bandura, 1982:122). Self-efficacy has become one of the major variables used in understanding and facilitating individual career development, and it has also become important in the study of organizational and team effectiveness. As originally proposed, self-efficacy expectations refer to individuals' beliefs concerning their ability to successfully perform a given task or behavior. These efficacy beliefs are behaviorally specific rather than general. The number of different kinds of self-efficacy expectations is limited only by the possible number of behavioral domains that are important for some defined purposes.

The term or concept self-efficacy has also been used as a motivating tool to create and sustain self-learning and development. As such, self-efficacy should not be ignored in the lives of women despite their prevailing conditions. There must be ways and means of helping poor women.

Unless individuals believe they can attain their goals, they have little motivation to attempt to do so. The self-efficacy belief extends beyond individual beliefs to collective efficacy (an individual's belief about a group's capabilities).

According to Greenhaus and Callanan (2006:717), expectations are postulated to have at least three important behavioral consequences, which are:

- Approach versus avoidance behavior,
- Quality of performance of behavior in the target domain, and
- Persistence in the face of obstacles or disconfirming experiences.

The low self-efficacy expectations regarding a behavior or behavioral domain are said to lead to the avoidance of these behaviors, poor performance, and a tendency to give up

when faced with failure or discouragement. This affects a lot of women in the Vhembe District's poor communities, and hence this study. Women in such an environment face challenges and setbacks that make them approach life negatively, and they depend on the negative experiences they face daily without any help. They get used to those negative experiences until they develop a habit of believing issues negatively, and hence it becomes their life style.

The first behavioral consequence, approach versus avoidance behavior, has a profound impact on career development because the approach behavior describes what people will try, while the avoidance behavior refers to aspects they will not try. It thus encompasses both the content of career choice, that is, the types of educational majors and careers an individual will attempt, and the process of the career exploratory and decision-making behaviors essential to making good choices.

Looking at self-efficacy in vocational development among women in poor communities, one would say that they would not attempt to do something about their present conditions. The only possible action for them is not to try anything due to their self-efficacy beliefs. Greenhaus and Callanan (2006:718) indicated that the second behavioral consequence refers to effects such as one's performance on the tests necessary to complete the college course work or the requirements for a job training program. This, however, cannot be found among these women since they seem to have a serious motivational need towards positive thinking. Finally, the effects of self-efficacy on persistence are essential for the long-term pursuit of one's goals in the face of obstacles, occasional failures, and negative messages from the environment. The gender or race-based discrimination or harassment in the community is an example here.

Research over the past years has shown that self-efficacy is important in relation to career behavior, including choices, performance, and persistence. Bandura (1986). It is fair to say that the self-efficacy expectations regarding both career activities and the processes of career decision making, and job search have an important relationship to the nature of educational and career choices, and the effectiveness of career decision-making behaviors.

2.3.2. Self- efficacy and its related concepts

The concept 'self-efficacy's related terms include self, self-esteem, self-concept and self-confidence. These terms are examined in the context of this study.

2.3.2.1. Self

Hagenmeier, Spicer, Nadasen, Draper, Thaver and Batley (2006:328) acknowledge that the self is organized around a self-concept, the ideas and feelings that individuals have about themselves. They added that Cooley (1902) called this concept the 'looking-glass self', based on how individuals think other people see and evaluate them.

2.3.2.2. Self-esteem

According to Feltham and Horton (2012:482), self-esteem is based on the opinion a person has of himself or herself, and the degree to which they value themselves. It is one of the most important aspects of self-concept, the multi-dimensional construct or 'inner map' that creates a person's individual perception of 'self'. This self-concept involves a range of characteristics such as likes, dislikes, abilities, strengths, beliefs and values. Self-esteem seems to have the most impact on how worthy a person feels about his/her engagement with daily activities. It is the way one feels about his/her whole person, not only their skills and talents. Self-esteem is something individuals wake up with in the morning, and it thus governs one's general sense of well-being. Healthy self-esteem is about feeling valuable and worth without having to prove or change anything. Greenhouse and Callanan (2006:722) indicate that self-esteem refers to the extent to which people's global feelings of self-worth, liking and acceptance are, that is, positive (high self-esteem level) or negative (low self-esteem level). The term self-esteem is generally used to refer to the global feelings of self-worth liking and acceptance. It is the kind of a relationship people have with themselves, the way they regard themselves daily.

To this researcher, every individual has an opinion of himself/herself, and a certain degree to which they value themselves. The opinions they have and how they value themselves can either be positive or negative, depending on an individual. Women in low-socio economic communities, due to their environment, suffer from low self-esteem, and hence this study. Feltham and Horton (2012:482) assert that low self-esteem can leave individuals feeling inadequate and unworthy, ashamed, awkward and unable to handle

everyday situations with confidence. It is difficult for a person to be fulfilled and satisfied if he/she does not feel worthwhile or good about themselves.

2.3.2.2.1. Where does self-esteem come from?

Feltham and Horton (2012:483) speak about one aspect of individuals, the thinking, known as 'inner self-talk', also known as 'internal monologue' or 'conversation with oneself'. This has a direct bearing on one's self-esteem. This inner self-talk starts the moment an individual wake up each day. People with low self-esteem tend to put themselves down through this inner self-talk and often they do not realize that they are doing so. Those with a healthier self-esteem tend to support and take care of themselves.

- **Upbringing**

Finzi-Dottan and Karu (2006) and Wilding and Palmer (2010) establish that one's upbringing plays a significant part in the development of an inner self-talk, and thus self-esteem children learn how to self-evaluate through the ways in which others have responded to them in the past. The parents or caregivers act like a mirror, letting a child know how he or she is perceived. In this way, the significant adults' opinions and the ways in which they respond to a child subconsciously contribute to that child's self-identity. Children tend to internalize every feedback, whether it is negative or positive, and regard it as 'the truth' about themselves. This internalization of judgments received from parents, school, siblings and friends from an early age forms the basis of a person's self-esteem.

The way most women in low socio-economic communities are today, is a reflection of what parents, siblings, friends, family members and even adult role models imparted to them while they were young. These women internalized a lot of issues that ended up affecting them psychologically and conditioned their life styles and their behavior in the process. It will take somebody's patients and sacrifice to help women in these conditions, bearing in mind that change cannot come over night. These women did not grow up in the same environment and family background. They will not need one specific skill, way and means to help them, but different multi-talented, skillful and willing individuals with passion to help.

- **Living a meaningful life**

Gradual changes over time can also erode self-esteem, especially if these changes include broader losses that involve three existential elements; making a difference, a sense of identity, and purpose in life (Deurzen, 2002; Maslow, 1987;1943). Feltham and Horton (2012:484) indicate that these three elements help create meaning in life and are essential for a healthy self-esteem. Ellis (2001) states that individuals have different ways of interpreting external circumstances and responses from others. Interpretation is the personal meaning, which individuals make of certain events or interactions, which often do not represent the truth. It is important for adults or role models to be careful of how they conduct themselves in their everyday live.

2.3.2.2. The nature of low self-esteem

According to Greenhaus and Callanan (2006:724), considerable research and theory suggest that low self-esteem individuals are generally unhappy and dissatisfied with themselves. Some researchers suggested that rather than having an intense dislike for themselves, low self-esteem individuals are uncertain and confused individuals whose feelings are predominantly neutral. Very few low self-esteem individuals consistently endorse statements that reflect a clear dislike or dissatisfaction with themselves. Moreover, other influential researches show that low self-esteem individuals possess self-concepts that lack in internal consistency and temporal stability, which they hold with little confidence.

Many women in low socio-economic communities are victims of low self-esteem. They are generally unhappy and dissatisfied about themselves. They are negative-minded people whose morale is very low. These women see themselves as useless and rejected members of the community.

2.3.2.3. The nature of high self-esteem

Research on self-esteem reveal that high self-esteem confers many benefits to individuals, and that this leads to many positive psychological outcomes. One critical factor is the extent to which high self-esteem is fragile or secure. Individuals with fragile high self-esteem appear willing to go to great heights to preserve, maintain and enhance their positive, yet vulnerable feelings of self-worth. Defensiveness and other maladaptive

processes characterize these individuals. In contrast, individuals with secure high self-esteem like, value and accept themselves, 'warts and all'. They have well-anchored feelings of self-worth and generally display a healthy psychological and interpersonal functioning (Greenhaus and Callanan, 2006:275).

Communities that are dominated by dependent members not only slow down the development of the community but end up affecting the rest of the country. It is essential that something be done about these women's situation. The why part of it is the seed they are sowing, which would bring forth fruits soon. In other words, every action they take shapes up somebody's life without their being aware of it.

2.3.2.3. Self confidence

Greenhaus and Callanan (2006:722) state that self-confidence refers to the expectations that individuals have regarding whether they can bring about desired outcomes or not. Feltham and Horton (2012:842) add that self-confidence, also known as self-efficacy, exists alongside self-esteem, but is a separate aspect. Individuals with self-confidence know that they have skills such as being able to drive, give presentations, play a sport or make people laugh, and believe that they can engage successfully in those areas. People who know and trust that they have an ability in a specific skill tend to value themselves.

When looking at women in low socio-economic communities, one realizes that they have no confidence in whatever they do. Over-dependency and their past experiences have crippled them in such a way that they have no expectations of doing anything good on their own. These women, in each day of their lives, wait for somebody to give them something or do something for them, hence most of them live a very stressful life.

2.3.2.4. Self-concept

The role of self-concept as a key element of career or vocational development has multiple dimensions some of which are developmental, psychological, and personal, as well as the social aspects. Career and vocational development are characterized by developing, synthesizing, compromising and implementing self-concepts. There are four sequential changing stages of self-concept such as awareness stage, planning stage, commitment stage and implementation stage (Greenhaus and Callanan, 2006:713).

2.3.3. Sources of self-efficacy

Bandura (1997) provided the primary sources of self-efficacy beliefs as:

- Personal mastery experiences (for example: successes & failure).
- Verbal persuasion (for example: social encouragement or discouragement).
- Vicarious learning (observation of models).
- Physiological affective states and reactions (for example: positive and negative emotions associated with performance of specific tasks).

These sources can be used to increase self-efficacy expectations at any time. Greenhaus and Callanan (2006:720) observed that the past performance accomplishments serve as indicators of capability and are the most influential sources of efficacy information. In contrast, Bandura (1986) indicates that success promotes strong beliefs of personal efficacy, especially if the failure occurs before efficacy beliefs are firmly established.

The second source of efficacy information is that observing another person successfully engage in behavior increases observer's self-efficacy, though observing failure in a model can likewise reduce the perceived self-efficacy. Social persuasion from others can be effective in enhancing and sustaining a sense of personal efficacy if the target behavior is within realistic boundaries. That is, the social persuasion that is well beyond what the individual is capable of doing will not be effective as the negative results of the individual's inadequate performances constitute a more powerful feedback than will unrealistic social persuasion.

The fourth source refers to somatic information conveyed by the physiological and emotional states. The physiological indicators refer to indices of autonomy arousal such as sweating and fast heartbeat or physical indicators such as fatigue or windedness. Anxiety is the most commonly type of emotional arousal. Self-efficacy can be enhanced by reducing the extent to which the individual experiences these indicators.

Lent, Ireland, Penn, Morris and Sappington (2016:108) spoke about the four primary sources of self-efficacy beliefs as indicated by Bandura (1997) and Greenhaus and Callanan (2006:720). Lent, Brown and Hackett (1994) maintain that these sources serve to inform the outcome expectations, both direct and via self-efficacy favourable levels of

all four sources on the learning experience variables. Schaub and Tokar (2005) add that the sources of self-efficacy have received some attention in research, particularly on the Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT).

Sources of self-efficacy bring to light the uniqueness of every individual characterized by their different personal experiences. The individuals' social interaction, the observation of models and the way they accomplish every task play a major role in the lives of these women. Their self-efficacy expectations can be increased through these sources, depending on their beliefs and the kind of encouragement they receive from those around them.

2.3.4. Domains of Self-efficacy

Greenhaus and Callanan (2006:719) point out that the self-efficacy influence approach versus avoidance behavior, and the domain specific self-efficacy expectations help individuals to understand the nature of people's choices and, if appropriate, provide a means of increasing the range of possible career options. Studies such as...show the significant gender-differences in self-efficacy with respect to different occupational groups, and more importantly, that the low self-efficacy expectations reduce the perceived career options. Furthermore, these authors say that with self-efficacy, there are five groups of tasks that are necessary in making career decisions. These are;

- accurate self-appraisal
- gathering occupational information
- goal selection
- making future plans, and
- problem solving (Greenhaus and Callanan, 2006:719).

Given the above, self-efficacy can now be considered as one of the major variables that influence the nature and the effectiveness of career choice behaviors in the women's vocational development.

Looking at the domains of self-efficacy, the researcher found out that as self-efficacy is seen to influence the approach versus avoidance behavior, for women in poor communities to be able to fit in the five groups above, there is a need for individuals who are prepared to take their time to help these women change their perceptions and

mentality about themselves. If this could be done, hopeless women could start building hope and belief that they can do and be something better in life.

2.3.5. Consequences of Self-efficacy

Greenhaus and Callanan (2006) asserted that research has shown that the higher the self-efficacy, the more likely one is to engage and persist in a task-related activity. The higher self-efficacy predicts more positive job attitudes, training proficiency, and job performance. Also, the higher self-efficacy serves as a buffer for the potentially negative effects of stress on one's overall psychological well-being.

Research studies such as Steele (1988) and Tesser (1988) point to the fact that people high on managerial self-efficacy are purpose-focused rather than self-focused and, thus efficient and creative in their decision-making processes in the face of organizational setbacks. Studies on manipulations to threaten the talented managers' efficacy beliefs reveal the progressive deterioration in their performance. These were inflicted with increasing self-doubt, and thus became more erratic in their thinking processes. Conversely, women whose self-efficacy beliefs were strengthened set increasingly challenging goals and were able to use efficient and creative thinking processes to achieve them.

Women in poor communities are mostly prone to low self-efficacy beliefs. These women are victims of self-doubt in their everyday lives because they are self-focused and less creative. Their self-efficacy beliefs are not strengthened, but weak in such a way that they find themselves unable to set challenging life goals.

2.4. THE IMPORTANCE OF SELF-EFFICACY

Kernis (1995:14) indicates that psychologists such as Strauger (1975), Steele (1988) and Tesser (1988) claim that individuals desire primarily to enhance the self and, accordingly, seek feedback from others that serve this goal. Self-enhancement is a more automatic, less cognitively effortful process which plays an important role in every individual's life. People with low self-esteem choose interaction partners who give them negative feedback because such feedback verifies their self-view.

The researcher observed that self-efficacy works hand-in-hand with an individual's self-enhancement and plays a major role in one's decision-making. The lower social and economic status among women is the results of their low self-esteem that makes them interact with people who always give them negative feedback. Every negative feedback they receive affects them psychologically, to such an extent that they never have positive self-view about themselves. It looks like positive self-efficacy and vocational development belong to a certain class of people.

It is, therefore, important for every individual to have a strong personal belief about him/herself to reach their life goals. This personal belief needs to come from within and should not be driven by the need to compare oneself with other people. This would mean that people need to accept their uniqueness and be themselves. The need for personal belief is crucial given that most people fail to become what they ought to be because they want to be like others.

Lahey (2012:410) explains self-efficacy as 'the perception that one can do what is necessary to reach one's goal, both in the sense of what to do and being emotionally able to do it. People who perceive themselves as self-efficacious accept greater challenges, expend more effort, and may be more successful in reaching their goals as a result. A person with a poor-sense of self-efficacy about social poise may not accept a promotion at work because it involves giving many speeches and having to negotiate with dignitaries.

As self-efficacious people can accept greater challenges and expend effort, the researcher observed that some women in the Vhembe District's poor communities still suffer from inferiority complex and self-condemnation. Most of these women see themselves as misfits within the community because of cultural and traditional stigmatization. This is driven by what women listen to in their society and communities. The researcher urges people to be careful of what they listen to and that they should not focus on their negative experiences and failures as this, in turn, negatively influences their behaviours from the inside out.

Pajares (2009) states that human motivation, cognition and behaviour are influenced by many factors. The success or failure that individuals experience as they engage in tasks

that involve their lives naturally influence the decisions they make. Also, the knowledge and skills they possess certainly play critical roles in what they do and do not.

The researcher observed informally, that women from low socio depend too much on their employed husbands, their employed grown up children and on their children's social grants. Such over dependency affects women in the Vhembe District's poor communities. In other communities, the researcher found that women do not bother to develop themselves educationally or their vocational skills.

Brown (1999) discussed ways in which self-efficacy beliefs are influenced by various internal, external and interactive factors, and reflected in career-related outcomes expectations.

2.5 SELF EFFICACY AND INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES IN BEHAVIOUR

Van Deventer and Mojapelo (2013:91) note that behaviour is influenced by many factors. Some are within the person, while others are outside the person, are in the environment. People need to be examined from several perspectives, or at different levels to understand why they behave the way they do. There are three main contexts for people's behaviour which are i) the social context; ii) the biological context; and iii) the intra-psychic context. Each contributes towards the individual differences in behaviour and gives a different perspective or viewpoint.

The above information on individual differences was relevant to this study because it helped the researcher to look at individuals holistically rather than concentrating on one side only. It was through the same knowledge that the researcher realized the importance of examining individuals from different perspectives that included the three main contexts that underpin an individuals' behaviour. There is no context that is more important than the other as they all play a major role in a person's behaviour. All the three contexts are discussed fully in the following sections.

2.5.1 The Social Context

People do not live their psychological lives in a vacuum. They live among others and under situations. The social context refers not only to the interaction with other people, but also to the physical environment (at workplaces, at home or in nature, as well as the

culture and the society in which they live). For example, the social and economic environment influences the school one attends, the kind of facilities one has access to and the social experiences one is exposed to. The environment alone, however, does not determine one's behaviour as one always have choices that influence his/her life (Van Deventer and Mojapelo, 2013:93). Looking at individuals' self-efficacy in women's vocational development, one assumes that in life, no one is 'a know-it-all' or 'a know-nothing at all'. Every individual need other people around them to shape their daily behaviour. Interaction with people, physical environment, culture and society contributes a lot in one's behaviour. It is important for individuals to be closer to people with positive attitudes in life so as to learn from them. Thus, an individuals' self-efficacy is also determined by the people he/she spends time with.

2.5.2 Cognitive Learning

Cognitive theorists such as Freud (2007), Rogers (2013), Deacon (2016), Nicholas (2016) and Nicholas, Morris and Ntonzini (2016) pay more attention to the cognitive factors that influence the process of learning. Cognitive factors play a role in associative learning because of expectancies. That is, the expectation of how issues are associated or connected. In general, cognitive learning refers to understanding, knowing, anticipation or otherwise making use of information to rich higher mental processes to facilitate learning (Coon, 2005). This relates to this study because women live among other people under different situations and physical environments. It is their time to understand, to know and anticipate different issues as unique individuals. The way women in poor communities make use of information is also affected by those around them, together with their environments. Individuals are also motivated by what they value in the world around them. A wide range of social and cultural factors play a major role in motivating people, even where the behavior is related to biological drives.

2.5.3 Social Learning

Van De Venter and Mojapelo (2013:181) state that social learning refers to the way individuals learn through interacting with other people. Moreover, social learning illustrates the fact that not all learning is formal, but it also happens informally in everyday life. Another way that social learning occurs is through observation. Observational

learning means learning by watching and imitating others' behavior, and those actions' consequences. Observational learning occurs when the way individuals behave or respond is influenced by observing others, who become their role models in this case (Werten, 2001). Bandura (1986) established four essential components to observational learning, vis:

- i. **Attention:** One must pay attention to the model's behavior and its consequences thereof.
- ii. **Retention:** That is 'keeping' or 'saving'. One must save a mental representation of what he/she observed to be able to use it at a later stage.
- iii. **Reproduction:** Individuals must be able to reproduce the observed behavior they have stored in their memory.
- iv. **Motivation:** Individuals will reproduce the behavior they have observed only if they are motivated to do so.

Social learning cannot be obtained if individuals live in silos or lonely but is obtained through rubbing shoulders with others. Everybody needs other people in life as there is an observational learning that cannot be acquired informally, but through watching and imitating the others' behavior. It is for this reason that the researcher argues that no woman should grow beyond learning from others. This calls for poor women to be encouraged to learn from others through interacting, observing and imitating them.

2.5.4 Situationism and Interactionism

Lahey (2012:412) suggests that an individual's behaviour is consistent only as long as his/her situation remains consistent. A woman might be friendly most of the time when she is with her family, but cold and distant when she is with her gossipy co-workers and, stiff and formal with her boss. People behave in ways that suit their situations, and because situations change, behaviour cannot be consistent enough to be adequately described in terms of personality traits.

The researcher learnt that individuals' self-efficacy in vocational development can also be determined by different situations around their lives and those they interact with. The combination of the characteristics of individuals and the situation can influence their behaviour. It is essential to find ways and means of helping different women in poor

communities by observing their situations and their interactions. For example, one person might be relatively calm and relaxed when not frustrated or threatened. If this person encounters a stressful situation, however, she might react with intense anxiety and irritability. Different people react to situations differently, and people often behave quite differently in different situations. People play an active role in choosing and creating the situations they experience later. It is important for academics to study women in poor communities.

2.6 SELF EFFICACY AND NEGATIVE VIEWS ABOUT SELF

Kernis (1995:23-24) states that first, there is the need to maintain the stability and coherence of a person's conceptual system. People with low self-images tend to choose self-verifying partners for "pragmatic and epistemic reasons". Some of the women in low socio-economic communities suffer from low self-esteem to such an extent that they never think they can do anything better to change their situations. They always think that aspects such as vocational and academic development are of a certain class of people, not for them. They reject and see themselves as useless such that they get used to their hopeless situations.

Second, the need for maximizing pleasure and minimizing pain, strange as it may seem, also contribute to the maintenance of a negative view of the self. Third, there is the need for relatedness. The common outcome of an unsatisfactory relationship with another person is that one is strongly motivated to view the self as bad. This self-view and its related behaviour patterns tend to become integrated into an enduring relationship pattern that is maintained into adulthood.

The researcher found it important for women in low socio - economic communities to know who they are, what they like and dislike and, what their strengths and weaknesses are. They need somebody who can motivate them so that they can believe in themselves, and hence become confident to rise and develop themselves. Their willingness needs to be encouraged by being told positive aspects to stimulate them psychologically. Self-doubt and life-task pursuit are some of the reasons people maintain negative self-views (Kernis, 1995:172).

Self-knowledge, and how one thinks about one's competence to work on a task, is a critical component in considering how direct an individual will "appraise" or "see" a life task. For example, individuals who are uncertain about their competencies will approach the task with some trepidation, while confident ones will find the tasks less challenging. Different task appraisals are associated with different ways of approaching and working on the task. Individuals should be competent if they are to do any task successfully.

If an individual develops self-doubt about himself/herself when it comes to life-tasks, as is the case with women in the Vhembe District's poor communities, they are likely to have poor outcomes. Life is full of challenging tasks, thus everyone, including these women, need to be self-confident, they need to overcome self-doubt. Self-efficacy in vocational development in the lives of women is of necessity. As such, it is every woman's responsibility not to accommodate self-doubts.

2.7 MOTIVATIONAL CONSEQUENCES OF SELF-EFFICACY BELIEFS

According to Pajares (2009), self-efficacy beliefs influence the choices individuals make, and the course of action they follow. Individuals tend to select tasks and activities in which they feel competent and confident, avoiding those they do not feel so. Self-efficacy beliefs help to determine how much effort people will expend on an activity, how long they will persevere when confronting obstacles, and how they will be in the face of adverse situations. Self-efficacy beliefs influence individuals' thoughts patterns and emotional reactions. High self-efficacy helps create feelings of serenity in approaching difficult tasks or activities. Conversely, people with low self-efficacy may believe that activities are tougher than they really are, a belief that fosters anxiety, stress, depression and a narrow vision of how best to deal with that task.

The researcher observed that the consequences of self-efficacy beliefs help to show the necessity of going closer to women in low socio-economic communities to help them to change their perceptions. Looking at their situations from a distance, cannot motivate them to see things differently and to believe that their situations cannot stay as they are forever. It is when somebody identifies himself or herself with them, showing them all the possibilities of changing their mentality and believe in themselves that they can do

something. In the next section, the researcher looks at the self-efficacy and its related concepts.

2.8 SOCIO-CONTEXTUAL FACTORS INFLUENCING SELF-EFFICACY

Nasurdin, Noor and Chew (2009:366) acknowledge the differences between internal and external environmental factors. Intrinsic factors are related to personal characteristics that consider factors such as self-confidence, individual's entry risk, the desire for independence and not working at the command of others. External factors that affect individuals refer to the social, cultural and economic environments. These environmental factors cover cultural support, social confidence, and appropriate markets, financing, consulting, and training in the business network that is given in this regard (Franke & Liithje, 2004:272).

The researcher observed that the external and internal factors play a major role in influencing self-efficacy in the lives of individuals. The socio-contextual factors that influence self-efficacy in women's lives can either be positive or negative, depending on the person's perceptions and attitudes.

2.8.1 Family background and economic outcomes

Family background and economic outcomes play an important role in determining the future outcomes such as educational attainments and earnings (Flippin & Paccagnella, 2011). Fena, Valcke and Cai (2009) posit that parental education, an index of home possessions, cultural home possessions, and the socio-economic educational level reached by parents, contribute a lot in children's educational attainments. The family background has an impact on the children's self-efficacy. Children from different social and economic backgrounds hold different beliefs about their own abilities.

The researcher supports such views in totality. According to the African tradition, for example, a girl child was not allowed to go to school, particularly for higher grades. This study, therefore, is an attempt to highlight such beliefs' short coming. Culturally, women are meant to get married at an early age to become housewives who bear children for the family to grow. Men are generally considered as providers or breadwinners in the family.

Among the women issues this study sought to address are those concerning the victims of such traditional beliefs.

2.8.2 Lack of confidence

Self-confidence, like what Nasurdin, Noor and Chew (2009:366) suggest, is one of the intrinsic factors related to the personal characteristics that affect the lives of individuals. Filippin and Paccagnella (2011) support this and indicate that by lacking role-models, parents transmit to their children beliefs about their unknown ability. Such beliefs shape children's educational choices that in turn can either make wrong beliefs (self-confirm in a limit way) or have long-lasting effects as they help widen the gap in educational attainments.

The lack of confidence is something that contributes negatively towards self-efficacy in women's vocational development. These women have lost confidence on themselves in that most of them live a very scattered life. They have lost hope about their situations in such a way that they even forget about building confidence in their children's lives. Instead, they leave them to develop on their own, without proper guidance.

2.8.3 Environmental factors

In relation to entrepreneurs, Franke and Liithje (2004:272) state that the environmental factors comprise the support such as social confidence, the appropriate markets, finance facilities, business networks and entrepreneurship training. Impressive environmental factors indicate the motivational contribution of the social environment where individuals have a space. Nasurdin, Noor and Chew (2009:367) add that the impressive social environment is a by-product of their beliefs and has a power that can affect individuals in their decision-making processes. This leads to the establishment of the perceived social security as one of the environmental factors, vis; families, relatives, friends and colleagues, and hence the supportive and positive approach provides emotional support (Christman, 2002:114).

Culture, as a powerful filter that shapes perceptions and interpretations of the individuals' environment in which they find themselves in, impacts heavily on their lives. Some of the issues that happen in women's lives of women are the results of the environments they

grew up in. Logel, Walton, Spencer, Iserman, Von Hippel and Bell (2009) confirm that the environment plays a key role in activating the individuals' stereotype threat and the resulting decrease in their performance of different tasks.

2.8.4 Parents' lack of knowledge and support

Fouad, Hackett, Smith, Kantamnen, Fitzpatrick, Haag and Spencer (2010) identify parents' lack of knowledge and support as one of the socio-contextual factors that influence an individual's self-efficacy in life. Culturally speaking, most of the parents in days gone by failed to give moral support to their children due to lack of knowledge. This disadvantaged a lot of children, especially the girl child.

2.8.5 Lack of interest in self-development

Self-development can include one's academic progress and other aspects that one could do to develop himself/herself. In Marra, Rodgers, Shen and Bogue's (2009) study, women cited a perceived lack of inclusion in their academic environments. If one lacks interest on something, hardly can he/she be able to achieve that. Interest works together with the willingness from within. Lack of interest in self-development also makes one not to know others who are successful. An individual who is not interested in self-development tends to conclude that others are also doing the same.

It has been observed that among these women, there are a lot of suppressed skills and talents that need somebody who can go closer and help them to re-discover themselves.

2.8.6 Involvement in survival sex

Whyte (2006) reports on a positive correlation between the level of survival sex (sex in exchange of food, money, housing and protection). Laughon (2007) explains that survival sex is also related to chronic mental health symptoms and substance use. Women in these situations often find themselves in a negative downward spiral, with little support to find and access help from anyone. De Marco, Kendrick, Dolmo, Dolan-looby and Rinne (2009:284) highlights the risk-taking behaviors such as the need for money without the self-efficacy skill building exercises. De Marco and Norris (2004) state that the loss of shelter, relationship and others continue to haunt women with low social and economic status. These lead women to high risk behaviors in their lives.

The above are effects that are found among women in low socio-economic communities. It is within this context that these women end up taking negative and risky actions that, consequently, affect their abilities to develop themselves.

2.8.7 Over-dependency

Hagemeier, Spicer, Nadasen, Draper, Thaver and Batley (2006:328) refer to economic dependency as a relationship in which a country's economic demands determine the economic activities that are possible in another country. There are women who are so dependent on males to such an extent that they fail to think about their self-development. Culturally, this over-dependency on male figures (husbands) figuratively crippled a lot of women. This has resulted in such women taking pride in their husbands' achievements, while in the process forgetting about their personal developments.

Greenhous and Callanan (2006:760) raise issues about compensations for low social and economic status through the child grants. Public policies are believed to make the children's social environment more conducive. The government looks forward to seeing families improving their social and economic status and raise their children properly. These opportunities include increased education facilities. Unfortunately, due of the lack of guidance and farsightedness, there are women who are over-dependent on their children's social grants such that they do not think of developing themselves. These women misuse such grants. The over-dependency on husbands and child grants affect some of these women.

This researcher observed that some of the unemployed women whose husbands are professionals or have well-paying jobs do not put any effort when it comes to their vocational development. The government has opened a lot of opportunities, especially for women, wherein whoever wants to do something to make her living can do it. Among these women in the low social and economic communities, there are those who are conditioned to receiving to such an extent that it has made them lazy to work for themselves. Some of them have a tendency of using their children's social grant money for gambling and drinking. This study sought to highlight such social anomalies.

2.8.8 Mistrust of significant people in the environment

Another social and economic factor that can affect women in low socio-economic communities in developing themselves is their mistrust of the significant persons in their environment. Significant persons often comprise parents, peers and community members they spend most of their time with. Irungu (2008:54) reveals that the lack of privacy and confidentiality makes some individuals not keen to seek for guidance and help from those around them, more especially women because of their sensitivity. Women fear being embarrassed when they express their challenges to family members and other adults, they live with. This implies that there is a need to build confidence and trust among these women.

2.8.9 Poor and unguided academic achievement

Irungu (2008:54) maintains that this is another factor that seriously hampers women's self-concept, and hence impedes other aspects of self-concept such as the vocational concept. When women fail to achieve a satisfactory academic performance, they become less motivated to explore their role in society or what they would like to be. In the Vhembe District's communities, where academic achievement is highly considered unlike before, women who feel that they do not meet the societal expectations, may lose heart before they establish their self-efficacy in vocational development, unless they are helped.

2.8.10 Lack of a well-situated place that ensures privacy and confidentiality

Murugami (2010:86) maintains that what may affect the effectiveness of a helpful program towards self-efficacy in women's vocational development may include the lack of a well-situated place that would ensure privacy and confidentiality, and the ambiance in guidance and counseling that would create an atmosphere of authority.

The researcher assumed that there is a need in communities for places that would enable women from low socio-economic communities to gather relevant and helpful information for guidance and counseling. Counsellors should be well-trained elderly people who can keep secrets as they help different women who face different challenges. Counsellors are in a unique position to influence and instill the positive development of women's personalities in the process of guidance and counselling, with love and understanding.

They act as a steering wheel in the community whole by coordinating the women's affairs. The counsellors or advisors, therefore, have various functions. These include, *inter alia*, appointing the committees from the community members to help them develop a comprehensive guidance and counselling program, and identifying women's guidance and counselling needs. These counsellors have the mandate to organize meetings where guidance and counselling duties and activities are shared so that all women in need of help are reached and their needs addressed.

Finally, these counsellors must have the ability and skills of establishing networks and referral systems with other stakeholders such as parents, community mentors, women professionals (who would act as role models for women) and transitional agencies. This is not withstanding the ability to ask for earnestly required resources to enable the programs to function efficiently, and hence implement the guidance and counselling processes effectively.

In relation to the above, Irungu (2008:56) argues that the guidance and counselling programs for these women in poor communities rely heavily on referrals from members of the community, who seek the intervention of other knowledgeable counsellors. In such a situation, the counsellors play the role of those who treat than those who guide and counsel. In addition, there is the lack of the involvement of family members in the vocational development of these women's self-efficacy since others ruled them out.

Risk taking behaviors such as the need for money without self-efficacy skill building exercises, loss of shelter, relationship loss, among others, are found among women in poor communities (Dc Marco and Morris, 2004). These lead them to high risks behaviors in life, like what Whyte (2006) reported on the positive correlation in the level of survival sex. When these women are tired of the situation they live under, they take negative and risky actions that affect their behaviors in order to seek out a living without thinking of any other way that can help them develop themselves.

The researcher observed that women in low socio-economic communities can be the victims of the above due to the lack of intrinsic motivation. The environment around these women is also unattractive in such a way that some of the people who are supposed to help them, do not even think of going to such under-developed areas.

2.9 THE ROLE OF SELF-EFFICACY IN INDIVIDUALS' LIVES

Luthans and Peterson (2002) add that self-efficacy has been shown to improve and influence both motivation and task performance. It was also found to mediate an employee's engagement with his or her work, and the self-leadership or performance relationship, and to predict career success as well (Day and Allen, 2004).

Bandura and Cervone (1986) note that individuals with high self-efficacy always increase their efforts to attain their set goals, whereas those low in self-efficacy do not. Self-efficacy serves as a moderator of the relationship between career commitment and career satisfaction such that the relationship is stronger at higher levels than at the lower levels. It affects the choice of activities, effort, persistence and achievement. Schunk (1995) indicated that a self-efficacy for learning is beneficial because it motivates individuals to improve their competence, outcome expectations, or the beliefs concerning the probable outcomes of actions. They are important because people strive for positive outcomes. Outcome expectations and self-efficacy are often related. Efficacious individuals expect and usually receive positive outcomes for their actions.

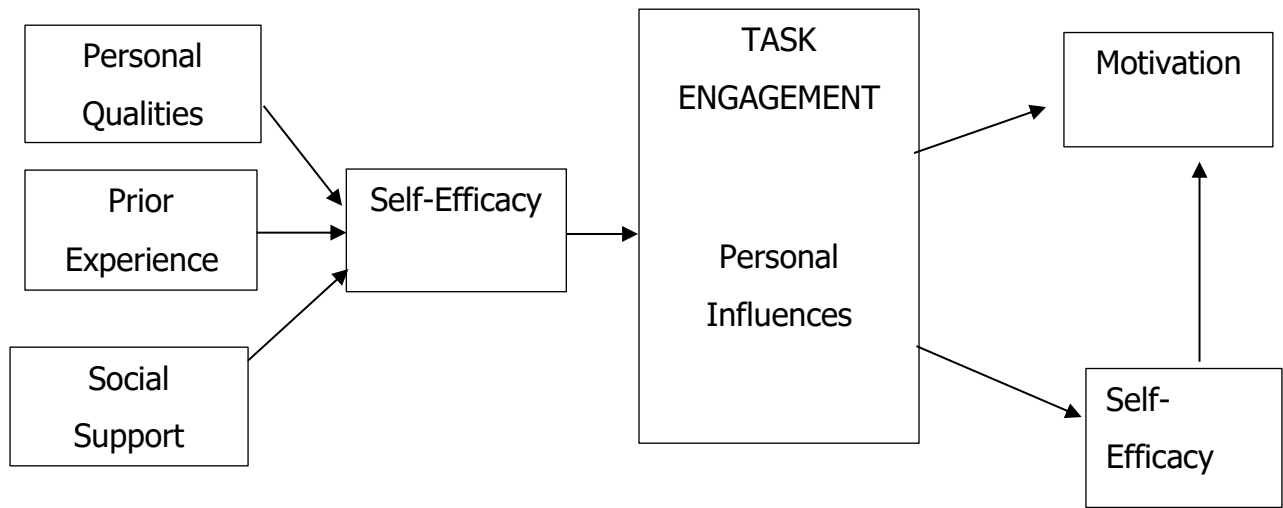


Figure 2: Model of achievement behaviour highlighting self-efficacy' role.

Source: Schunk (1995)

The role of self-efficacy in behavioral change is highlighted in the model shown on **Figure 2** above. At the start of an activity, individuals differ in their self-efficacy in learning or performing an action as a function of their prior experiences or similar activities, and such personal qualities as abilities and attitudes. Initial self-efficacy is also affected by the type of support persons receive from significant individuals in their environment.

The researcher assumed that as people engage themselves in activities, they are affected by their personal influences that come through their everyday experiences. At the same time, the social support that individuals receive from the people who self-efficacy is a product of the individuals' environments. If one's surrounding is full of negative influences, the individuals' self-efficacy will be negatively affected. It is important to do something about the environment around the individuals' life despite his/her background. That is why Schunk (1989) said that the lack of success or slow progress will not necessarily lower self-efficacy and motivation if individuals believe they can perform better by adjusting their approach.

2.10 THE LEVEL OF SELF-EFFICACY AMONGST WOMEN

Schunk (1995:57) state that when self-efficacy is measured more globally, it is difficult to predict how well the participants will perform on specific tasks. Moreover, Bandura (1986) maintains that the predictive power of measures of self-efficacy would be higher when there are little delays between the measurement of self-efficacy and the performance, and the measurement of the related criteria tasks. In fact, it has been shown over a sustained period that levels of self-efficacy impact directly on achievement (Swackhamer, Roellner, Basile & Kimbrough, 2007).

2.11 SELF-EFFICACY AND VOCATIONAL OUTCOME EXPECTATIONS FOR INDIVIDUALS OF LOW SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS

Ali, McWhirter and Chronister (2005:40) indicate that the social and economic status has a multiple dimensional influence in an individual's life. These may include the educational and occupational opportunities available to that individual and their attainment. For example, the social and economic status influences the quality of education, health care access and other areas in a way that often limit the individual's perceived options and goals. Liu and Ali (2004) demonstrated how the social and economic status influences the way individuals perceive their opportunities, and how it affects their access to educational and vocational resources. Participants with high social and economic status showed interest in work for personal satisfaction, better self-concepts, greater access to resources, and were career focused than those of the lower social class (Blustein, Prezioso and Schultheiss, 2002).

The previous authors call attention to the importance of the social and economic status. This shows that individuals from low socio-economic communities' experience career development processes differently from those with higher social and economic status. Ali, McWhirter and Chronister (2005); Liu and Ali (2004) and Blustein (2002) highlighted the need for theory-driven research on the vocational or career development of individuals from poor communities, and hence this study.

2.12 SOCIAL SUPPORT AND CAREER BARRIERS

Ali *et al.* (2005:42) note that the Social Cognitive Career/Vocational Theory (SCCT) stresses the importance of the development of self-efficacy beliefs, outcomes,

expectations and goal mechanisms. The background contextual affordance such as the social support is important in the vocational development outcomes. The levels of support from parents, family and peers have been found to predict educational plans, self-efficacy and the perception of opportunity and school outcomes (Farmer, 1985; Kenny & Blustein, 2003; Lapan, Hinkelman, Adams & Turner, 1999; McWhirter, Hackett & Bandalos, 1998; Rosenthal, 1996). It is important for those around other people to play a positive influential role since social support is very important in one's vocational development. The level of support from parents, family and peers can shape an individual's future. Thus, it is important to motivate individuals in low socio-economic poor communities so that they can believe in themselves.

2.13 CAREER BARRIERS FOR WOMEN

Swanson and Woltke (1997) observed that career barriers have been defined as events or conditions, either within the person or the environment that make career progress difficult. Lent, Brown and Hackett (2000) suggested that career barriers could be conceptualized in the Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT) model as background contextual variable that influence self-efficacy beliefs and outcome expectations, and as moderators of interest, and goal activity relationships. In contrast, Kenny and Blustein (2003) maintained that the perceived barriers were associated with career aspirations and the commitment to school engagement, attaining career goals and vocational outcome expectations. Women in low social and economic communities seem to have some conditions they come across that make their career progress difficult.

Self-efficacy perception is another effective factor in an individual's future goal attainment. Individuals with high self-efficacy perception have high levels of future goals, and they endeavor to attain these. On the other hand, individuals with low self-efficacy perception have modest goals, which are easier to attain. Such individuals believe that they can even do more, yet they are unable to use their capacities fully and fail to reach the required performance (Woolfolk *et al.*, 1990) In this study, the researcher believes that it is everybody's wish to be on the brighter side of life than to be on the darker one. Every individual would love to have a high self-efficacy perception as well as high levels of future goals. It is through motivation by others that such goals could be achieved. Receiving

encouragement and being positive about the prospect of undertaking a task can help build one's confidence.

Betz and Hackett (1981) posited that women are less likely to pursue traditionally male-dominated fields, in a false belief that they do not have the capability to do so. To them, women experience vicarious learning that results in sex-role stereotyping, a lack of exposure to performance accomplishment, and a lack of verbal persuasion or encouragement from others. Byars-Winston and Fouad (2008) acknowledged that women, in contrast, perceive greater barriers in pursuing different careers than do men. Cadaret, Hartung, Subich and Weigold (2016:41) state that among women in introductory courses, some showed less self-efficacy towards their success. They also had less self-efficacy than did their male classmates, hence less interest in academic and scientific activities. Fouad, Hackett, Smith, Kantamnic, Fitzpatrick, Haag and Spencer (2010) discovered that college women in Maths and Sciences identified barriers that included parents' lack of knowledge and support, low teacher support and inspiration, a lack of extra-curricular opportunities, anxiety during test, poor past performance, and the lack of interest in self-development (academic progress).

Feminist identity shows different kinds of barriers that affect females than males and differs from culture to culture. Women in low socio-economic communities may also be affected by some of these barriers, depending on their different situations and life experiences. Marra, Rodgers, Shen and Bogue (2009) reveal that across institutions, women cited a perceived lack of inclusion in their academic environments. They attributed this to negative social cues from peers and elderly professionals that act as a form of social persuasion and, therefore, impact on self-efficacy (Zeldin and Pajares, 2000).

2.13.1 Stereotypical threats

Cadaret *et al.* (2016) speak about stereotype threat, where they say it is enacted within environments where one perceives negative judgments about their identity. Stereotype threats influence individuals through physiological arousal, working memory depletion, off-task rumination, self-handicapping and stereotype priming effects, which results in a decreased performance academically (Spencer, Logel & Davies, 2016). Further, they

indicated that stereotype threats act as a proximal contextual barrier to women's career development.

Thus, it is no surprise to see women whose career development does not get better. A person exposed to stereotype threats feels threatened by such negatives, judged and having to conform to such. Aronson and Inzlicht (2004); Spencer, Steele and Quinn (1999) and, Steele and Aronson (1995) note that negative social identity stereotypes can diminish task performance due to pressure and anxiety. Stereotype threats affect a lot of women who identify with the domain, including those in lower social and economic communities.

Based on the above, the researcher reasons that internalized beliefs about female identity and related stereotypes shape women's attitudes and behaviors. In this case, one's environment plays a key role in activating stereotype threats and the resulting decrease in an individual's performance. Log, Walton, Spencer, Iserman, Von Hippel and Bell (2009) concluded that environments can be potent sources of threats.

2.13.2 Coping with barriers to education

Bandura (1997) theorized that coping efficacy acts as an individual difference variable, such that those with high coping efficacy are likely to view new social realities as a challenge, whereas those with low coping efficacy may view the same event as a threat. In discussing contextual support and barriers to career choice, Lent and Hackett (2000:47) suggests that one's perspective, given an environmental demand, may be viewed alternatively as an insurmountable barrier, a minor obstacle, a character-building opportunity, or even a personal contest or a challenge. Coping efficacy is viewed as one's confidence in managing perceived situational and environmental demands that have the potential to impede performance in a given domain. Furthermore, Lent, Brown and Hackett (2000) suggest that coping efficacy relates positively to content (academic) self-efficacy, outcome expectations, interests and choice intentions, while it relates negatively to career barriers.

Byars, Winston and Fouad (2008); Perrone, Civilettor, Web and Fitch (2004); Thompson (2013); Thompson and Dahling (2012) highlight that coping efficacy appears to directly

predict academic self-efficacy and interests as well as mediate the strength of the association between career barriers and academic self-efficacy. These studies offer support for coping efficacy as a mediator, yet there is still minimal research on tested coping efficacy as a moderator (Novakovic & Gnilka, 2015; Thompson, 2008).

To date, there is still a need for studies that can explore the possibility of coping efficacy as a moderator of contextual barriers and self-efficacy among women in different careers, especially to those in low socio-economic communities. In this study, the researcher, thought that women might also be vulnerable to stereotype threat, and consequently, may see barriers as threatening and withdraw from the community or alternatively view barriers as a challenge. Thus, it is assumed that the level of self-efficacy to cope with educational barriers (high-low) might moderate the relationship between stereotype threat and academic self-efficacy. Stereotype threats and academic self-efficacy can be influenced by feminism. The following section focusses on feminist theory.

2.14 FEMINIST THEORY

The feminist theory is the extension of feminism into a philosophical discourse. It aims to understand the nature of gender inequality. The theory examines women and men's social roles, experience interests, chores and feminist politics in a variety of fields, such as anthropology and sociology, communication, psychoanalysis, home economics, literature, education and philosophy. The theory focuses on analyzing gender inequality. Themes explored in feminism include discrimination, objectification (especially sexual objectification), oppression, patriarchy, stereotyping, art history and contemporary art and aesthetics.

Theorist such as Grimshaw (1988) and Gagnier (1990) indicated that feminism has been pulled towards the postmodernism, to the very critique of the onto-theological nature of such beliefs. Here, feminism as a set of theoretical perspectives, has increasingly been identified as postmodern. The division between modern and postmodern elements in feminism is mapped onto a division between practice and theory. Gagnier (1990), for example, argued that feminism cannot undermine its basis in a realistic epistemology nor its normative ground in humanism, given that it presupposes that the oppression of women exists and that its project is to make the world better for women. But, at the same

time, she argues that feminism is pushed towards a postmodern ethics and politics via its very emphasis on the culturally over-determined constitution of the gendered subject (Gagnier, 1990:24). Likewise, Grimshaw (1988) argued that feminism needs to,

Engage with those theories that deconstruct the distinction between the “individual” and the “social”, which recognize the power of desire and fantasy and the problems of supposing any “original” unity in the self, while at the same time preserving its concern with the lived experience and, the practical and material struggles of women to achieve more autonomy and control over their lives.

Here, the issue of ‘feminism needs to engage with’ ‘deconstructive theories’ is asserted. However, the use of the phrase ‘at the same time’, also suggests that such an engagement must take place in the context of a concern with lived experiences and practical struggles, a ‘taking place’, which is constituted as a potential limit to the engagement. These two elements of feminism, ‘the deconstructive or postmodern, and the realistic or modern are separated as the differential realms of theoretical engagement and practical struggle.

Hekman (1990) argued whether this represent a split between a modern origin and postmodern future. In the first instance, one must question rather than assume such a contradiction between the demands of practice and theory. These might bring a challenged representation of a necessary disjunction between feminist practice and theory, and with it, between modern and postmodern elements of feminism, by considering the issue of rights. Rights can certainly be understood as a center-piece of modernity, with the initial French civil code, the Declaration of the Rights of Man, representing the first attempt at a modern constitution based directly on the sovereignty of the people (Carty, 1990:1).

Lewis (2017) said that feminism is about equality of the sexes, and the activism to achieve such equality for women. Not all theorists have agreed on how to achieve that equality and what equality looks like. Looking at the feminist identity and feminist theorists, the researcher found that it is important to do something that can help every women’s situation for the better than just watch and wonder how they go about life. Women should

not be taken for granted despite their historical past, their family backgrounds and what surrounds them. Self-efficacy in relation to feminist identity is very important since there is no one who does not want to be valued by a recognition of who he/she is. It is also good not to judge individuals by their present conditions or circumstances because it is not their end.

2.15 FEMINIST IDENTITY

Collins (2001) states that the feminist identity is interpreted as the feminist consciousness or beliefs that represent conformity with a social or political ideology. The feminist identity is about how women perceive and discover themselves as born with a different identity. That is, an identity of their own which reflect their role and status in society. A woman plays a variety of roles such as being a wife, a mother, a sister, a friend, *inter alia*. But her actual identity is that of being a human being. There is a need, therefore, to foster a feminist identity in women. At present, women worldwide are occupied with redefining their position in society in the context of their own experiences. Thus, the issue of identity is crucial for them since they are considered as the repositories of culture and symbols of identity. It is imperative that women' self - efficacy is taken care of.

Evans (1985); Jones and McEwen (2000); Carpenter and Johnson (2003); Graham (2004); Olsson and Walker (2004); Varma and Dhawan (2006); Rederstoff (2007); Leaper and Arias (2011); Cichocka (2013) and Kaur (2013) emphasized that the understanding of one's identity as a woman is very important.

Collins (2001) understands female identity as consisting of multiple elements that are organized in one of the following two ways; a whole with multiple parts, and a collection of multiple parts. The first is an integrated identity where all the elements are connected to each other. The second is the contextual identity where the connection of elements depends on situational variables. The multiple identities include, among others, the traditional categories of occupation, relationships, religion, politics, race and sexual orientation. Also included here are other aspects such as age, the social and economic status, vocational interest and feminism.

When looking at self-efficacy in relation to feminism, women were culturally not supposed to undertake any form of occupation. Feminist identity is linked to women improved self-

acceptance, greater willingness to engage in feminist activism, and superior health and well-being outcomes, and greater efficacy in many areas (Szymanski, 2004; Duncan, 1999; Nielson *et al.*, 2008).

2.16 FEMINIST IDENTITY AND DEVELOPMENT

The feminist theorists argue that women who have a well-developed feminist identity recognize and resist the oppressive messages about the importance of the ideal female body (Murnen & Smolak, 2009). Downing and Roush (1985) defined a theory of feminist identity development (FID) as a theory which presents a framework for understanding women's growth and socio-emotional development. The FID outlines a five-stage developmental process where a woman moves from rejecting the existence of sexism to developing a feminist identity and engaging in activism that supports gender equality. Advancing through FID stages can be enabled by a variety of life events. The following five stages are used in the FID.

- **Passive Acceptance**

Women begin at this stage, where they believe in traditional gender roles especially that men are superior to women, denying that prejudice and discrimination impact negatively on women (Downing & Roush, 1985).

- **Revelation**

This stage is characterized by the dualistic thinking where women question traditional roles and their participation in them, often experiencing anger and guilt.

- **Embeddedness-emanation**

This is the stage of integration and connectedness in the 'female is beautiful' subculture and the 'discovery of sisterhood' and more flexible, relativistic thinking about men.

- **Synthesis**

Having developed a deeper understanding of the positive aspects of being female and having the capacity to integrate this understanding with other components to self, women eventual move towards the development of a healthy feminist identity.

- **Active commitment**

Here, women work to translate their newly developed feminist identity into action within their community, with the aim of changing social norms and promoting the feminist cause. At this stage, men are considered equal, but different from women. The feminist identity development suggests that women do not progress through the five stages in a linear fashion or in a specific order. They can repeatedly recycle through these stages, while processing their issues at some stages, particularly the Revelation or Embeddedness-emanation (Dawning & Roush, 1985). The feminist identity development is relevant in this study because it would help women grow from one level to the other, instead of letting themselves remain in an oppressive environment. The researcher believes that if these women can recycle these stages, some of them would develop despite their conditions.

2.16.1 Empowerment

A component of feminism, which is emerging as a potential factor for protecting women against the development of negative self-image dissatisfaction, is empowerment. Empowerment is the ability of women to make self-determined choices (Kabeer, 1999). It serves as a key factor in imparting knowledge to individuals who needed it so that they can also be developed. This development affects individuals in different ways. Through empowerment, one is bound to move from one level to the other.

2.16.2 Mindfulness

Mindfulness is described as aware of what one does intentionally and being open to fully experience what is happening at present without grasping onto judgments (Siegel, 2010). Stewart (2004) observed that teaching women to develop a mindful state through mindfulness training would assist them to engage in less judgmental thinking about their situation and resist blindly, accepting and integrating what others say about them and have positive beliefs about what they can do.

The aspect of non-judgment is a central component of mindfulness that is associated with being satisfied with oneself. For example, a study by Wood-Barealow, Tylka and Augustus-Horvath (2010) showed that women who endorsed a positive body image avoided judging themselves according to societal ideals. Mindfulness shows 'potential'

as a protective factor to disengage women from judging thoughts and other behavior patterns in relation to their situations (Ryan & Deci, 2000). The way individuals think about themselves determines their actions and behavior. It is important to promote positive thinking about oneself than to focus much on the definition of people because it is in their individuals to believe in themselves despite the prevailing situations around them.

2.17 PREDICTING AND IDENTIFICATION WITH FEMINISM

Although feminist beliefs cannot be conflated with feminist identity, they are related. That is, people are more likely to identify as feminists to the extent that they support gender equality or related feminist goals (Myakovsky & Wittig, 1997). Amongst various factors that influence feminist identity, the feminist prototypes are often overlooked. The researcher believes that the more women expose themselves to, and engage in what other women do, the more this helps them develop themselves. Also, it can build their confidence in such a way that they may find themselves being able to deal with challenges such as insecurity and inferiority complex.

Research suggests that people are more likely to identify as feminists to the extent that they have positive attitudes toward feminists or are exposed to positive information about them (Houvouras & Carter, 2008; Liss, O'Connor, Morosky & Crawford, 2001; Myakovsky & Wittig, 1992; Robnett, Anderson & Hunter, 2012; Roy, Weiburst & Miller, 2007 and Williams & Wittig, 1997). For example, the participants who attributed negative qualities to feminists (like undesirability, plainness) were less likely to identify as feminists compared to those who attributed positive qualities to them (for example, desirability, and sexiness) (Leaper & Arias, 2011). In addition, college women who read negative stereotypes of feminists (for example, stubborn, angry) are subsequently less likely to identify as feminists compared to those who read about positive stereotypes (like confident, independent). The next section looks at the feminist theory as a way of linking self-efficacy and its effects on vocational development of women in low socio-economic communities

2.18 FEMINIST IDENTITY THREATS

Typically, the accusations revolve around feminists as “anti-family” or “man-haters” and “frustrated radicals” Kamen (1991). McGregor, Grailliot, Vasquez, Nash and Jordan

(2007) suggest that a threat in general leads to stronger conviction in and defense of one's beliefs. Doosje, Ellemers and Spears (1995;1997) note that value threats to group identity may cause group members (especially the high identifiers) to stress on group homogeneity, cohesiveness, and loyalty. They added that it is possible that threats to feminist identity have the potential to strengthen the organizing value of the group, and gender equality. In cases of gender discrimination, therefore, the experience of a threat to feminist identity may cause feminists to become even more sensitive to situations of gender discrimination, and more supportive to its victims.

The researcher argues that threats to feminist identity, together with gender discrimination need to be dealt with when it comes to women's individual and group self-efficacy. When feminist identity is threatened, it can be easy for feminists to be motivated to emphasize the differences between those who do and do not share their worldview. Given that no one enjoys being discriminated against, it is important to deal with these kinds of threats in order to promote women's positive self-efficacy in every environment and background.

2.19 SUMMARY

This Chapter examined and explored what self-efficacy is, its origin, role, sources, importance together with its related terms such as, self, self-esteem, self-confidence and self-concept. It explained how self-efficacy affect individuals' lives and their daily behaviours. It brought to light the different behaviours of self-efficacious people and those with low self-concept. Individuals' behaviours are influenced by different factors such as, family background and economic outcomes, lack of confidence, environmental factors and others. The Chapter closed by indicating how self-efficacy is related to feminist identity development.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1. INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter reviewed literature related to this study which has greatly enriched and guided this study with reference to critical issues concerning self-efficacy in vocational development of women in low socio-economic communities. This chapter describes the research design and methodology employed to address the stated research questions concerning self-efficacy in vocational development of women in low socio-economic communities. The chapter is specifically focused on the research design, aim of the study, target population, research site and sampling, research method, data collection, the role of the researcher and qualitative data analysis. Quality assurance techniques, ethical considerations, delimiters of the study and the trustworthiness in qualitative data were also embraced.

3.2. AIM OF THE STUDY

The primary aim of the study was to examine socio-contextual factors influencing self-efficacy in vocational development of women, in low socio-economic communities, in the Vhembe District of Limpopo Province. The objectives of this study were to identify the socio-contextual factors that influence self-efficacy in women of low socio-economic status, to establish the levels of self-efficacy among women of low socio-economic status, to ascertain the extent to which self-efficacy influences women's vocational development and to propose a pragmatic women development model for acceleration of access to vocational development.

3.3. THE RESEARCH DESIGN

A research design is a plan or strategy which moves from underlying philosophical assumptions to specifying the selection of participants, the data gathering techniques to be used and the data analysis to be done. A research design can be seen as a plan of action, framework or structure which links the philosophical foundations and approach to its methods in order to provide accountable and sensible answers to all the research questions and the research objectives (Creswell 2003:53). Its purpose is to integrate the

different components of the study into a coherent and logical entity, thereby ensuring the research problem is adequately and effectively addressed in a systematic and comprehensive manner that gives credibility to the research results rather than in a haphazard manner. It constitutes the blueprint for the collection, measurement and analysis of data (Maree, 2007; Gorard, 2013). The research design helps to form a golden thread to tie all the important components of the study. In this study, the researcher employed the qualitative approach.

Van Den Aardweg and Van Den Aardweg (1988:189), describe the qualitative approach as an assessment of a situation expressed in words; it is concerned with qualities rather than quantities or figures thus it describes types and styles in an effort at understanding an individual as a totality. Individuals should always be seen in the light of their relationships to themselves and their life-world and this cannot be determined by means of a scale. Not even intelligence can be determined as a figure but should be seen qualitatively as an aspect of the relationship of the individual and specific circumstances. The qualitative approach therefore takes cognisance of qualitative data in obtaining a total understanding of an individual.

Qualitative research calls for the collected data to be rich in describing people and places together with everything happening around the people in their everyday experiences. Flick (2011:12) states that qualitative research is not modelled on measurements as found in natural sciences. Qualitative research addresses issues by using any of the following three approaches: grasping the subjective meaning of issues from the perspectives of the participants; second, latent meanings of the situation are put in focus and lastly, social practices and the life world of the participants are described.

This study uses the phenomenological approach basically because of the research questions of the study. Creswell (2014) describes phenomenological methodology as a qualitative research that is concerned with how human beings experience certain phenomenon. A phenomenological study attempts to set aside biases and preconceived assumptions about human experiences, feelings and responses.

Furthermore, Creswell (2014) indicates that the phenomenological methodology includes interviews, conversations, participant observation, focus meetings, analysis diaries and

other personal texts. The methodology is designed to be less structured and more open-ended to encourage the participants to share details regarding their experiences. It emphasizes the subjectivity of personal lived experiences. This type of research utilizes the participants themselves as experts in the chosen phenomenal being analysed.

3.4. RESEARCH PARADIGM

Creswell (2014) wrote that a paradigm is the patterning of a thinking of a person; a principal example among examples; an exemplar or model to follow according to which design actions are taken. In other words, a paradigm is an action submitting to a view (Stanage (1987); Denzin, Lincoln (2000)). This view is supported by Denzin and Lincoln (2000:157 who define a research paradigm as “a basic set of beliefs that guide actions”, dealing with first principles, “ultimate” or the researcher’s view.

This study used the interpretive phenomenological analysis as its paradigm. This paradigm made meaning out of the subjectivity given by the participants. This type of research utilizes the participants themselves as experts in the chosen phenomenal being analysed.

3.5. EPISTEMOLOGY

A researcher’s epistemology according to Holloway (1997; Mason (1996) and Creswell (1994) is literary the theory of knowledge which serves to decide how the social phenomenon will be studied. In this study, the epistemological position taken can be stated as follows:

- a) Data are contained within the perspectives of participants involved
- b) Because of this, the study engaged the participants to collect the data.
- c) The researcher observed the participants over a period of time.

Based on Creswell (2014), this study identifies phenomenological methodology as the best means for this type of the study.

3.6. THE TARGET POPULATION

Tuckman and Harper (2012:267) state that a population is the group about which the researcher wants to gain information and draw conclusions; are the individuals in the universe who possess specific characteristics. These individuals are the set of entities to which measurements of interests to the practitioner or researcher were presented. Similarly, De Vos *et al* (2002:198) explain that a population is a term that sets boundaries on the study units or the total set from which the individuals or units of the study are chosen.

Tshuma (2010:86) posits that:

The population in the research context is any group of individuals that have one or more characteristics in common that is of interest to the researcher for purposes of gaining information and drawing conclusions.

Furthermore, Welman, Kruger and Mitchell (2011) note that population is the study's objects and consist of individuals, groups, organizations, human products, and events or the conditions to which they are exposed. A population encompasses the total collection of all units of analysis about which the researcher wishes to make specific conclusions; it is the full set of cases from which a sample is drawn.

In this study, the target population was comprised of health workers in the management section, traditional leaders, community leaders, religious leaders and women in low socio-economic communities of the Vhembe District. The rationale for the researcher to choose these groups is because they all meet different women of low socio-economic status and they always see their behaviours and the consequences thereof when these women faced different life situations.

3.7. SAMPLING

Lewis-Beck, Bryman and Liao (2004:993) point out that sampling is the deliberate selection of the most appropriate participants to be included in the study. The following section focuses on the strategies employed when selecting the sample for the study.

3.7.1. Sampling Strategies

The basic idea in sampling is extrapolation from the part to the whole, from the “sample” to the “population”. The sample has been chosen to fairly represent the population.

Sampling is the researcher’s acknowledgement that it was simply not possible to study everyone involved in the research setting, hence, it entails placing a boundary in connection with the collection of data. This means that the researcher needed to make decisions about the ‘who, where, when and why’ in relation to the participants. Qualitative researchers tend to work with small samples of people embedded in the context under investigation (Miles and Huberman, 1994). The authors also provide a typology of sampling strategies that may be used in qualitative research (see Table below):

Table 1: Typology of sampling strategies in qualitative inquiry

(Source: Miles and Huberman, 1994:28)

| <i>Type of Sampling</i> | <i>Purpose</i> |
|------------------------------------|--|
| Maximum Variation | Documents diverse variations and identifies important common patterns |
| Homogenous | Focuses, reduces, simplifies, facilitates group interviewing |
| Critical Case | Permits logical generalization and maximum application of information to other cases |
| Theory based | Finding examples of a theoretical construct and thereby elaborate and examine it |
| Confirming and disconfirming cases | Elaborating initial analysis, seeking exceptions, looking for variation |
| Snowball or chain | Identifies cases of interest from people who know what cases are information-rich |
| Extreme or deviant case | Learning from highly unusual manifestation of the phenomenon of interest |
| Typical Case | Highlights what is normal or average |
| Intensity | Information-rich cases that manifest the phenomenon intensely but not extremely |
| Politically important case | Attract desired attention or avoids attracting undesired attention |
| Random purposeful | Adds credibility to sample when potential purposeful sample is too large |
| Stratified purposeful | Illustrates sub-groups; facilitates comparisons |
| Criterion | All cases that meet criterion; useful for quality assurance |
| Opportunistic | Following new leads; taking advantage of the unexpected |
| Combination or mixed | Triangulation, flexibility, meets multiple interests and needs |

| | |
|-------------|--|
| Convenience | Saves time, money and effort, but at the expense of information and credibility. |
|-------------|--|

Qualitative researchers are primarily interested in studying the spoken and written representations of the human experience (Punch, 2005).

Mertens (2013:316) indicates that the strategy chosen for selecting samples varies based on the logistics, ethics and paradigm of the researcher. An important strategy for choosing a sample is to determine the dimensions of diversity that are important to the study. To solve the dilemma, this study used the purposive sampling technique. Tichapondwa (2013:124) posits that:

The primary consideration in purposive sampling is your judgement as to who can provide the best information to achieve the objectives of the study. You as a researcher only go to those people who in your opinion are likely to have the required information and will be willing to share it with you.

Similarly, Shava (2012:160) said, “the main aim in purposive sampling is to identify “information-rich” participants who have certain characteristics detailed knowledge or direct experience relevant to the phenomenon of interest to the study or researcher”. Amongst the types of purposive sampling strategies, this study used maximum variation sampling strategy. This strategy helps the researcher to select a small number of units/cases that maximizes the diversity relevant to the research questions. The rationale for using this strategy is to understand how a phenomenon is seen and understood among different people, in different settings and at different times.

In addition, Lewis-Beck *et al.* (2004:884) clarify the point that purposive sampling strategy in qualitative inquiry is the deliberate seeking out of participants with characteristics, according to the needs of the developing analysis and emerging theory. Types of purposive sampling are nominated or snowball sampling (in which participants are referred by members of the same group who have already been enrolled in the study). In nominated or snowball sampling, the researcher locates a “good” participant and at the end of the interview, asked the participant to help with the study by referring the

researcher to another person who may like to participate in the study. Nominated or snowball sampling is particularly useful when groups were hard to identify or may not volunteer or respond to a notice advertising for participants.

In this study, data were collected from the following five different groups of participants:

- 8 Health Workers
- 8 Traditional leaders
- 8 Community leaders
- 8 Religious leaders and
- 26 Women from Low socio-economic communities.

The rationale for selecting the other four groups namely, Health workers, Traditional Leaders, Community Leaders, and Religious leaders was mainly to triangulate data Lewis-Beck, Bryman and Liao (2004:993) point out that sampling is the deliberate selection of the most appropriate participants to be included in the study. in vocational development of women in low socio-economic communities. All these groups meet these women on day-to-day basis. It must however be explained that amongst the traditional leaders, community leaders and religious leaders, there are women from low socio-economic communities. The researcher assumed that the understanding and perception of every group of participants about the self-efficacy in vocational development of these women were essential in this study and the day-to-day experiences of women in low socio-economic communities.

3.8. RESEARCH SITE

The fieldwork for this study was conducted in the Vhembe District of Limpopo Province.

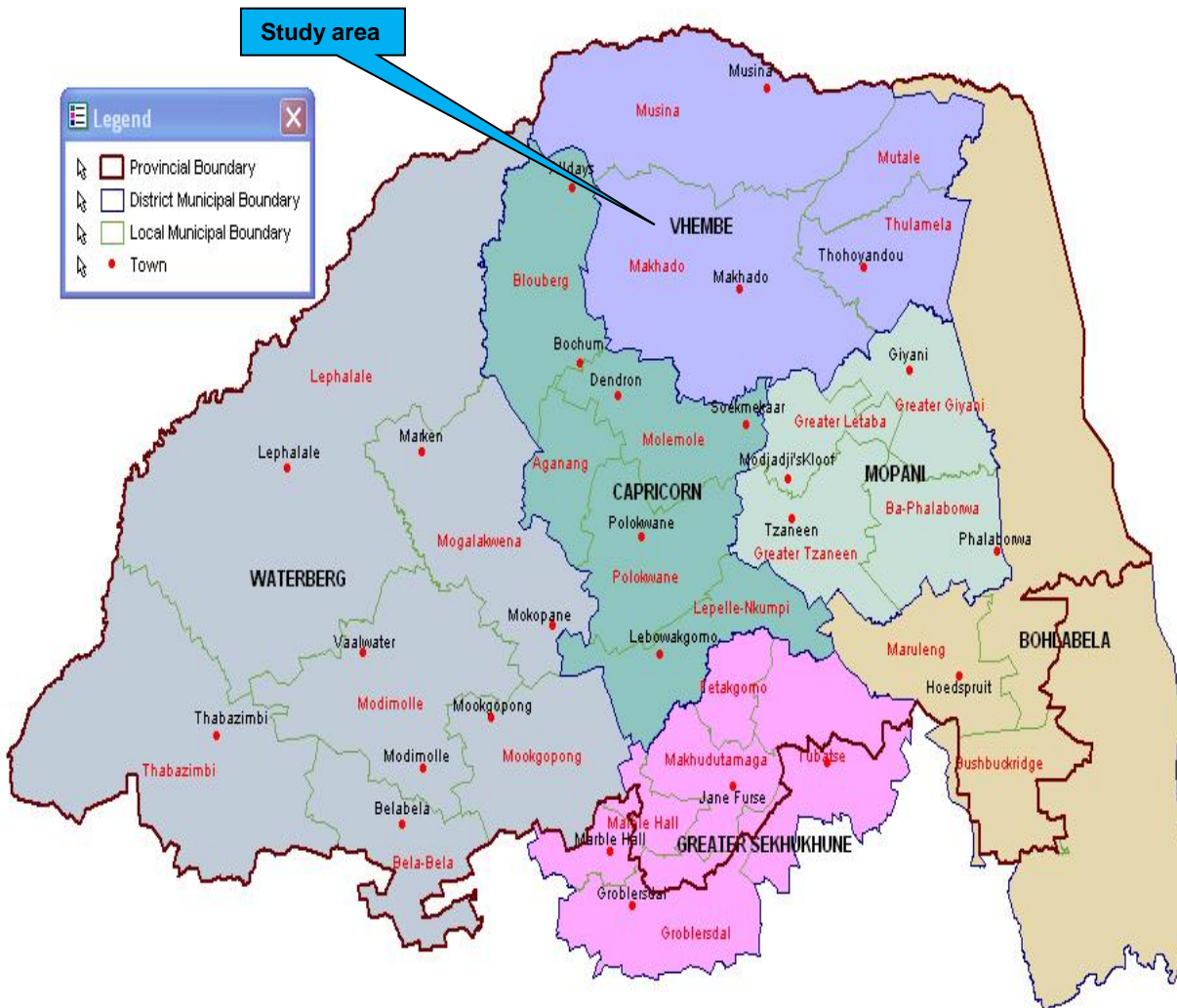


Figure 3: Vhembe District within the Limpopo Province (Source: Integrated Development Plan: 2017/18-2021/22: 1)

3.8.1. Pre-testing

Pilot study is an important component of each study. According to Welman, Kruger and Mitchell (2010:167), a pilot study has the following advantages:

- *The understanding of the participants regarding the research problem and interview questions can be determined;*
- *First-hand insight into what might be called ‘cultural endowment’ of the participants can be gained;*
- *Additional information with regards to improving the final draft of questions can be obtained, and*

- *It can determine the amount of time needed for the questions.*

To ensure the success of this study, the interviews were initially conducted with other three different individuals whose community environment and socio-economic status were the same as those who would participate in the study, to identify potentially unclear question items. These individuals were requested to freely share their experiences and views concerning the self-efficacy of women in vocational development. Based on their response, several changes were affected on the interview questions.

3.9. THE RESEARCH METHOD

Polit and Hungler (2004:233) explain the term 'methodology' as ways of obtaining, organizing and analysing data. The research methodology section presents the materials, tools, or instruments used and different methods or techniques employed concerning the study in question.

Flick (2011:81) indicates that for an individual to be able to make the right choice of method to be used, the first decision one needs to make, concerns the selection of a research problem. This is what the researcher did as it has been indicated in the first chapter of this study and this major implications for the subsequent procedures. In this study, a qualitative research paradigm was chosen based on the nature of the study at hand which sought to explore socio-contextual factors influencing self-efficacy in vocational development of women in low socio-economic communities in Vhembe District.

3.9.1. Qualitative approach

Rudestam and Newton (2001:36) argue that the emphasis in qualitative is on understanding the following: "the 'socially constructed nature of reality; the nature of the 'close relationship between the researcher and the object of study; and the 'context that influences the inquiry".

From the qualitative (interactive) perspective, which could be described as a phenomenological one, the researcher explored the experience and perceptions of the health workers, the community leaders, the religious leaders and the traditional leaders

who were the participants in the study with open-ended questions interviews and focus group interviews (Macmillan & Schumacher (2010).

3.9.2. Rationale for choosing Qualitative approach

The rationale for the researcher to choose qualitative approach is because of the nature of the research questions that were stated in this study. Patton (2002) has indicated that the choice of qualitative methods are appropriate under three conditions: first, because many educational and psychological programs are based on humanistic values, the intended uses of the research may prefer the type of personal contact and data that emerge from a qualitative study. Second, qualitative methods can also be chosen when no acceptable, valid, reliable, appropriate quantitative measure is available for the desired outcome of a program. A third reason might be to add depth to a quantitative study already conducted on the topic.

The researcher chose qualitative approach therefore, because it is more concerned with the everyday lives of individuals, groups, societies, organizations and what is happening around them. It gives a holistic meaning and understanding of the situation around the people being studied. This design helps a researcher to get closer to the participants and to understand their situation better, hence, it promotes the ultimate relationship between the researcher and the participants.

One of the qualitative approaches's outstanding attributes and strengths is that as an approach, it places all the research participants at the centre of the study as they provide views, opinions and facts as sought by the researcher. Participants' presence is highly acknowledged and valued as important in the research process.

In addition, it means that data were collected as the phenomenon of interest unfolded naturally which gave the researcher a global picture of the underlying reasons, opinions and motivations of the subjects of interest, thus allowing a deeper understanding of the phenomenon of interest to the researcher. In other words, in qualitative research all participants are freely allowed to share their views and opinions with no reservations.

In this study, qualitative research was found suitable because issues interrogated were everyday social issues and could only be better understood by observing and interacting

with the participants in their real-life settings. Issues of self-efficacy in vocational development of women draw a lot of emotions when looking at the contextual factors of influence and the personal experiences; this could only be studied and understood better by interacting and interfacing with research participants.

To justify the use of qualitative approach in this study, Creswell, Klassen, Clark and Smith (2011:4) state the following:

One salient strength of qualitative research is its focus on the contexts and meaning of human lives and experiences for the purpose of inductive or theory development driven research, qualitative researchers want those who are studied to speak for themselves, to provide their perspectives in words or other actions. Therefore, qualitative research is an interactive process in which the persons studied teach the researcher about their lives. It is a systematic and rigorous form of inquiry that uses methods of data collection such as in-depth interviews, ethnographic observation, and review of documents. Qualitative data helps researchers understand processes, especially those that emerge over time, provide detailed information about settings or context, and emphasize the voices of participants through quotes.

Qualitative research methods and techniques are appropriate to the social sciences because they are well suited to exploration and discovery in times of rapid and fundamental change. Qualitative inquiry was also deemed appropriate for this study for the following reasons (Mertens, 2012):

- It is generally conducted in natural settings.
- It utilizes the researcher as the chief instrument in both data gathering and analysis.
- It emphasizes thick description so that it obtains rich and deep data which illuminate everyday patterns of action and meaning from the perspective of those being studied.
- It focuses on social processes rather than primary or exclusively on outcomes.

- It employs multi-data gathering methods, especially participant interviews.
- It uses an inductive approach to data analysis, extracting its concepts from the mass of detail which constitutes the database.

From the above information, the nature of this study does not need the manipulation of research subjects but needs the researcher to be deeply involved with them so as to observe them in their natural settings. Through observation, interviews and focus group discussions, the researcher interrogated the effectiveness of self-efficacy, its origin, importance, role and its socio-contextual factors of influence in the lives of women. The day-to-day experiences of health workers who are in management, community leaders, traditional leaders and religious leaders informed this study. The contributions of these research participants enabled the researcher to gather needed information on self-efficacy in vocational development of women in low socio-economic communities thus providing the solution to the problem and drawing conclusions from the findings.

3.10. DATA COLLECTION

Mertens (2013:241, 351) contends that options for data collection in research include tests, surveys, checklists, observations, records and documents reviews as well as interviews. The purpose of data collection is to learn something about people or things. Qualitative data collection methods vary and use structured, unstructured and semi-structured techniques, some common methods include focus groups (group discussions).

For this study, data were collected through observation, focus group discussions and individual interviews. Focus group discussions were used for health workers and religious leaders, while the community leaders, low socio-economic women and the traditional leaders were interviewed individually. These were then transcribed in preparation for data analysis and presentation.

- **Observation**

Observation allows a researcher to independently observe and record the actions and behaviours of people. There were two main fundamentally different approaches when using observation as a data collection method, namely, structured observation and

participant observation. Structured observation, as the name implies, means that the researcher adopts a detached stance (Robson, 2002).

For this study, the researcher observed different participants in their everyday life-settings, their behaviours and their way of responding to their situations. When doing observation, the researcher did not depend on the participants' possibly misleading reports, but, instead, observed directly from a distance, meanwhile, taking notes of whatever was happening around them. The observations helped the researcher to discover and understand the uniqueness of the participants.

- **Interviews**

The data were collected during deliberately created opportunities. An initial interview was sought with each community leader, Women of low socio-economic status as well as traditional leaders, during which the purpose of the study was explained to each one of them. Participants were given an opportunity to verbalize whatever they did not understand.

The interviews were designed also to give the participants an opportunity to express their own perceptions and opinions. For triangulation purposes, open-ended questions were included, mostly to provide indicators for the researcher as to difficulties and motivations experienced by different community stakeholders.

De Vos *et al* (2012:342-343), suggest that researchers can obtain information through direct interchange with an individual or a group that is known or expected to possess the knowledge they seek. During interviewing, the researcher applied the following interviewing techniques and tips to ensure an effective interview:

- The participant did 90% of the talking;
- Asked clear and brief questions;
- Asked one question at a time;
- Asked open-ended questions and asked questions that required detailed answers rather than “yes” and “no”;

- Avoided sensitive questions for the participant might feel uneasy and adopt avoidance tactics if the questionings were too personal;
- Asked experience/behaviour questions before opinions/feelings questions.

The interview technique is considered the most common form of data collection used in qualitative research (Punch, 2005). Punch further argues that it is a good way of accessing people's perceptions, meanings and their world-views. Fontana and Frey (1994) used a three-way system for identifying the different types of interviews at a researcher's disposal - structured; semi-structured; and unstructured.

Field notes were also taken during the interviews as Tuckman and Harper (2012:408), state that with the qualitative research, data should include field notes that the researcher will be writing during the interviews. Whatever information the researcher has written during interview as the participants responded to all the questions, was helpful in meeting the objectives of this study.

During interviews, a tape-recorder was used to capture every information given by the participants to get the verbatim statements from the participants. And, in order not to lose any of the important information from the participants. Welman, Kruger and Mitchell (2010:199), suggest that notes should be made of everything that is said during interview. For this purpose, a tape-recorder was particularly useful. The researcher also took note of any non-verbal behaviour of the participants. De Vos *et al* (2012:344), advise that researchers should not switch the tape-recorder on and off as this causes unnecessary attention to it rather, they should be alert, even when the tape-recorder is turned off as the interview may not necessarily be over.

Interviews with participants comprising of community leaders, women from low socio-economic communities and traditional leaders were personally conducted by the researcher on a one-to-one basis. Focus group discussions were employed to the Health workers and Religious leaders. Some of these participants were interviewed in their mother-tongue after all the questions were translated by a professional translator from the University of Venda. The translation was done to allow the participants freedom to express themselves freely. All these groups were interviewed because they were in a good position to detail the socio-contextual factors influencing self-efficacy in vocational

development of women, as they all meet women most of the time. The information was provided by some individuals who used their mother-tongue which thereafter was translated to English.

The interview schedule consisted of sixteen simple questions, and care was taken to ask questions which were flexible enough to allow for responses that were unexpected by the researcher. In order to obtain more information from the participants, the researcher also probed and made follow-up questions where it was needed, and some notes were also taken (De Vos *et al.* 2012).

Participants were put at ease by initially engaging in small talks, which progressed to an explanation of the study; excessive informality was avoided.

The individual interviews and focus group interviews were specifically designed to provide a focus for the analysis of the data. Ten specific themes have been suggested as necessary part of a qualitative enquiry and for action on the part of a researcher (Patton 1990:40-41; Swanson & Woltke, 1997:95).

As mentioned in the previous paragraph, from individual interviews and focus group discussions, there were different themes designed to provide a focus for the analysis of data. So, the following table indicates the relationships in this study:

Table 2: Themes identified by Patton-implemented research.

| <i>No</i> | <i>Theme</i> | <i>Research Action Implemented</i> |
|-----------|---|---|
| 1 | Naturalistic enquiry (real world situation} | Interviews were conducted with participants |
| 2 | Inductive analysis (begins with collection of detail to lead to generalization) | Data was collected by different means (interviews, observation, focus group) to establish links between findings to gain insights |
| 3 | Holistic perspective | Pilot study has been done to gain more understanding |
| 4 | Qualitative data (collection of detailed description) | Open-ended questions were provided, and interviews conducted to allow opportunity to self-expression |
| 5 | Personal contact and insight (personal contact between researcher and participants | Interviews and focus groups were conducted personally by the researcher |
| 6 | Dynamic systems (the object of study viewed as dynamic and changing during the study) | Interviews conducted at different times |
| 7 | Unique case orientation (each research case is unique and special) | Each participant was unique, hence enquiry about culture as well as individual environment |
| 8 | Context sensitivity (placing of findings in a social historical and temporal context | The temporal context of the research |
| 9 | Empathetic neutrality of the researcher | The researcher, although a member of the community was not part of the participants |

| | | |
|----|---|--|
| | | being researched nor a friend of any of the participants in this study |
| 10 | Design flexibility (enquiry process adaptive, potentially changing as the research is conducted | The use of pilot study in the design of the interviews and focus groups to aid in the interpretation of the results provide for necessary change and flexibility |

(Adapted from Patton, 1990:40-41; Swanson & Woltke, 1997:95)

De Vos *et al* (2012:308) state that unlike the quantitative paradigm, the qualitative paradigm requires the design of the research to be more than a set of “worked-out-formulas”. The qualitative researcher is concerned with understanding rather than explanations, with naturalistic observation rather than controlled measurement, with a subjective exploration of reality from the perspective of an insider as opposed to that of an outsider, predominant in a quantitative paradigm.

To understand more of this approach, a qualitative researcher does not become a spectator in whatever is going on with the participants, instead, he/she becomes more involved by ‘going closer’ to the participants so that she can understand them better. The researcher becomes part of the everyday experiences that the participants come across in their real world. The researcher does not depend only on the individuals’ explanations and perceptions of the problem, but also plays an important role as an insider. There is mutual relationship between the researcher and the participants.

Golafshani (2003:600) posits that:

Qualitative research uses a naturalistic approach that seeks to understand in context specific settings, such as ‘real world setting where the researcher does not attempt to manipulate the phenomenon of interest’. Broadly defined means any kind of research that produces findings not arrived at by means of statistical procedures or other means of quantification.

To explain more about this phenomenon, Mertens (2013:225) indicates that qualitative methods are used in research that is designed to provide an in-depth description of a specific program practice or setting. It consists of a set of interpretive material practices

that make the world visible”. From the above definitions, qualitative research is a process of collecting, analysing and interpreting data by observing what individuals do and say. It is participants-driven in terms of collecting information as the researcher must be deeply immersed with the participants in their communities to observe and record data as it happens. It is chiefly non-numeric, and it tends to focus on exploring in as much detail as possible to achieve ‘depth’ rather than just ‘breadth’ of the everyday experiences.

- **Focus groups**

According to Krueger and Casey (2000), focus groups, are group interviews that rely, not on the question-and-answer format of interviews, but on an interaction within the group. This reliance on interaction between participants is designed to elicit more of the participants’ point of view than would be evidenced in more researcher-dominated interviewing. A focus group is defined as a small gathering of individuals who have a common interest or characteristics, assembled by a moderator who uses the group and its interactions to gain in-depth information about a specific topic (Ncube, 2014).

The emphasis of a focus group is on the interaction between the members of the group and the construction of joint meaning about a topic. In this manner, it allowed the researcher to develop an understanding of why people feel the way they do about a specific topic (Punch, 2005; Bryman and Bell, 2007). In this type of data collection method, the role of the researcher was that of a facilitator and less of an interviewer (Punch, 2005). Basically, the researcher used the interaction amongst the group to produce the data and insights via group interaction. It is argued that the group situation stimulates the individuals within a group to make explicit their opinion or point of view, something that they are reluctant to do in a one-on-one interview situation (Robson, 2002). The researcher focused on the list provided by Bryman and Bell (2007) of useful practical tips that need to be considered when using focus groups, namely:

- *It works best from a data collection point of view if the group discussion was tape-recorded and subsequently transcribed for analysis.*
- *The number of focus group discussions that one needs to have in his or her data collection must be carefully considered. The norm in qualitative*

research in this regard is between 12 and 15 different focus group discussions on a specific topic.

- *The size of each focus group should range between 6 and 10 individuals.*
- *The role of the researcher needs to be carefully considered. The aim of a focus group is to obtain the perspectives of the individuals within the focus group and therefore the approach should not be structured or intrusive in any way.*
- *Selecting the participants or individuals for a focus group should utilize one or more of the usual sampling strategies.*

Group interviews are essentially a qualitative technique for collecting information. The researcher directs the interaction and inquiry either in a very structured or unstructured manner, depending on the aim of the investigation. The aim of using such group interviews is not to replace individual interviewing but to gather information that can perhaps not be collected easily by means of individual interviews.

From the above information, focus groups are deliberately created for the purposes of soliciting in-depth information on the phenomenon of interest to the researcher. In this study, the participants were not just assembled but were chosen because of the rich information they possessed about the topic. Some literature also views focus groups discussions as a group interviews of approximately six to twelve people who share similar characteristics, common interests and experiences which were of significance to the researcher.

3.11. THE ROLE OF THE REASEACHER

In qualitative studies, the researcher's role is quite distinct. The researcher is considered an instrument of data collection (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003). This means that data are mediated through this human instrument, rather than through inventories, questionnaires, or machines. To fulfil this role, consumers of research need to know about the human instrument. A qualitative researcher needs to describe relevant aspects of oneself, including any biases and assumptions, any expectations, and experiences to qualify her to conduct the research (Greenbank, 2003).

A qualitative researcher needs to also explain if the participants' role was emic, who was a full participant in activity, program, or phenomenon, or the role is more from an outside view, more of an objective viewer. There could be a great deal of variations and in-between; sometimes a researcher starts as an outsider and then becomes a member of the group as the discussions progress; or the reverse can occur- the researcher starts as a member of a group then becomes a more objective observant (Punch, 1998).

For this study, the researcher became a sensitive observer who records phenomena as faithfully as possible, while also raising additional questions, checking out hunches and moving deeper into analysis of the data (McMillan & Schumacher, 1993:393). It was important that the researcher should not be too far removed from the issues at the base of the enquiry. In this case, the researcher was a single individual, herself a pastor in the church within the research area, and a mother-tongue speaker of the principal language, Tshivenda, thus to a great degree sharing the culture of all the participants alike. All these contributed to an appropriate understanding of and sensitivity to the factors which emerged for the investigation.

As Welman, Kruger and Mitchell (2011:19) note that to the phenomenologists, what the researcher observes is not the reality as such, but an interpreted reality, the researcher asked probing questions, then listened, then thought about it. The researcher asked more probing questions where necessary to get to deeper levels of conversation. This happened because an effective qualitative researcher seeks to build a picture using ideas and theories from a wide variety of sources.

3.12. QUALITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS

Punch (2005), argues that there is no single way to undertake qualitative data analysis. The only provision to keep in mind is that the research questions determine the nature of data collected and therefore the choice of data analysis technique to be used by the researcher. Robson (2002), suggests that there are two assumptions embedded in qualitative data analysis.

Firstly, if one has a large quantity of data, one uses software package to handle and analyse the data. Secondly, if he or she already has basic experience in in qualitative

data analysis, he/she will require and seek out the assistance of someone who does have the experience in this type of data analysis.

Miles and Huberman (1994), state that there are some recurring features of qualitative data analysis that the researcher needs to adhere to in undertaking qualitative data analysis. These common features are:

- *Assigning codes to the initial data obtained from methods such as, observation, interviews, and documents;*
- *Adding commentary and personal reflections as the data collection proceeds, commonly referred to as 'memoing';*
- *Identification of similar phrases, patterns, themes, relationships, sequences, and differences between participants within the data set;*
- *Using these patterns or themes to focus the subsequent round of data collection;*
- *Gradually and inductively forming generalizations that cover the uniformities that are emerging from the data set and*
- *Linking these generalizations into a formalized body of knowledge or theory.*

In this study, the data collected by means of interviews and the focus group discussions were summarised and analysed thematically. At the end of the study, the researcher used a triangulation approach as she observed, interviewed and used focus groups together with a summary of the responses of all the participants, used to aid in the interpretation of the results.

3.13. QUALITY ASSURANCE TECHNIQUES

Robson (2002) contends that validity, generalizability and reliability are central concepts within qualitative research. Validity refers to whether the findings are really what they appear to be about, and generalizability is concerned with the extent to which the data are applicable outside the specifics of the current context studied (Robson, 2002:93).

Reliability in the context of qualitative research refers to the trustworthiness of the research process undertaken. Denzin and Lincoln (2005:24) and Leedy and Ormrod

(2005:100), agree that terms, such as 'credibility', 'transferability', 'dependability', 'confirmability' and 'verification' should replace the positivist criteria of 'validity' and 'reliability' that are utilised within the qualitative paradigm.

Miles and Huberman (1994:277), point out that all research is subjected to 'goodness criteria' and that the terminology utilised is dependent on one's epistemological position. In this context, reliability/ dependability/ auditability refers to the consistency with which the research process was undertaken. The internal validity/ credibility/ authenticity refers specifically to the credibility of the research findings and therefore the conclusions that have been drawn from the data. The external validity/ transferability/ fittingness pertains to the extent to which the research findings and conclusions drawn may be transferred to other contextual settings.

To enhance quality in this study that employed qualitative methods, several processes that were proposed by Lincoln and Guba (1999) were taken into consideration and these are discussed below.

3.13.1. Trustworthiness in Qualitative data

Trustworthiness is the standard of the rigor in qualitative research. The focus of the interpretation of any social phenomenon, which is in this case the qualitative data from the interviews with all the participants, should be viewed as something that can be used for better understanding. The trustworthiness of qualitative research generally is often questioned by positivists, perhaps because their concepts of validity and reliability cannot be addressed in the same way in naturalistic work. Many naturalistic investigators have, however, preferred to use different terminology to distance themselves from the positivist paradigm.

Table 3: Guba’s Four Criteria for Trustworthiness

| <i>Quality Criterion</i> | <i>Possible provisions made by researcher</i> |
|--------------------------|--|
| Credibility | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Adoption of appropriate well-organized research method -Development of early familiarity with culture of participating organizations -Triangulation via use of different methods, different types of informants and different sites -Tactics to help ensure honesty in informants -Interactive questioning in data collection dialogues -Negative case analysis -Debriefing sessions between researcher and superiors -Peer scrutiny of project -Use of “reflective commentary” -Description of background, qualifications and experience of the researcher -Member checks of data collected, and interpretations/theories formed -Thick description of phenomenon under scrutiny -Examination of previous research to frame findings |
| Transferability | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Provision of background data to establish context of study and detailed description of phenomenon in question to allow comparison to be made. |
| Dependability | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Employment of “overlapping methods” -In-depth methodological description to allow study to be repeated |
| Confirmability | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Triangulation to reduce effect of investigator bias -Admission of researcher’s beliefs and assumptions -Recognition of shortcomings in study’s methods and their potential effects |

| | |
|--|--|
| | -In-depth methodological description to allow integrity of research to be scrutinized -Use of diagrams to demonstrate “audit trail” |
|--|--|

Lincoln and Guba (1985); Krefting (1990:217), Denzin and Lincoln (2003) and Golafshani (2003:601), proposed criteria that they believe should be considered by qualitative researchers in pursuit of a trustworthy study. Lincoln and Guba (1985) asserts that the whole area of qualitative inquiry was still emerging and being defined. Guba’s constructs have been accepted by many and they correspond to the criteria employed by positivist investigators. These are the following:

- Credibility (in preference to internal validity);
- Transferability (in preference to external validity/ generalizability);
- Dependability (in preference to reliability);
- Confirmability (in preference to objectivity)

For this study, the researcher sought to increase the credibility of the interview data by implementing member checking and peer review. Krefting (1990) suggests that member checking, which is where the interviewee plays an active role in being part of the process. He or she in bringing in his/her own meaning or interpretation of the data, is a form of triangulation and thus minimizes researcher bias (Creswell, 2003). It was therefore planned that the other three participants should be given the opportunity to review the data and make comments or changes where they felt it was necessary. In such review, the data may also be given to impartial colleagues who may have experience of the qualitative methods, and the research findings are then discussed (Krefting, 1990). The focus groups meetings were designed to serve this purpose.

3.13.2. Credibility

Mertens (2013:256), states that credibility includes prolonged and persistent engagement. Lincoln and Guba (1985) proposed a criterion for quality in qualitative research that include a deep and close involvement of researchers in the community of interest combined with enough distance from the phenomenon under study to record

accurately observed actions. Credibility also covers membership checks and peer debriefing, progressive subjectivity, negative case analysis and triangulation.

In addition, checking with stakeholders (participants) in the research (member checks) a working with other researchers (peer debriefing), are recommended practices. Member checks involve the researcher seeking verification with the respondent groups about the constructions that are developing because of the data collected and analysed. Cho and Trent (2006), discuss this concept of “validity in qualitative research as an interactive process between the researcher, the researched, and the collected data that is aimed at achieving a relatively higher levels of accuracy and consensus by means of revisiting facts, feelings, experiences and values or beliefs collected and interpreted” (Tshuma (2010:160); De Vos *et al* (2012:419) and Ncube (2014:111).

To increase the quality of research in this study, the researcher made use of different sources of data who included health workers, religious leaders, traditional leaders and community leaders. This allowed a corroboration of the findings from these different participants. The researcher also involved three different participants in which the main purpose is to determine whether the relevant data can be obtained from the actual participants.

3.13.3. Transferability

Transferability included a thick description and multiple cases. Mertens (2012:259) and De Vos *et al* (2012:420), explain that in transferability, the researcher asks whether the findings of the research can be transferred from a specific situation or case to another. Transferability is the degree to which the findings of the study can apply or transfer beyond the bounds of this research project.

Lincoln and Guba (1985:69), discussed the term “transferability” as:

The parallel concept that enables readers of the research to make judgements based on similarities and differences when comparing the research situation to their own.

Mertens (2013: 259), contends that in qualitative research, the burden of transferability is on the reader to determine the degree of similarity between the study site and the

receiving context. The researcher's responsibility is to provide enough detail to enable the reader to make such a judgement. Extensive and careful description of the time, place, context and culture is known as a "thick description".

To achieve transferability in this study, the researcher provided rich, detailed and thick description about the research methods, strategy of inquiry used, the researcher's role, sampling, data collection methods, procedures for recording, storing and managing information, data analysis steps, including coding, interpretations, validation as well as data presentation. The criterion against which applicability of qualitative data is assessed, was met by this research when the findings fit into contexts outside the study situation that are determined by the degree of similarity or goodness of fit between the two contexts.

3.13.4. Dependability

De Vos *et al* (2012:420), indicate that for the findings to be dependable the researcher asks whether the research process is logical, well documented and audited. This is an alternative to reliability, in which the researcher attempts to account for changing conditions in the phenomenon chosen for study as well as changes in the design created by an increasingly refined understanding of the setting. Dependability in qualitative research can be compared to reliability in quantitative studies. In other words, dependability is an evaluation of the quality of the integrated process of data collection, data analysis and theory generation.

To address the dependability issue more directly, the researcher has reported the process within the study in detail and what had been done so that future researchers can repeat the work, if not necessarily to gain the same results. The research approach that was used has been fully explained as well as its implementations describing what was planned and executed by both the researcher and the participants. The operational detail of data gathering, how it was done and evaluating the effectiveness of the process of inquiry undertaken have been clearly explained.

If a report is not detailed enough, the research design may be viewed as a "prototype model" which is a model or a program which is not based on strict planning but is an early

approximation of the final findings in a study (Patton, 1990). Such in-depth coverage therefore, also allows the reader to assess the extent to which proper research practices have been followed.

3.13.5. Confirmability

Patton (1990) associated objectivity in science with the use of instruments that are not dependent on human skills and perception. In confirmability, steps must be taken to help ensure, as far as possible, that the findings are the results of the experiences and the ideas of the informants, rather than the characteristics and preferences of the researcher. The role of triangulation in promoting such confirmability is more emphasized in this context to reduce the effect of investigator bias.

Miles and Huberman (1994) proposes that a key criterion for confirmability is the extent to which the researcher admits his or her own predispositions. All the decisions made, and methods adopted have been acknowledged within this study and even the rationale for using qualitative approach has been explained. Preliminary theories that ultimately were not borne out by the data were also discussed thoroughly. So, for confirmability sake, in this study, the detailed methodological descriptions that have been given can enable the reader to determine how far the data and contents emerging from it may be accepted.

3.14. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

In every research, ethics are particularly important (McMillan & Schumacher, 1993:197), in that they deal with beliefs about what is right or wrong, proper or improper, acceptable or unacceptable, good or bad. In this study, the researcher considered the following ethical measures:

3.14.1. Gaining permission

Mertens (2012:250) stated that before data are collected, the researcher must follow appropriate procedures to gain permission from the gatekeepers (typically defined as those with power in the organization or community).

For the success of this study, the researcher made applications to the Department of Health and the religious leaders in Vhembe District within the Limpopo Province for

permission to conduct interviews. The researcher submitted the necessary documents needed by the Department until she obtained that permission. Care was taken to follow ethical principles as recommended by Cohen *et al* (2000:58).

The researcher undertook to focus on the research questions and not to change them in any manner that could jeopardize the integrity of data and the study. Participants were assured that there would be no unpleasant or damaging effects on the individuals or setting. Prior to the commencement of data collection activities, the researcher communicated the aim, objectives, nature and future use of findings to all the participants.

3.14.2. Avoidance of harm

One fundamental ethical rule of research is that it must bring no harm to the participants as they can be harmed in a physical or emotional manner. Everything individuals do in life can possibly harm someone and therefore, researchers should weigh the risks against the importance and possible benefits of the specific project (Babbie, 2007:27).

In this study, because participants may experience harm, for instance about their family life, relationships or employment situation, the researcher made a commitment and assured the participants that she would keep the information anonymous, details like low income, which are issues would only be known to the participants and the researcher. The researcher protected participants within all possible reasonable limits from any form of physical discomfort that could have emerged from the research project.

3.14.3. Voluntary participation

Participants should always be voluntary; hence, no one should be forced to participate in a project (Rubin & Babbie, 2005:71). In this study, the researcher explained everything about the project with every participant and it made them feel free to express their feelings. This ensured that all the participants were involved freely, with full understanding.

3.14.4. Informed consent

Obtaining informed consent implies that all possible or adequate information on the goal of the investigation; the expected duration of the participants' involvement; the procedures which will be followed during the research process; the possible advantages,

disadvantages and dangers to which participants may be exposed; as well as the credibility of the researcher, be rendered to potential subjects or legal representatives before participants participation (Williams, Tutty & Grinnel, 1995:30; Royse, 2004:52-54).

For the success of this study, before the interview or during the opening of the discussion, the researcher communicated to all participants that the information is important and the reasons for that importance, and the willingness of the interviewer to explain the purpose of the interview clearly. These opening remarks made the participants to be psychologically competent to give consent and to be aware that they are at liberty to withdraw from the project at any time. All the participants who formed part of the sample completed and signed an informed consent forms (Appendix.... after thorough explanation made by the researcher. This helped the participants to do everything with clear understanding.

3.14.5. Privacy

Privacy in its basic meaning, is to keep to oneself that which is normally not intended for others to observe or analyse. Every individual had the right to privacy, and it was their right to decide when, where, to whom and to what extent their attitudes, beliefs and behaviour will be revealed (De Vos *et al.* 2012:119).

Participants were informed of all possible limits to this principle as well as the steps that will be taken to ensure that no breach of this principle would take place. So, the researcher saw to it that every information shared by all participants should be kept to herself. This encouraged the participants to be open and share their individual experiences at ease.

3.14.6. Anonymity and confidentiality

Confidentiality in a study, indicates the handling of information in a confidential manner. In other words, confidentiality can be viewed as a continuation of privacy, which refers to the agreements between persons that limit others' access to private information (De Vos *et al.* 2012:119).

To fulfil this, the researcher made it a point that every information that was given by individual participant was treated as confidential. By doing that, there was no betrayal of

trust and it resulted in the smooth running of the project. In this study, there was no use of hidden apparatus such as video cameras, one-way mirrors and microphones. No one including the researcher was able to identify any participant afterwards.

It was important that the researcher should not interact with the participants in any way that would suggest the violation of such ethics or that would impact upon the results of the investigation. The interviews were conducted fairly and honestly with the researcher interacting on a personal basis with the community leaders, religious leaders and traditional leaders. In these interactions, particularly in the formally conducted interviews, it was necessary to put the participants at ease; in a standardized way. Great efforts were also made by the researcher to adhere to the following procedures in the ways described by Welman, Kruger and Mitchell (2011) as illustrated in Table 4 below.

Table 4: Ethical procedures by Welman, Kruger & Mitchell (2011)

| <i>Procedures</i> | <i>Action Taken</i> |
|--|---|
| <i>Protect the rights of human subjects by not causing emotional harm or infringing on</i> | The interviews were conducted fairly and honestly |

| | |
|--|---|
| <i>their right to maintain self-respect and dignity</i> | |
| <i>Provide all necessary facts without distortion or misrepresentation</i> | The initial interviews with all the participants allowed them to ask questions and have them answered to their satisfaction |
| <i>Avoid being biased in the interpretation and presentation of data</i> | The follow-up interviews and focus group discussion allowed input of other viewpoints |
| <i>Report conflicting evidence</i> | By facilitating triangulation of data |
| <i>Report any flaws or limitations in the research</i> | Discussed earlier |

(Adapted from Welman, Kruger and Mitchell (2011))

3.15. DELIMITERS OF THE STUDY

In all enquiry, account must be taken of the Hawthorne effect, which is the effect that the researcher may have upon that which is researched. This needs to be considered as a possible limitation in the conduct of the research as well as in the interpretation of the findings. The researcher used the following qualitative delimiters as illustrated in Table 5:

Table 5: Qualitative delimiters

| <i>NO</i> | <i>THEME</i> | <i>DELIMITERS</i> |
|-----------|------------------------------|---|
| 1 | Naturalistic Enquiry | All participants were from low socio-economic communities and experience formed part of the gathered data. |
| 2 | Inductive Analysis | The fact that data collection and interpretation were performed by one person only, potentially impacted positively on the way in which findings were obtained. |
| 3 | Holistic perspective | Since this study refers to the socio-contextual factors influencing self-efficacy of women, qualitative approach was used. |
| 4 | Qualitative Data | Qualitative data were used for all the participants to be able to express themselves freely and gain more understanding |
| 5 | Personal contact and insight | The researcher is somebody who works mostly at a close range with women, so personal bias cannot be excluded. |
| 6 | Unique case orientation | Not only did the research confine itself to self-efficacy of women in general, but the research was conducted in a limited area of the Vhembe District of the Limpopo Province. |
| 7 | Context sensitivity | Environmental influences and barriers were canvassed in terms of culture, race, locality, sex and background. |
| 8 | Empathetic neutrality | Researcher also a religious leader, so, personal bias cannot be excluded. |
| 9 | Design flexibility | Since an interview schedule was used, the researcher had a better chance to be flexible. |
| 10 | Dynamic systems | Although thirty-two participants were considered in this study, triangulation of data was done through interviews. |

(Adapted from Patton, 1990: 40-41; Swanson & Woltke, 1997:95)

3.16. SUMMARY

In this chapter, an outlined and detailed research methodology has been provided. The focus was on the research design, research procedures and strategies, context of the

study (location of the study), qualitative research, the target population, sampling and sampling techniques. The researcher therefore interacted with research participants in their different communities and other low socio-economic environments and places. Through purposive sampling, health workers who are in management section, religious leaders, traditional leaders and community leaders were sampled. Health workers and religious leaders participated through focus group discussions whereas the rest of the participants were engaged through individual interviews.

The participants aired their views on self-efficacy in vocational development of women in low socio-economic communities in Vhembe District. Data gathering techniques utilized were focus group discussions and individual interviews. The chapter closes with issues of trustworthiness, the role of the researcher, ethical measures and delimitation of the study. The qualitative data collection methods and analysis including quality assurance techniques were discussed. Qualitative research focuses on collecting no-numeric data from all research participants from their natural day-to-day settings. The chapter also discussed trustworthiness issues such as confirmability, transferability, and dependability. The researcher also considered the importance of ethics comprising of gaining permission, avoidance of harm, voluntary participation, informed consent, privacy, anonymity and confidentiality. The next chapter deals with data presentation, analysis and interpretation about socio-contextual factors influencing vocational development of women in low socio-economic communities.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION

4.1. INTRODUCTION

This Chapter presents, analyses and interprets data as collected from the women in low socio-economic communities within the Vhembe district. Data collected were in connection with the socio-contextual factors influencing vocational development of women in low socio-economic communities in this district. As stated earlier, data were collected from a sample comprising of community leaders, health workers, religious leaders, traditional leaders and women from low socio-economic communities (who are the main candidates of the study), who make a total of 60. Health workers and religious leaders participated through focus group discussions while community leaders, traditional leaders and women from low socio-economic communities participated through individual interviews. As outlined in Chapter three, the presentation follows a thematic approach based on the data collected. When analysing data, four themes emerged: poverty, over-dependency on husbands, dependency on child grant and barriers on women's self-efficacy in career or vocational development. These are discussed in detail here.

What the informants said is put in conversation below to establish the crux of the matter as formulated in the research problem. To clearly present data, the researcher used these codes for referencing purposes as shown in **Table 6** below.

Table 6: Coding System used in the study.

| Key to Coding | Explanation | Participants Involved |
|----------------------|-------------------------|---|
| IT | Individual Interviews | Traditional Leaders Community Leaders Women in low socio-economic communities |
| FGDH & FGDR | Focus Group Discussions | Health Workers Religious Leaders |

The researcher made appointments with different interviewees, depending on their availability to collect data from them. Participants were free to share their daily experiences as they encounter women in low socio-economic communities. As the data collection process continued, the researcher learnt that participants had a lot to say about their lived experiences. This helped the researcher to formulate themes and sub-themes when analysing data. The said themes are outlined in the following table.

Table 7: Themes and sub-themes emerging from individual interviews, observation and focus group discussions.

| No | Themes | Sub-themes |
|-----------|--|--|
| 4.1.1 | Poverty | 4.1.1.1 Early Marriages 4.1.1.2 Lack of skills |
| 4.1.2 | Over-dependency on husbands | 4.1.2.1 Laziness 4.1.2.2 Irresponsibility |
| 4.1.3 | Dependency on children social grants | 4.1.3.1 Gambling 4.1.3.2 Alcoholism |
| 4.1.4 | Barriers for women advancement to self-efficacy in career/vocational development | 4.1.4.1 Fear 4.1.4.2 Low Self-Esteem 4.1.4.3 Lack of role models 4.1.4.4 Lack of self-confidence 4.1.4.5 Lack of guidance and counselling 4.1.4.6 Low Education 4.1.4.7 Cultural factors of the girl/woman child |

4.2. DATA PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION

4.2.1. Data Presentation pertaining to Individual Interviews (IT), Observation and Focus Group Discussions (FGD)

Individual interviews, observation and focus group discussions were the main data collection techniques here. In all these groups, there was an interview schedule to focus on, from which these groups were to share their experiences concerning this study. All the other four groups were chosen because most of the times, they meet women from different family set-ups. Women from low socio-economic communities are the main

candidates of this study who share their first-hand day-to-day experiences of their own lives. This is the main emphasis of the Self-Efficacy Theory (SET) which originated from Bandura's (1986) Social Cognitive Theory and it was used as the theoretical framework of the study. The theory considers the social environment in which individuals perform their behaviour and considering the individuals' past experiences.

An interview schedule with sixteen questions was used by the researcher. All participants gave their inputs on how self-efficacy in vocational development affects the lives of women in low socio-economic communities based on their experiences. It emerged that poverty was one of the issues that popped up several times during the interviews. Thus, it is discussed first here.

4.2.2. Poverty

Data gathered from participants through individual interviews, observation and focus group discussions show poverty as one of the factors that affect women in low socio-economic status in relation with their self-efficacy in vocational development.

Questions from the interview schedule were asked and the responses from the participants led to sub-themes such as early marriages. A focus of the discussion below,

4.2.2.1. Sub-theme: Early Marriages

During focus group discussions, in response to the questions, participant 8 from the religious sector said,

Poverty affected some of these women such that they got married early.

The majority lack skills for formal employment. Some have low education due to their inability to complete their schooling. Many young women in low socio-economic communities concentrate much on marriage. They always think that bearing children is the best they can do in life. Therefore, most of them, young as they are, have many children.

Participant 4 among women from low socio-economic communities acknowledged thus,

I grew up in a poverty-stricken family as an orphan, without guidance nor any advice from my biological parents. This made me get married early as a survival

strategy. I fell pregnant and had a baby while I was young. No one was there to give me advice about life issues.

Participant 1 from women in low socio-economic community also had this to say,

I entered into early marriage because the guy was employed, and I could not wait, I agreed. I thought my poverty would be over, not knowing that I was getting myself into a worse situation. Idleness makes your mind wonder and do futureless activities. Your mind is not functioning, you are not doing anything because you are not busy. If I was at school, I would not have gotten into early marriage because I would have had a goal in life that would make me stay focused. I had a dream of going for nursing, but I failed to accomplish it because of poverty. Lack of finance after one has passed Grade 12 frustrates a lot.

Based on several responses above, it looks like the issue of early marriages looks normal here. Embarking on self-development does not matter, neither is it a priority to most of them because of the issue of poverty.

The above-mentioned inputs were the participants' experiences which emanated from what they always see happening in the lives of women in different situations and this resonates well with the Self-Efficacy Theory chosen as the theoretical frame-work of the study. In low socio-economic communities, when individuals' social environment is not taken into consideration, it brings a lot of disadvantages in people's lives. Early marriages seemed to be an accepted practice in low socio-economic communities as there are a lot of young mothers around. Child-bearing seem to be their top priority in life, at the expense of self-development.

In low socio-economic communities, there are no educational activities to challenge women. The findings would suggest that the issue of young mothers bearing several children is being normalized. Embarking on self-development does not matter, neither is it a priority to most of them because of the issue of poverty. As the researcher continued with the interviews, participant 1 and 3 from the traditional leaders alluded to what the above-mentioned participants have said about early marriages and their effects.

Bandura (1994) perceived self-efficacy as peoples' beliefs about their capabilities to produce designated levels of performance that exercise influence over events that affect their lives. Due to the surrounding environment in low socio-economic communities, poverty is one of the phenomena that affect peoples' lives heavily. This confirms what DeMarco and Norris (2004) said that risking behaviours such as the need for money, skill building exercises, loss of shelter, relationship loss and others continue to be found among people in such adverse situations, especially women in low socio-economic communities. These lead women to take risks in their lives like what Whyte (2006) reported on, that there is positive correlation between the level of survival sex (sex exchange for food, money, housing and protection and low self-efficacy).

According to the Venda culture, the issue of the girl-child getting married was the responsibility of the elderly people, and her opinion was not sought. Elderly people were considered to have the final say in every arrangement. The girl-child was expected to accept their decisions without questioning them. Worse more, she would be married to someone she did not even know. Fena, Valcke and Cai (2009) wrote that parental and the highest educational level attained by parents contribute to a child's educational attainment as well.

Thus, family background has an impact on children's self-efficacy. Women from different socio-economic backgrounds hold different beliefs about their own abilities. Culturally, girls were not allowed to go to school. They were meant to get married at an early age and become housewives whose duty was to bear children. Their marriages were pre-arranged by elders from both families. Based on data collected, it is apparent that poverty disadvantaged a lot of women here.

4.2.2.2. Lack of skills

During the focus group discussions of the Health workers, participant 1 said the following:

There is no fast development here when compared to urban areas. In some areas, there are no community projects, no educational activities in rural areas, no motivational talks, no exposure, lack of facilities, there is poor transportation and women therein have limited knowledge.

Franke & Liithje (2004:272) concurred, stating that environmental factors that include support provided for entrepreneurship, social confidence, appropriate markets, financial facilities and entrepreneurship training are essential here. Environmental factors include the motivational contribution of the social environment in which individuals live.

In support of lack of skills in women from low socio-economic communities, participant 3 from the traditional leaders had this to say,

Outsourcing people with skills instead of empowering women from our own communities because they are not developed enough to be engineers. We end up empowering people from elsewhere and it can't always be men, men, men. The government has taken a decision that when we talk about empowerment, it can't be empowerment without women. But, had the women been empowered previously, or long ago, we wouldn't be where we are today. There'll be a lot of development, but, in the absence of this ee training and development and skill provisions, thus where now, this is the results of where we are today.

For individuals to acquire some skills, it needs facilities to be provided to them so that they can be given proper training. This will need trained people who are prepared to impart the knowledge they have to others. It is essential to see to it that individuals including women in low socio-economic communities, are receiving things that will help them to develop some skills to have social confidence. Social environment in which individuals live, seem to play a major role in people's personal development.

Participant 7 from women living in low socio-economic communities explained,

In this area, there are no community projects. The vocational development of women is not satisfactory, and there are no role models. We are not knowledgeable in many areas. We still need people who can motivate us into developing ourselves because there are those who are now involved in gambling and alcoholism due to frustrations.

In Self-Efficacy Theory, Bandura (1995) referred to self-efficacy as a belief in one's capabilities to organize and execute the causes of action required to manage prospective

situations (What individual believes he or she can accomplish using his or her skills under certain circumstances).

4.2.3. Over-dependency on husbands

Over-dependency on husbands was the second theme that emerged. Two sub-themes were extracted, namely; laziness and irresponsibility. One participant from the religious sectors indicated that,

Tradition and some cultural beliefs concerning the girl-child have affected some individuals. According to the Venda culture (which also is a strong practice among African societies), men (husbands) provide everything for the family. They go to work while women remain doing domestic chores and rearing children. Back then, there were jobs that were done by males only.

Such beliefs made women to be dependent on men than doing something to improve their social status. This was a sign of being submissive to one's husband. The issue of dependency on husbands contributes to women's laziness and irresponsibility in low socio-economic communities. In Self-Efficacy Theory which is the theoretical framework of this study, self-efficacy is considered as the belief that one has the power to produce some effects by completing a given task or activity related to his or her competency.

Participant 5 from women in low -socio economic community said thus,

Over-dependency of women on their employed husbands is not good for them because it can happen that he goes away to stay somewhere even if he is not dead. You remain in the family, starting things from scratch because of difficulties you will be going through. Previously, you were spoiled.

Participant 7 from women who live in low socio-economic communities supported the previous participant and said:

Women who depend much on their employed husbands are not doing good for themselves because they are not sure who will die first between them. If it can be the employed one first, they can remain struggling as they got

used in receiving only. It causes problems, divorces because of failing to meet the demands of the receiver.

In view of the above, Christman (2002) stated that culture is a powerful filter that shapes the individuals' perceptions and interpretations of the environments in which they find themselves in, and this impact on their lives. Some of what happens in the lives of women is because of the environment they grew up in. Logel, Walton, Spencer, Iserman, Von Hippel and Bell (2009) confirmed that an environment plays a key role in activating an individual's stereotypical threats and the resulting decrease in their performance in different tasks.

To this end, participant 6 from community leaders pointed out that,

Nnn...I think...the advice that can be given to these women is that one needs to stand up for herself, relying on another person is not good because you will never know who will go first in life. When you utilise something that has been saved and you are not productive, you will end up getting bankrupt. Ee...the presence of a husband who is with an income, gives that woman a chance to improve herself so that at the end, she can stand on her own. It is not bad if that woman becomes a professional. If she doesn't show a concern, the husband ee...won't mind, he is happy to see the wife at home, ee...hence one should stand up to improve oneself.

The above responses from the participants confirm what the Self-Efficacy Theory states as it considers also the social environment in which individuals perform their behaviour. The theory considers the person's past experience, which influences whether a certain behavioural action will occur.

From a critical perspective, dependency on males (husbands) has destroyed a lot of women today. In communities, there are women who are dependent on males for their provisions without thinking of self-development. Similarly, there are women who take pride in the achievement of their husbands and forget about their personal development. This has affected a lot of those in the Vhembe District's low socio-economic communities.

Participant 8 from community leaders bemoaned a dependent woman thus,

A woman who is not working, not doing anything to develop herself, but always dependent on her employed husband, is not enjoying, is an empty pride because one cannot manage to get everything she needs. There are things in the family which cannot be bought or thought of by a man even if he earns a lot of money. In most cases, they have a lot of differences or disagreements concerning finances. They live in pretense as if everything is well. No husband enjoys or likes a non-working wife.

Participant 8 from women in low socio-economic communities had this to say,

Life is like a turning wheel, it changes with time. Death comes to us all, do not be over-dependent on other people. Instead, be able to do things on your own. There are women who are so used in receiving money from others that they do not think of developing themselves. When they come across challenges, one just cries without getting help. It is better to do something than to be dependent.

When looking at the inputs from interviewees and all what different authors above say about over-dependency on husbands, one would say that culture plays a role and it influences women to be how they are in low socio-economic communities. This, however, does not mean that there is nothing that can be done in order to help these women. There are women who are still dependent on their spouses so much that they are not developing themselves in any way. The given responses concur with the results of the observation done by the researcher.

- **Laziness**

One of the issues that emerged from the interview is that participants indicated that because of over-dependency on husbands, laziness contributes much on the lives of women in low socio-economic communities. In response to the questions, participant 2 from the traditional leaders responded thus:

Nn...career or vocational development of women, one can say it is average because some of them in our communities are lazy. Nn...nn...ee...every traditional

leader has the same problem of laziness. Nn...nn, no, no, laziness has no treatment at all. Many of our community women are lazy, they don't want to work.

The researcher who is a pastor works with women from different communities and has observed that laziness is one of the characteristics of women in low socio - economic communities.

Looking at the above response, the researcher assumes that women in low socio-economic communities are conditioned to receive freely from other people without their efforts. No wonder leaders complain about their laziness. Participant 4 from community leaders echoed the same sentiments in that,

Eee, in the lives of women, laziness and not developing themselves, can lead them to poverty. This can affect their children because they will, will copy as they learn from their parents. I think it brings bad consequences in the lives of their children.

Participants 17 from women in low socio-economic communities concurred with the issue of laziness and had this to say:

Some of the women living in our disadvantaged communities who are totally dependent on their employed husbands, have fallen into a bad tendency of lazy. Laziness is dominating them such that they just do not do anything that can be part of helping positively to make their family situations to be better.

Participant 1 from the community leaders had the following to say:

As a community leader, I am not satisfied of what women are doing. There are women who are failing to support themselves because of laziness. This laziness to some of the women, is caused by the spirit of over-dependency. You will find that there are those who are always loafing around without doing anything. Idleness is leading women to be involved in bad things like gambling.

Unfortunately, some of these women compete lifestyle wise, and this leads them astray. Women, as grown up individuals, must bear in mind that whatever step they take, there

are other people watching them. Among those that watch are their children who end up following in their steps. Human nature grasps negative aspects more than positive ones.

- **Irresponsibility**

When responding to questions during interviews, irresponsibility of women which emanated from over-dependency on husbands also emerged. Participant 7 from women in low socio-economic communities had the following to say:

There are women who waste a lot of time doing nothing. They are involved in gambling and alcoholism. This tendency gets worse with each passing day as such women end up misusing their children's grants.

Participant 16 from the same group had this to say:

Most of the unemployed women in our area are spendthrifts. Some of them misuse child grants through gambling and alcohol. These women do not even think of developing themselves.

Participant 7 from traditional leaders concurred with the previous participants and had the following to say:

Our area is not full of working-class women or professionals and one of the contributory factors is irresponsibility that is prevailing among women. This irresponsibility is caused by the over-dependency of women on husbands or males and dependency on children social grants. There are so many women who are just idling, doing nothing. It is so painful to us as community leaders when we find that some of these women are involved in bad things like gambling and alcoholism.

There are women who are so used in depending on other people to do things for them. All these confirms what Self-Efficacy Theory considers concerning the unique way in which individuals acquire and maintain behaviour while also considering the social environment in which they perform that behaviour.

- **Culture**

Culture emerged from the interview as another sub-theme under over-dependency on husbands. Culture is a powerful filter that shapes up individuals' behaviour and personality. According to the Venda culture, it was an accepted practice for a girl-child not to go to school. She was not supposed to be educated, except to get married and bear endless children. This has affected most of the females than males in families. It is no surprise to find the issue of over-dependency on husbands still affecting some of the women in low socio-economic communities. Culturally, males were superior to women, to rule over them and to provide everything in families. Bit-by-bit, women got used in depending on their husbands to do everything for them. It contributed a lot in women not to develop themselves. In low socio-economic communities, it looks like culture has affected some of these women.

Franke and Liithje (2004:272) spoke about external factors affecting individuals referred to social, cultural and economic environment. These environmental factors cover cultural support, social confidence, appropriate markets, financing, consulting and training into a business network. Fena, Valcke and Cai (2009) wrote that family background has an impact on individuals' self-efficacy.

This study is based on Self- Efficacy Theory (SET) as originated from Bandura's (1986) Social Cognitive Theory (SCT). The theory posits that the perception of efficacy is also influenced by vicarious experience. It is no surprise to find that Self-Efficacy Theory as the theoretical framework of this study, considers the unique way in which individuals acquire and maintain behaviour, while also considering the social environment they perform that behaviour.

Participant 19 from women in low socio-economic communities had this to say,

I encourage women to be independent and start to believe on themselves because gone are the days of waiting for somebody to do things for you. They must fight against the spirit of looking down upon themselves. I used to buy things and sell them in order to help my son to go to school.

Participant 7 from community leaders who believes in changing with the changing times said thus:

Women must be involved in self-development in communities because they are many. If they fail to do that, still depending on other people, we will have redundant communities soon.

Life is no longer the way it used to be in the past, it is full of situations and practices that are affecting African cultures, including the Venda culture. Some of these things affect culture differently, it can be either negative or positive depending on the backgrounds of people. Some of the things that are happening in the daily lives of women in low socio-economic communities are the results of the environments they grew up in.

4.2.4. Dependency on child support grant

Another theme that emerged during interviews, is dependency on child support grant. During interviews, participant 4 from the traditional leaders said the following about support grants,

To be honest, many women are lazy because they receive social grants for their children and grandchildren. These grants affect our communities to such an extent that some women have maids. If the government was to make some follow-ups to check if the money is used properly, it was going to withdraw some grants.

This is something that the researcher came across during data collection. Participant 3 from the traditional leaders had this to say,

Nnn, child grants affect many women in low socio-economic communities in career or vocational development, even in education. They no longer want to further their studies. It looks like they think it does not matter because they receive social grants monthly. This also influences high birth-rate among young women. They continue to give birth, forgetting that when these children grow up, they must be responsible for their lives. Yes, young women consider bearing children as the most important thing, yes.

When it comes to child grants, the Department of Social Development came up with a strategy of helping communities by looking at different aspects that affect people. This was a positive idea and people accepted and appreciated it. As time went on, some people, especially women, began to misuse these grants. Participant 7 from women in low socio-economic communities said,

Our dependency on child grants is not good because these are provided only for a stipulated period. It is important for women to develop themselves. Some of these women misuse this money, and do not support their children. There are women who are involved in gambling and alcohol.

From the South African Social Security Agency (SASSA) Report, 2017, the number of social grant recipients in South Africa increased exponentially over the past twenty years, from an estimated 4 million in 1994 to 17 191 121 in 2017. This was partly caused by an increased birth-rate among young people, especially in low socio-economic communities. Here, people are not busy, no development, no motivation and no positive thinking about oneself except bearing children. Participant 7 from the community leaders said the following,

For women who depend much on child grants instead of developing themselves, and when we look at it as community leaders, it is not good at all, why? Because it influences children who receive these grants negatively. When the children discover that their grant money is used by both parents, they can develop a negative attitude towards school and future work, in the false belief that money comes freely. To some women, it is not good, why, because they misuse it as they do not work for it. Some of these women are involved in gambling and going to night clubs.

Greenhaus and Callanan (2006) spoke about compensating low socio-economic status through child grants. Public policy on child grants are meant to make children's social environment bearable. The government aims to see families improve their socio-economic status where children are raised properly. Opportunities for improvement include increased education. Unfortunately, because of lack of guidance and foresight, there are still women who are so over-dependent on children social support grants that

they abuse such privileges, where they do not even think of developing themselves. The situation is further aggravated by the fact that these women misuse these child grants willingly.

The main theoretical framework of this study is the Self-Efficacy Theory which considers individuals' experience, which influences whether a certain behavioural action will occur. These experiences influence reinforcements and expectations which shape whether a person will engage in a specific behaviour and if so, why that person engages in that behaviour.

4.2.5. Barriers to women's self-efficacy

According to data obtained through interviews and focus group discussions, the social, cultural and attitudinal factors impinge on women's self-efficacy in vocational development. As such, these become barriers in women's advancement in life. In response to questions, the following emerged; fear and low self-esteem. These are discussed in detail below as sub-themes.

- **Fear**

Fear is an unpleasant emotional feeling that attacks individuals from within. Whoever is afraid, tends to lose the risk potential (Masakona, 2005).

During focus group discussions, participant.3 from the Health sector had this to say,

Women are delayed because of fear to venture into uncharted waters as they think negatively about themselves. This happens because women in low socio-economic communities do not believe in themselves. Some of them rush to careers they do not even understand.

In support of what the above-mentioned participant had said, Participant 5 from the religious sector had the following to say:

Some of the women in low socio-economic communities who are in churches, because of their low self-esteem, they do not balance their beliefs in church issues and self-development in vocational development.

Bandura (1994) spoke about people who doubt their capabilities that they shy away from difficult tasks which they view as personal threats, they have low aspiration and weak commitment to the goals they choose to pursue. When faced with difficulties or challenges, people with low levels of self-efficacy dwell on their personal deficiencies, on obstacles they are likely to encounter and all kinds of adversity. They do not think of how to succeed. Participant 6 from the community leaders responded thus,

Ee...I...can...only say that...e...I don't really see that self-confidence being developed or appearing in those women even though I cannot say it is all of them since there are so many activities that we do together regarding improving women's financial position. Women are afraid of taking risks, especially when it comes to starting something new. We are afraid of failure, yet those who are not afraid prosper. Being afraid of failure, to be seen that I have failed, will make me not try anything new.

Cadaret *et al.* (2016) spoke about stereotype threats like fear embedded within the environment where one may encounter negative feelings or social stereotype about their identity. Stereotype threats influence individuals through physiological arousal, working memory depletion, off-task rumination and self-handicapping and stereotype priming effects. These result in decreased performance on academic tasks (Spencer, Logel and Davies, 2016). They further indicated that stereotype threat acts as a contextual barrier to women's career/vocational development. Fear seems a limitation to individuals in low socio-economic communities. It makes women lose the game before they even start playing it because their minds are already defeated.

In Self-Efficacy Theory, Bandura (1995) referred to self-efficacy as a belief in one's capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to manage prospective situation (what individuals believe they can accomplish using their skills under certain circumstances). To women in low socio-economic communities, fear limits them to believe in themselves.

- **Low Self-Esteem**

As Greenhaus and Callanan (2006) indicated, self-esteem is the extent to which individual's feelings of self-worth, liking and acceptance are either positive (high self-esteem) or negative (low self-esteem). In short, self-esteem is the kind of relationship people have with themselves daily. Feltham and Horton (2012) said that self-esteem is based on the opinion a person has of himself/herself and the degree to which they value themselves. It is a multi-dimensional construct or inner map that creates one's perception of 'self'. Self-esteem seems to have the most impact on how worthy a person feels when engaging in everyday activities.

Women in low socio-economic communities, due to their environment, appear as if they suffer from low self-esteem. Thus, participant 7 from the health workers had this to say,

Tradition contributes for u, for us, for ladies not to develop themselves because traditionally, we know that men are supposed to supply or support their families. So, if you find yourself supporting the family, people would say; 'Ah, by the way, we are just single parents. We support ourselves and they do not see it as something good to manage ourselves without depending on others. So, people lack self-confidence due to this.

There is a need for the 21st century women in low socio-economic communities to be conscious about the changes in today's life. This takes knowledgeable people, those prepared to sacrifice their time to go and impart this knowledge to others. It is not enough to have knowledge until it helps the next person.

Participant 6 from the community leaders said the following:

Ee...I'm not satisfied because many times when women are given a task to do, they look down upon themselves and refuse to do it. They think that it must be another person do it. Ja, the 50/50 rhetoric can be fulfilled by women if they accept responsibility. You may find one woman working in different positions as if there are no people, yet we are many.

Given the above, it is obvious that low self-esteem can leave individuals feeling inadequate, unworthy, ashamed, awkward and unable to handle everyday situations with confidence. Individuals seem to be generally unhappy and dissatisfied with themselves. It is, therefore, difficult for individuals to be satisfied if they do not feel worthy of themselves. The way people feel or think about themselves from within can easily affect them. So, it is important to find ways and means of helping women in low socio-economic communities in this respect.

Self-Efficacy theory considers self-efficacy as the belief that one has the power to produce some effects by completing a given task or activity related to their competency. It thus relates to people's perceptions of their ability to reach certain goals. Again, the theory considers the unique way in which individuals acquire and maintain behaviour, while also considering the social environment in which they perform that behaviour.

- **Lack of role-models**

Human beings are not meant to live in isolation. People need a shoulder to lean on, someone they can trust and look up to. Whenever they come across life challenges, everybody looks forward to having somebody to talk to. In this case, the lack of role-models can prevent women in low socio-economic communities from developing themselves. Women need significant others like parents, peers and community members, those they spend most of their time with. People who can motivate women by speaking positively about what they can do, and the use of their own ability, play an important role here. These have pushed some women in low socio-economic communities to live without dreaming of anything good for themselves.

There were some key questions from the interview schedule that the researcher asked the participants in order to obtain more information in line with this study. Participant 7 from the community leaders agreed thus,

Ee, ee, when ABET was introduced in our communities, eeh, there were so many people who got involved. Even the elderly people who never went to school, until they were able to write their names/surnames. When ABET continued, others became discouraged, they dropped because of lack of

teachers. If it can be revived through the motivation of traditional and community leaders, hai, many women can be helped.

Very few people are self-sufficient, hence we need inputs from better-informed individuals to assist them. Role models play an important role, especially in family set-ups and among communities. Parents and elderly people should know that there are other people who look up to them and rely on them for guidance. In agreement with the issue of role-models, Irungu (2008:54) noted that this is another factor that can seriously hamper women's self-concept, hence impede other aspects of self-concept such as career or vocational development. When women fail to achieve satisfactory academic results, they become less motivated to explore their role in society or what they would like to be because their academic self-concept is eroded. Participant 1 from the health workers admitted that,

In most families in low socio-economic communities, women lack role-models that can be considered as living examples in career or vocational development. Many elderly people are involved in alcohol and they are not working nor intend to.

It has been observed by the researcher that most women in low socio – economic communities lack people who can serve as their role models and mentors.

In agreement with what the above participant said, Finzi-Dottan and Karu (2006), Wilding and Palmer (2010) stated that upbringing plays a significant part in the development of inner self-talk and thus self-esteem. Children learn how to self-evaluate based on the way others have responded to them in the past. Parents or caregivers act like a mirror, letting a child know how he/she is perceived. In this way, adults' opinions and the ways in which they respond to a child subconsciously contribute to her/his self-identity. This confirms that individuals need each other in life. The way women in low socio-economic communities are seen today is a reflection of opinions that parents, siblings, friends, family members and even role-models imparted to them while they were still young. These women have internalized a lot of issues that ended up affecting them psychologically. In such a situation, it takes a lot of patience to reverse these effects, bearing in mind that change cannot come over night.

Self-Efficacy Theory considers individuals' social environment in which they perform their behaviour. Women from low socio-economic communities in the Vhembe District, are also shaped by their social environment which they find themselves in. As such, they do not need one specific skill, but strategies such as multi-talented, skillful and willing individuals who have the passion to help.

- **Lack of Self-confidence**

Self-confidence as defined by Nasurdin, Noor and Chew (2009) is one of the intrinsic factors related to personal characteristics that affect the lives of individuals. Lack of confidence makes individuals fail before they even start doing whatever they are to do. It shuts down positive thinking to an extent that an individual fails to reason logically. During focus group discussions, participant 3 from the health sector pointed out that,

Some women are affected by their polygamous backgrounds, and this has contributed to their being docile and hopeless, full of mistrust, fear and lack of self-confidence. Some of them think that there is nothing good they can do because they are not professionals.

Ncube (2014) noted the lack of confidence or what he calls 'suffering from inferiority complex' as another barrier in relation to women. Lack of confidence/inferiority complex makes women in low socio-economic communities to be stereotyped into believing that men are superior to women. Participant 7 from women in low socio-economic communities had this to say:

I'm not satisfied about the self-development of women in our area because most of the women spend a lot of time doing nothing. They look like they have no confidence on themselves because some of them are involved in alcohol and gambling. Sometimes, some of them do not even come back home.

In support of this barrier in the lives of women in low socio-economic communities, participant 6 from community leaders had the following to say:

E.....I.....can.....say thate.....I don't really see that confidence being developed or appearing in these women even though I cannot say is all of them

since there are so many activities we do together with regard to improving finances as women. We are afraid of taking some risks especially when it comes to starting something new. We are afraid of failing, yet those who are not afraid, do end up prospering.

Women in low socio-economic communities are mostly victims of low self-efficacy beliefs. These women are victims of self-doubt in their everyday lives because they are self-focused and less creative. Their self-efficacy beliefs are not strengthened but weakened such that they find themselves unable to set for themselves challenging goals. If women always live stressful lives, families and communities are also affected as they are in the majority (Kernis, 1995).

Self-doubt and challenges in life-task pursuits are some of the reasons why people have negative self-views (Kernis, 1995: 172). He said that self-knowledge, and how one thinks about one's competence to work on a task successfully, is a critical component in considering how direct an individual will "appraise", or "see", a life task. For example, individuals who are uncertain of their competence will approach the task with some trepidation, while confident ones find the tasks less challenging. Women with low self-confidence who reside in low socio-economic communities need some life-changing skills if they are to be progressive in life.

Self-Efficacy Theory considers individuals' social environment and their experiences. Over-dependency and past experiences tend to demotivate them such that they have no positive expectations of whatever they are engaged in. They always look forward to seeing people feeling pity for them because they live a stressful life.

- **Lack of guidance and counselling**

It is important to learn from others by seeking guidance and counselling. Fouad, Hackett, Smith, Kantamnen, Fitzpatrick, Haag and Spencer (2010) observed that parents' lack of knowledge and support is one of the socio-contextual factors that influence self-efficacy in one's life. Lack of knowledge and guidance result in some of parents failing to give moral support to their children. This disadvantage a lot of children, especially females. As pointed out during focus group discussions, participant 7 had the following to say:

Women who are in low socio-economic communities lack guidance and counselling. Some of them have nobody to offer advice, not even elders to advise the younger ones nor parents advising their children. They get used to their ineffective and discounted lives until it looks normal though they are always distressed.

Irungu (2008) argued that women's guidance and counselling programmes in low socio-economic communities rely heavily on referrals from members of the community who seek the intervention of other knowledgeable counsellors. In such a situation, the counsellors play the role of those who treat rather than those who guide and counsel. Unfortunately, though, there is lack of family involvement of family in members' self-efficacy development. On the same vein, Irungu (2008:54) stated that lack of privacy and confidentiality make some individuals not keen to seek guidance and help from those around them. Women fear humiliation from exposure when they express their challenges to family members and community elders. This implies that there is a need to build confidence and trust in these women.

Participant 26 from women in low socio-economic communities had to say the following:

If there are vocational development opportunities in our area, very few women can become part of this because of lack of guidance and counselling. Women in low socio-economic communities, suffer low self-esteem. They look like they do not think positively about themselves.

When it comes to guidance and counselling in low socio-economic communities, many women's behaviour and actions are influenced by a lot of factors like; family background and economic outcomes, parents' lack of knowledge and support, and lack of interest in self-development. These did not start with these women, but with those they spent most of their times with as they were growing up (peers, friends, family members and other members of the community). In addition, the researcher observed that women in low socio-economic communities fall short of guidance and counselling.

- **Low Education**

The educational position of individuals cannot be separated from their family background, socio-economic status and social support. As said earlier on, family background has an impact on individuals' education. Low education shapes individuals' behaviours, personalities and goals. Coping efficacy is viewed by Lent and Hackett (2001) as an individual's confidence in managing perceived situational and environmental demands with the potential to impede performance in a given domain. To them, coping efficacy relates positively with academic/educational self-efficacy, outcome expectations, interests and choice, while it relates negatively to career barriers. The focus group discussants from the health sector noted that,

These women are found in low socio-economic communities where there is no development at all. Low socio-economic communities are neglected because they are not even comparable with what is happening in urban areas. There are people who still have the idea that the girl child should not go to school as she will get married one day.

Participant 2 from the traditional leaders had the following to say:

Uhm... social support grants and over-dependency affect most of the ladies in low socio-economic communities in career and vocational development because even young women in education. They no longer want to further their studies, they always think it doesn't matter because they will be receiving social grants on monthly basis. They tend to accept their level of education. It also influences high birth-rate among young women.

In low socio-economic communities, it is true that there is a lack of resources and facilities and this hinders development. Those who reside in low socio-economic areas looks like they are less important than those in urban areas. Thus, an individuals' educational development depends also on their intelligence which can be shaped by their environment and the people surrounding them. Intelligence gives a reflection of an individual's capacity to understanding issues.

Pajares (2009) noted that in psychology, intelligence has typically been acknowledged as the most powerful cognitive predictor of achievement. Low education is something that needs to be attended to in low socio-economic communities as less attention to it is potentially disastrous. Health workers' focus group discussants and those from the Religious sector noted that,

In low socio-economic communities, technology is very low, and there are no skills. No accessibility of things because of lack of resources. Fast development is happening in urban areas than in rural areas.

In view of the above, the low education is one of the factors that affect most women in low socio-economic communities. Family backgrounds, community people and those they spend much times with play a major role in these women's lives. It is important for individuals to be surrounded by people who have a positive influence in their educational lives.

- **Cultural factor**

Culture and tradition play an important role in our lives. According to Venda culture, there are issues that are well-known that are not supposed to be done by girls like, looking after cows and goats. There are jobs that are known to be done by males only, for example, ploughing the fields using the span of oxen and getting employment far away from home. It was a belief that men/males are considered to be the providers in families and others were considered as cultural taboos. This makes females to be dependence such that they become conditioned not to believe in themselves. It made some of these women to undermine themselves.

For individuals to perform every task successfully, they need to be confident enough from within. Matlin (2008) said that men are sometimes more self-confident about their ability than women are. The perception of oneself is formed by what one thinks other people think of him/her and, in the process, fail to find out the things that spark one's interest.

Participant 7 from the health sector had the following to say during focus group discussions:

Culture or tradition is contributing for u...for us.... for the ladies not to develop themselves because in our tradition, we know that is a man, is the one who is supposed to supply or support the family. So, if you find yourself supporting the family, even those who are doing that, when they are among the married women, they say ah, by the way we are just single parents, we are supporting ourselves. They speak discouraging statements.

During focus group discussions with the religious leaders, participant 8 had the following to say:

Tradition and culture have affected some individuals because there were a strong belief that girls were not supposed to go to schools. Again, there was a strong belief that males (husbands) are the providers, they have to go out and work whereas women are remaining in families doing domestic work and bearing children. This kind of beliefs conditioned some of these women to be dependent on men than to believe in doing something on their own.

This shows that women in low socio-economic communities here experience vicarious learning that results in sex-role stereotyping, a lack of exposure to perform and accomplish, and a lack of verbal persuasion or encouragement from others. This supports the Self-Efficacy Theory (SET) which originated from Bandura's (1986) Social Cognitive Theory. The theory posits that the perception of efficacy is influenced by four factors, namely: mastery experience; vicarious experience; verbal persuasion and somatic & emotional state.

4.3. CONCLUSION

Self-efficacy in career and vocational development of women looks to be a matter of concern in different individuals, including those in low socio-economic communities. It is something that needs to be attended to since it affects their behaviours. Failure to do so may cause harm to other individuals' lives. Looking at the above themes and sub-themes, it is apparent that life is not composed of one group of people, but of different groups of individuals whose behaviours are not the same, depending on their surrounding environment. In all this, the researcher learnt that one cannot separate individuals from

their environment, as they are like a hand in glove. Individuals' surrounding environment and their family backgrounds play a major role in shaping their behaviours and personalities.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. INTRODUCTION

In the preceding chapter, the researcher presented data on the self-efficacy in vocational development of women in low socio-economic communities. The data were gathered through observation, individual and group interviews (focus group discussions) which reflected first-hand information based on the participants' day-to-day experiences, opinions, feelings, perceptions and knowledge of issues under discussion. From the collected data, themes and sub-themes emerged from the contributions of the participants interviewed which form the findings of this study. It is the purpose of this chapter to discuss the findings of the study in relation with its objectives, together with drawing conclusions and making recommendations for future study.

5.2. OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

The main aim of the study was to examine socio-contextual factors influencing self-efficacy in vocational development of women in low socio-economic communities.

Different chapters outlined in the study examined the socio-contextual factors influencing self-efficacy in vocational development of women in low socio-economic communities.

In **Chapter One**, the background to the study, awareness of the problem, problem statement, purpose of the study, study objectives, research questions, theoretical framework, the significance of the study, delimitation of the study, methodology and research design were outlined. Furthermore, ethical consideration, measures to ensure trustworthiness, definitions of key terms and conclusion were also described.

Chapter Two provided a review of literature based on the origin of self-efficacy, its importance, its sources, its consequences, role and its related concepts which include, self-esteem, self-confidence and self-concept.

In **Chapter Three**, research methods, instruments and sampling are discussed. The chapter describes how the study was conducted.

Chapter Four addresses the data analysis and interpretation of the results.

Chapter five, presents the summary of findings, conclusions, and recommendations.

The following objectives underpinned the main aim of the study:

- i) To identify the socio-contextual factors that influence self-efficacy in women of low socio-economic status in the Vhembe District.
- ii) To establish the levels of self-efficacy among women of low socio-economic status in the Vhembe District.
- iii) To ascertain the extent to which self-efficacy influences women's career/vocational development in this district.
- iv) To propose a pragmatic women development model for acceleration of access to career and vocational development.

This **Chapter five (5)** covers the following:

- Major findings of the study which include the findings based on the objectives of the study.
- Conclusions drawn from the major findings
- Limitations of the study
- Recommendations pertaining to the study
- Recommendations for further studies and
- Concluding remarks

5.3. MAJOR FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

In this section, the researcher provides the major findings of the study in relation to the issue of exploring socio-contextual factors influencing self-efficacy in vocational development of women in Vhembe District. These findings are linked with the above-mentioned objectives of the study.

5.3.1. Findings pertaining to the socio-contextual factors that influence self-efficacy in women of low socio-economic status in the Vhembe District.

In relation to the socio-contextual factors influencing self-efficacy in vocational development of women, the findings revealed that the socio-contextual factors can influence health behaviours directly or indirectly through individual psychosocial factors or wealth. One of the socio-contextual factors that influences self-efficacy in women of low socio-economic status is family background and economic outcomes depending on the culture, setups and surrounding environment. Furthermore, family background and economic outcomes play a major role in determining future outcomes like educational attainments and earnings. Family background has an impact on individuals' self-efficacy. Women from different socio-economic backgrounds hold different beliefs about their own ability. The highest educational level reached by parents and other community stakeholders contribute a lot in educational attainment of these women.

The findings revealed lack of confidence or inferiority complex as another socio-contextual factor. Self-confidence is one of the intrinsic factors which is related to personal or characteristics that affect the lives of individuals. Lack of confidence has contributed negatively concerning self-efficacy in /vocational development of women in low socio-economic status. Some of them have lost confidence about themselves because of looking at what is always surrounding them. Another contextual factor that has been discovered by the findings of this study is individuals' social environment such as family members, peers, friends and colleagues. Individuals' self-efficacy can be shaped by the type of people they spend their time with. Some of the behaviours manifesting in the lives of women in low socio-economic status are the results of the social environment they grew up in.

The findings further revealed lack of interest in self-development as another socio-economic factor that influences self-efficacy in women of low socio-economic status. Self-development can include academic progress and many other things that individuals could do to develop themselves. If individuals lack interest on something, hardly can they be able to achieve any goal. Interest goes together with willingness from within.

Furthermore, the findings of this study discovered that survival sex (sex in exchange for food, money, housing and protection) is another socio-contextual factor. In low socio-economic communities, there are women who are involved in this risking taking behaviours such as the need for money without self-efficacy skill building exercises.

Moreover, the findings in this study also revealed that another socio-contextual factor that influences self-efficacy is over-dependency which include economic dependency. Culturally speaking from an African perspective, over-dependency on male figures individuals (husbands) and children social grants has affected a lot of women in low socio-economic status. Among the communities, there are women who are so dependent on males to be their providers without thinking about their personal development.

5.3.2. Findings regarding the level of self-efficacy among women of low socio-economic status in the Vhembe District.

In trying to establish the level of self-efficacy among women of low socio-economic status, the findings of the study would not certainly reveal how well participants will perform on specific tasks because of the uniqueness of the individuals.

5.3.3. Findings in relation to the extent to which self-efficacy influences women's vocational development in this district.

The findings revealed that it has been shown over a sustained period that levels of self-efficacy impact directly on achievement.

5.3.4. Findings pertaining to proposed tentative pragmatic women development model for acceleration of access to career and vocational development.

The findings point to the need for partnerships between the family, the church and the society (which incorporate community leaders, religious leaders and health workers). The partnership between the family, the church and the society necessitate the need for Family, Church and Society (FCS) Women Developmental Model which the researcher has expanded more on in one of the sections below.

5.4. CONCLUSIONS BASED ON THE MAJOR FINDINGS

Based on the major findings of the study, it is concluded that women's family backgrounds, economic outcomes and their surrounding environments should be attended to since they play a major role in individual's development. This will help to build their confidence which will at the end stimulate their interest in self-development. Women in low socio-economic communities, need people to motivate them positively to believe in themselves and start using their God-given abilities. It is important for the government to incorporate the low socio-economic communities in the social development including the Vhembe District. Though the study has drawn this conclusion, still it has its own limitations.

5.5. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study was mainly concerned with the self-efficacy in vocational development of women in low socio-economic communities and was therefore, limited to low socio-economic communities in Vhembe District within the Limpopo Province and the findings are only applicable in this specific area. Though the study was based on a small number of participants, its findings might be generalized to other low socio-economic communities. It is worth noting that in carrying out this study, the researcher encountered a lot of obstacles such as women not necessarily willing to voluntarily participate in the study. This was however, mediated by the researcher who by virtue of being a community leader and pastor who spends much of her time with those women, used her influence that allowed for more women participation in the interviews. It was also not easy to access relevant sources with recent information concerning the topic from the library but the use of the internet and inter library helped to bridge this gap.

5.6. RECOMMENDATIONS PERTAINING TO THE STUDY

Based on the findings of this study, the researcher recommended the following:

5.6.1. The need to encourage women to avoid negative attitudes from the society

Family background and economic outcomes depending on the culture, setups and surrounding environment, play a major role in determining individuals' future outcomes.

To bolster self-efficacy amongst women, it is important for women to be encouraged to avoid negative attitudes from the community members towards them. There are times where people rule others out that they cannot make it in life.

Women should be motivated every now and then in community gatherings so that they can know and believe it that their present condition (in which their family backgrounds and those who are surrounding them contributed much), is not their conclusion. The fact that they grew up in poverty-stricken families does not mean that they cannot succeed in life. They need to have positive thinking and perception towards whatever they do instead of conceiving what other people say about them. They must also overcome negative attitudes from their peers and contemporaries who even know their family backgrounds and their surrounding situations.

5.6.2. There is a need for community stakeholders to build the confidence of women

Lack of confidence destroys individuals' morale/zeal to execute any given task. People with self-confidence know that they have skills and believe that they are able to engage successfully in different areas. These people tend to value themselves. Women in low socio-economic communities need to be encouraged to put value on themselves. They must have healthy self-esteem and know that they are important and worthy like any male individual.

Women in low socio-economic communities, need people who can speak positively about them and what they can do best. It is something that needs to be restored from within. It will take their willingness to admit and accept that there is a missing link that needs to be attended to. These women also need to believe that they can make it.

Women need people they can look up to as their mentors. So, parents and other community members must go closer to these women, as it is everybody's desire to find a shoulder to lean on. It is important for role models to lead an exemplary life for the sake of women self-efficacy. Family members together with all those who are found in the surrounding environment, play a major role in shaping up the behaviour of women in low socio-economic communities.

5.6.3. The establishment of women's right of association

Individuals' social environment which is composed of peers, family members, friends and colleagues, has an influence on their lives. Findings in this study revealed that it is important for women in low socio-economic communities to be encouraged to associate themselves with people who can influence them positively. Whoever one associates himself/herself with, that person will have a portion of influence either positively or negatively. Right association will help these women's self-efficacy and they will think positively about themselves and start to believe that they can. The way they think and perceive themselves, will end up affecting their daily behaviours and actions. Findings discovered that in low socio-economic communities, some of the women are the way they are because of the type of associations they have. The researcher can say that individuals' self-efficacy is mainly shaped by the people that are always surrounding them.

5.6.4. There is a need for women to be motivated on the value of self-development

It has been revealed during the discussions that many women in low socio-economic communities, lack people who can motivate them on self-development. One of the main contributory factors is that most of the low socio-economic areas are neglected compared to urban areas. That is why some of the participants commented that in their area's development is very slow unlike in urban areas.

It is also recommended that traditional leaders together with other community stakeholders organize community gatherings where they invite speakers to address women on the value of self-development. Among the speakers, should be women who have walked the road, who started to develop themselves from nothing until they became something in life. In order to accomplish the main aim of this study, this motivation should include furthering their studies, starting small businesses and even vocational development.

5.6.5. The need for community leaders to initiate community projects

It is also recommended that there should be different community projects that are initiated by the community leaders. In these projects, women in low socio-economic communities should receive different trainings through which there will be skills development among them.

These community projects should help these women not to wait for somebody to employ them, instead, they will create jobs for themselves and be self-employed. By so doing, they will be able to fight against the problem of unemployment rate that is always escalating, the problem of poverty that led some of them to be victims of early marriages, to overcome the spirit of over-dependency on their employed husbands and dependency on children social grants.

5.6.6. Promotion of women independency

It is recommended that women need to be encouraged to be independent by overcoming low self-esteem and be self-confident. Low self-esteem leaves individuals feeling inadequate, unworthy, awkward, ashamed and unable to handle everyday situations with confidence. They must develop healthy self-esteem and know that they are valuable and worthy.

It is important for women in low socio-economic communities to overcome fear and stop looking down upon themselves. They need to know that today's life is far different from that of the past. They must be encouraged until they outgrow the spirit of over-dependency on other people and believe on themselves.

5.6.7. Accepting the uniqueness of women

It is further recommended that to build positive self-efficacy of women in low socio-economic communities, individuals should know that it is difficult to predict how well participants will perform on specific tasks because of the uniqueness of individuals. The researcher recommends that these women need to be encouraged not to compare themselves with others since they are in a different environment. Therefore, it is important

for women in low socio-economic communities to understand themselves and accept their uniqueness.

5.6.8. Encouraging teamwork spirit among the community structures
(Family, Church and Society (FCS) Women Developmental Model).

The study recommends that there should be partnership between the family, the church and the society (which includes community leaders, religious leaders, traditional leaders and health workers) to give equal value and opportunities to women in low socio-economic communities. Based on the above-mentioned recommendations, the researcher proposed Family, Church and Society (FCS) Women Developmental Model as outlined below:

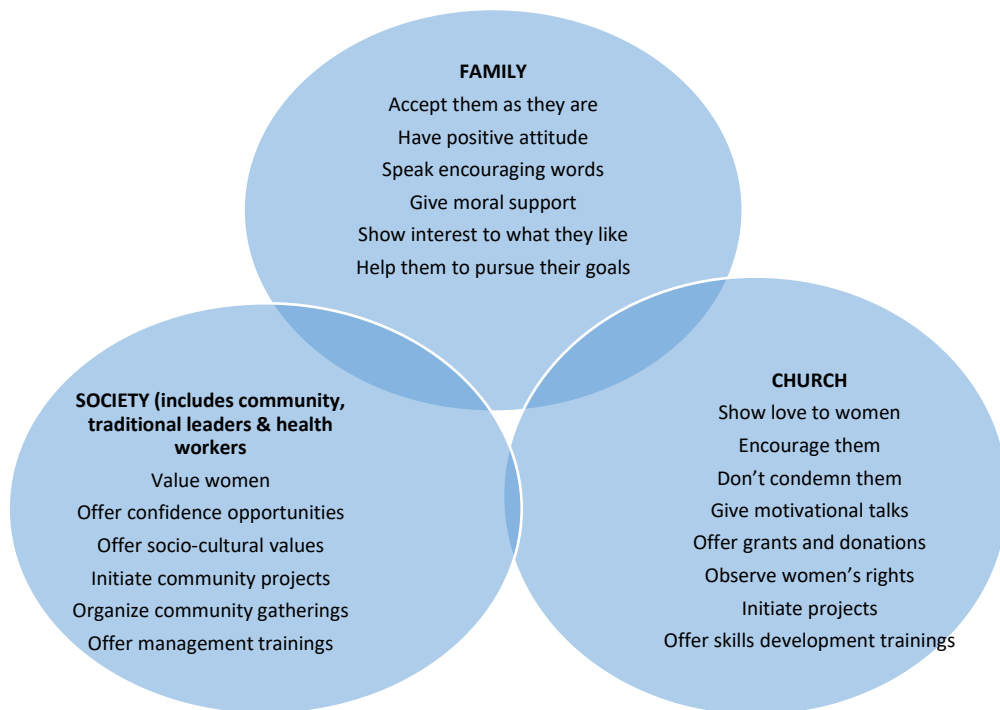


Figure 4: Family, Church and Society (FCS) Women Developmental Model

Based on the recommendations above, this study proposes a **Family, Church and Society (FCS) Women Developmental Model** which is a partnership between women from lower socio-economic communities; church (religious leaders) and society (traditional leaders; community leaders; health workers). All these stakeholders in communities must play their respective roles in creating the environment

that builds up the confidence of women in low socio-economic communities with all their challenges. These stakeholders will firstly remove the negative barriers that affect these women to make use of their self-efficacy despite their backgrounds and their surrounding environments.

Family is an important structure that shapes women's behaviour and personalities. To build women's self-efficacy, family members should accept the uniqueness of every woman as they are and have positive attitude towards them. It is in the family where women in low socio-economic communities should get moral support through receiving encouraging words from other family members. Furthermore, the family should show interest to what they like to help them to pursue their goals.

The church as part of the society where women of socio-economic status are also found, church leaders and other members should encourage them, show love to them without condemning them. Church leaders should create opportunities to give motivational talks to women in low socio-economic communities. Where need be, the church should sometimes offer grants and donations, observe women's rights, initiate projects and offer skills development trainings.

Women as members of the community who are always in the majority in every community, they should be valued and be offered confidence opportunities by community leaders. For the sake of building their self-efficacy, they should also be offered socio-cultural values and offered management trainings in order to develop their skills. Community gatherings and motivational meetings organized or planned by churches and the traditional leaders supported by other institutions, will give these women time to access knowledge and skills development. This partnership will help women to feel accepted and accommodated.

Families, community structures and other members of the community need to be supportive and should always, forget about these women's past failures and their negative attitude towards self-development. In order to accelerate the partnership between families, community structures and other members of the community, the government need to be actively involved by means of reviving the Adult Basic Education Training (ABET) in some communities where there is a need.

The family through the society and the church institutions, should support women in low socio-economic communities in all respects. These structures should therefore, re-socialise the girl child so that she can grow into a confident citizen who believes in herself that she can make a difference in her community. This will be a way of supporting and promoting women's independency. If the girl child can grow up with the positive mentality and understanding, that would help in shaping up the kind of women that is needed in the near future. As much as individuals' background and the environment they grow up in play an important role, positive upbringing will bring forth positive results.

Looking at the proposed model on partnership of these community structures, it confirms the recommendation on encouraging teamwork spirit. Teamwork shows strength and unity of hearts and mind. Individuals who work as a team are likely to achieve more in whatever they do. People who work as a team cannot easily give up, they are always confident to accomplish their goals. This also support the recommendation on building the confidence of women.

Society with all the community structures, should support the government's initiatives to achieve women's self-efficacy. The family, church and the society, should work together as a team without undermining or criticizing each other. In their respective areas of jurisdiction, they should socialize both the children and young people to grow up into confident independent citizens capable of making quality independent decisions. As children and young people grow up, should be bold and stand firm against all barriers that need to stop their development in life. If all these institutions play their role properly, low socio-economic women will be transformed willingly with understanding. For more details, refer to diagram above.

5.7. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

This study revealed different factors that served as barriers of women self-efficacy. It established that this is riddled with negative attitudes that were built up by societal and cultural beliefs about women. This societal and cultural beliefs pose a big challenge to the self-development of women, including those in low socio-economic communities. Cultural beliefs concerning men and women's roles in families has negatively affected women in disadvantaged communities. The researcher therefore recommends further

study on how cultural beliefs can be addressed concerning individuals and groups' self-efficacy of women. Furthermore, the researcher recommends that a similar study involving more women from low socio-economic communities and a larger number of participants be conducted in order to generate new knowledge on the same topic.

Further research is also recommended to explore self-efficacy in vocational development of women in low socio-economic communities, not only in Vhembe District, but also in other districts in the province and worldwide. This topic, given its relevance in the current situation where the dominant discourses are around economy and unemployment, is essential in dealing with constraints that affect the promotion of positive self-efficacy of women in every environment.

5.8. CONCLUDING REMARKS

This chapter summarized the research study and the findings of the study per objectives and based on the research questions. Contextual factors affecting individuals including women, were also discussed. These contextual factors include: family background and economic outcomes, lack of confidence or inferiority complex, social environment, lack of interest in self-development, survival sex and over-dependency. Low socio-economic communities are neglected and lagging behind in so many things, not to mention technological advancement. Furthermore, limitations of the study, recommendations pertaining to the study, a partnership of the family, church and society Women Self-Efficacy Developmental Model and recommendation for further study were discussed.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: Interview Guide for Women in Low Socio-Economic Communities

1. Kha vhupo ha havho, vhunzhi ha vhafumakadzi vha khou shuma mishumo ye vha tou i gudela? Arali zwi songo ralo, mulandu?
2. Vhunzhi ha vhafumakadzi vha sa shumi, vha khou kona hani u tshila ubva kha duvha na duvha?
3. U di-bveledzisa ha vhafumakadzi vha kha vhupo vhune ikonomi ya vha fhasi hua fusha?
4. Vha ri mini nga vhafumakadzi vha sa shumi vho dowelaho u di-tika nga vhanna vhavho vha no shuma?
5. Vha ri mini nga avho vhane vha di-tika nga magavhelo a vhana?
6. Vhafumakadzi vha re kha vhuno vhupo vha sa shumi vha a di-dzhenisa kha mishumo ya zwanda nga vhunzhi? Zwi songo ralo, ndi ngani?
7. Arali ha nga vha na tshikhala tsha u di-bveledzisa siani la pfunzo , vha nga takalela u di-dzhenisa? Mulandu?
8. Vhunzhi ha vhafumakadzi vha fhanu vha nga takalela u di-dzhenisa?
9. Vhuponi ha havho huna thandela dzo itelwaho u bveledzisa tshitshavha?
10. Ndi dzifhio dzinwe thandela dzine vha nga takalela dzi tshi vha hone fhanu?
11. U di-bveledzisa ha vhafumakadzi vha fhanu kha mishumo ya zwanda hu a fusha? Hu sa fushi, mulandu?
12. Ha vha na tshikhala tsha u di-bveledzisa, vha nga takalela u itani? Ndi ngani?
13. Vha a fushea nga kutshilele kwa vhafumakadzi vha sa shumi? Mulandu?

14. Vho sedza fhungo la u di-bveledzisa, ndi zwifhio zwine vha tama zwi tshi khwiniswa kha vhupo ha havho?
15. Vha tama vhutshilo ha vhana vhavho na vhanwe vhaswa vhu tshi khwinisea nga ndila-de?
16. Vha nga eletshedza hani vhafumakadzi vha sa shumi nga fhungo la u di-bveledzisa nga kha mishumo ya zwanda na nga pfunzo?

APPENDIX B: Interview Guide for Traditional Leaders

1. U ya nga tshenzhemo yavho, u di-bveledzisa ha vhafumakadzi vha re vhuponi ha ikonomi i re fhasi hu hani?
2. Vha tshi lavhelesa kha vhupo ha havho, fhungo la u di-bveledzisa li kwama hani vhafumakadzi?
3. Vha a fushea nga zwine vhafumakadzi vha sa shumi vha khou ita?
4. Vhupo ha fhanu ho dala vhafumakadzi vhane vha khou shuma? Zwi songo ralo, mulandu?
5. Hu nga itwa mini u tandulula fhungo ili?
6. Vha sa fushei nga mishumo ya vhafumakadzi vha sa shumi, ndi zwifhio zwine zwa nga itwa uri vha thusalee?
7. Hu na thandela dzo itelwaho u bveledzisa tshitshavha na matshilele atsho?
8. Vhunzhi ha vhafumakadzi vha sa shumi vha khou kona hani u tshila? Kha vha dodombedze mishumo ine vha i ita.
9. Vha tama u vhona vhutshilo ha vhafumakadzi vha sa shumi ho khwinisea nga ndila-de?
10. Kha vhupo ha havho, vhafumakadzi vha khou di-dzhisa kha mishumo ya zwanda? Zwi songo ralo, mulandu?
11. Hu na dzithandela dza u bveledzisa tshitshavha, vhafumakadzi vha a sumbedza dzangalelo? Zwi songo ralo, mulandu?
12. Vha tou lambedzwa hu tshi itelwa u bveledzisa tshitshavha, ndi dzifhio thandela dzine vha takalela dzi vha hone? Mulandu vha tshi tou takalela dzenedzo?
13. Ha vha na tshikhala tsha pfunzo ya vhaaluwa (ABET), vha nga takalela u vhoa vhunzhi ha vhafumakadzi vha sa shumi vha tshi vha tshipida tshatsho?

14. Vha vhona unga vhutshilo ha vhafumakadzi vha sa shumi vhu nga khwiniswa hani? Kha vha nee tsumbo ya zwine zwa nga itwa.
15. Ndi zwithu-de zwine zwa khou thusa vhunzhi ha vhafumakadzi vha sa shumi?
16. Kha vhuno vhupo, u di-bveledzisa ha vhafumakadzi vha sa shumi hu khou aluwa nga ndila I fushaho?

APPENDIX C: Interview Guide for Community Leaders

1. U ya nga tshenzhemo yavho, u di-bveledzisa ha vhafumakadzi vha re vhuponi ha ikonomi i re fhasi hu hani?
2. Vha tshi lavhelesa kha vhupo ha havho, fhungo la u di-bveledzisa li kwama hani vhafumakadzi?
3. Vha a fushea nga zwine vhafumakadzi vha sa shumi vha khou ita?
4. Vhupo ha fhanu ho dala vhafumakadzi vhane vha khou shuma? Zwi songo ralo, mulandu?
5. Hu nga itwa mini u tandulula fhungo ili?
6. Vha sa fushei nga mishumo ya vhafumakadzi vha sa shumi, ndi zwifhio zwine zwa nga itwa uri vha thusalee?
7. Hu na thandela dzo itelwaho u bveledzisa tshitshavha na matshilele atsho?
8. Vhonzhi ha vhafumakadzi vha sa shumi vha khou kona hani u tshila? Kha vha dodombedze mishumo ine vha i ita.
9. Vha tama u vhona vhutshilo ha vhafumakadzi vha sa shumi ho khwinisea nga ndila-de?
10. Kha vhupo ha havho, vhafumakadzi vha khou di-dzhisa kha mishumo ya zwanda? Zwi songo ralo, mulandu?
11. Hu na dzithandela dza u bveledzisa tshitshavha, vhafumakadzi vha a sumbedza dzangalelo? Zwi songo ralo, mulandu?
12. Vha tou lambedzwa hu tshi itelwa u bveledzisa tshitshavha, ndi dzifhio thandela dzine vha takalela dzi vha hone? Mulandu vha tshi tou takalela dzenedzo?
13. Ha vha na tshikhala tsha pfunzo ya vhaaluwa (ABET), vha nga takalela u vhoa vhonzhi ha vhafumakadzi vha sa shumi vha tshi vha tshipida tshatsho?

14. Vha vhona unga vhutshilo ha vhafumakadzi vha sa shumi vhu nga khwiniswa hani? Kha vha nee tsumbo ya zwine zwa nga itwa.
15. Ndi zwithu-de zwine zwa khou thusa vhunzhi ha vhafumakadzi vha sa shumi?
16. Kha vhuno vhupo, u di-bveledzisa ha vhafumakadzi vha sa shumi hu khou aluwa nga ndila I fushaho?

APPENDIX D: Focus Group Guide for Religious Leaders

1. U ya nga tshenzhemo yavho, u di-bveledzisa ha vhafumakadzi vha re vhuponi ha ikonomi i re fhasi hu hani?
2. Vha tshi lavhelesa kha vhupo ha havho, fhungo la u di-bveledzisa li kwama hani vhafumakadzi?
3. Vha a fushea nga zwine vhafumakadzi vha sa shumi vha khou ita?
4. Vhupo ha fhanu ho dala vhafumakadzi vhane vha khou shuma? Zwi songo ralo, mulandu?
5. Hu nga itwa mini u tandulula fhungo ili?
6. Vha sa fushei nga mishumo ya vhafumakadzi vha sa shumi, ndi zwifhio zwine zwa nga itwa uri vha thusalee?
7. Hu na thandela dzo itelwaho u bveledzisa tshitshavha na matshilele atsho?
8. Vhonzhi ha vhafumakadzi vha sa shumi vha khou kona hani u tshila? Kha vha dodombedze mishumo ine vha i ita.
9. Vha tama u vhona vhutshilo ha vhafumakadzi vha sa shumi ho khwinisea nga ndila-de?
10. Kha vhupo ha havho, vhafumakadzi vha khou di-dzhisa kha mishumo ya zwanda? Zwi songo ralo, mulandu?
11. Hu na dzithandela dza u bveledzisa tshitshavha, vhafumakadzi vha a sumbedza dzangalelo? Zwi songo ralo, mulandu?
12. Vha tou lambedzwa hu tshi itelwa u bveledzisa tshitshavha, ndi dzifhio thandela dzine vha takalela dzi vha hone? Mulandu vha tshi tou takalela dzenedzo?
13. Ha vha na tshikhala tsha pfunzo ya vhaaluwa (ABET), vha nga takalela u vhoa vhonzhi ha vhafumakadzi vha sa shumi vha tshi vha tshipida tshatsho?

14. Vha vhona unga vhutshilo ha vhafumakadzi vha sa shumi vhu nga khwiniswa hani? Kha vha nee tsumbo ya zwine zwa nga itwa.
15. Ndi zwithu-de zwine zwa khou thusa vhunzhi ha vhafumakadzi vha sa shumi?
16. Kha vhuno vhupo, u di-bveledzisa ha vhafumakadzi vha sa shumi hu khou aluwa nga ndila I fushaho?

APPENDIX E: Focus Group Discussions Guide for Health Workers

1. Based on your day-to-day experiences, how is the self-efficacy in vocational development of women in low socio-economic communities?
2. Looking at your area, how does this affect these women?
3. Are you satisfied about what low socio-economic women are doing? If not, why?
4. Is this area full of professional women? If not, what are the contributory factors?
5. What can be done to solve this kind of a condition?
6. Are you satisfied with the behaviour of the low socio-economic women? If not, what more could be done?
7. Are there community projects in your area that were established in order to develop people?
8. How do the majority of unemployed women sustain themselves? Kindly specify what they do.
9. How do you like to see the lives of these women changing for better?
10. Are women engaged in any form of vocational development in your community? If not, what are the obstacles?
11. If there are vocational development opportunities such as community projects in your area, do most of the women show interest of being part of them? If not, why?
12. If you happen to be funded for community projects in your area, which projects would you like to have and why those in particular?
13. If there are any academic development opportunities (like Adult Basic Education Training (ABET) in your area, would you be interested to see women taking part and why?

14. How do you think the lives of women in low socio-economic communities can be improved? Kindly provide examples of what should be availed.
15. What are most of unemployed women engaged in? Why?
16. Is the vocational development of women in your area growing in a satisfactory manner? If not so, what are the causes?

APPENDIX F: Request for permission to the Department of Health

Tel. 0825600186

School of Human and Social Sciences
University of Venda P.O. Box 5050
Thohoyandou 0950

The District Senior Manager
Department of Health
Private Bag
Thohoyandou
0950

2017-07-31

Re: Request for permission to conduct data collection exercise.

I am currently conducting a PhD research study into the Self-efficacy in vocational development of women in lower socio-economic communities, write to request for permission to undertake the data collection exercise to Health workers in the Vhembe District.

There is no risk involved in the research and that special care will be taken that there is no any form of disruption in the day to day running of the work.

I remain hopeful that permission will be granted.

Thanking you in advance



Sincerely

Ps MF Masakona

APPENDIX G: Consent Letter

Tel. 0825600186

School of Human and Social Sciences
University of Venda
Thohoyandou 0950

2017-07-31

Dear Participant

I am currently conducting research into the self-efficacy in vocational development of women in lower socio-economic communities and. I have been granted permission by the Limpopo department of Health, Religious leaders and Traditional and community leaders to conduct research.

- 1 An instrument (interview schedule) will be distributed.
- 2 There is no known risk involved in the research.
- 3 There are no costs involved.

You are assured that you and your responses to this activity will always be regarded as extremely confidential and that they will not be made available to any unauthorized user.

Should you have any queries or comments, you are welcome to contact me.

Ps Florence Masakona

CONSENT

In terms of the ethical requirements of the University of Venda, you are now requested to complete the following section:

I have read this letter and understand the terms involved.

On condition that the information provided by me is always treated as confidential, I hereby (MARK the appropriate section)

Give consent

Do NOT give consent that the results may be used for research purposes.

Signature:

Date:

Appendix H: Response from the Department of Health



LIMPOPO
PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Enquiries: Stander SS (015 293 6650)

Ref:LP_2018.02-006

Masakona MF

UNIVERSITY OF VENDA

Greetings

RE: Self -efficacy in vocational development of woman in lower Socio-economic communities in Vhembe District within Limpopo Province

The above matter refers.

1. Permission to conduct the above-mentioned study is hereby granted.
2. Kindly be informed that:
 - Research must be loaded on the NHRD site (<http://nhrd.hst.org.za>) by the researcher.
 - Further arrangement should be made with the targeted institutions, after consultation with the District Executive Manager.
 - In the course of your study there should be no action that disrupts the services or incur any cost on the Department.

• After completion of the study, it is mandatory that the findings should be submitted to the

Department to serve as a resource.

• The researcher should be prepared to assist in the interpretation and implementation of the study recommendation where possible.

• The above approval is valid for a 3-year period.

• If the proposal has been amended, a new approval should be sought from the Department of Health.

• Kindly note, that the Department can withdraw the approval at any time.

Your cooperation will be highly appreciated.



Head of Department

04/04/2018

Date

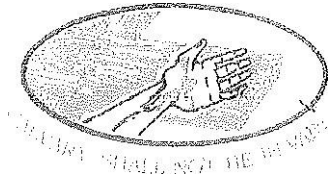
Private Bag X9302, Polokwane

Fidel Castro Ruz House, 18 College Street. Polokwane 0700. Tel: 015 293 6000/12.

Fax: 015 293 6211. Website: <http://www.limpopo.gov.za>

The heartland of Southern Africa — Development is about people!.

APPENDIX I: Permission from the Pastors' Forum



CALVARY CHRISTIAN CHURCH CENTER
P.O. Box 332
Lwamondo 0985
27 October 2017

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

PERMISSION TO COLLECT DATA FROM THE RELIGIOUS LEADERS.

As a chairperson of the Pastor's Forum in the Vhembe District Municipality, I hereby give permission to Pastor Morongwa Florence Masakona who is a Univen PHD candidate, to collect Data pertaining to her study from the Religious Leaders around this District.

Kind Regards

Apostle Azwidowi Maxwell Masakona.

(Founder and Head Pastor of Calvary Christian Church International).