



The Role of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) on Women's Micro-Enterprises:

The Case of Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife

by

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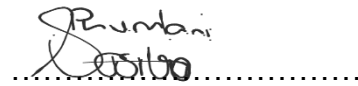
July 2023

DECLARATION

I, Phumlani Victor Sosibo, solemnly affirm that the work presented in this research project is entirely my own. I have taken all necessary measures to ensure that all sources used in this study have been appropriately recognised and accurately cited.

Furthermore, I confirm that this research project has not been previously submitted for a degree at any other educational institution, nor has it been submitted for publication as journal articles or conference papers.

I acknowledge the importance of academic integrity and take full responsibility for the originality and authenticity of this work.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Phumlani Victor Sosibo', is written over a horizontal dotted line.

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ABSTRACT

The positive support provided by Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife can potentially transform the entrepreneurial spirit, attitudes, and perceptions among women in rural communities of the KwaZulu-Natal Province. Previous research on women's micro-enterprises has highlighted the importance of empowering women, particularly those living in rural areas such as KwaZulu-Natal. This study specifically focuses on investigating the initiatives of women's micro-enterprises through the corporate social investment programme of Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife.

The study was conducted in the Masters Primary Co-operative, using qualitative research methods. A sample of 13 participants involving government officials and co-operative members was selected using purposive sampling. Data was collected through semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions. Thematic analysis was employed to analyse the collected data.

The primary objective of this research was to understand how corporate social responsibility contributes to women's micro-enterprise initiatives using Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife as a case study. By focusing on these initiatives, the study aims to shed light on the strategies and practices that lead to the successful and enduring operation of women's micro-enterprises with the organisation's support. Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife's corporate social development programme has helped to sustain women's micro-enterprises by increasing income generation, business expansion, purchasing necessary equipment, and improving their production capacity, leading to higher revenue and profits. The women also received infrastructural assistance, access to a broader market base, and essential training and capacity building. The study demonstrated that women's micro-enterprises achieve sustainability through teamwork, commitment, and future focus. The study recommends that Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife adopt the Marxist feminist theory approach, the sustainable livelihood approach to corporate social responsibility, and offer continuous training in micro-enterprises to improve their corporate social responsibility programme further.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

BBBEE	Broad-based black economic empowerment
BEE	Black economic empowerment
CSR	Corporate social responsibility
CSI	Corporate social investment
EKZNW	Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife
GAD	Gender and development
KZN	KwaZulu-Natal
PIP	Political institutions and processes
SDG	Sustainable development goals
SEDA	Small Enterprise Development Agency
SLA	Sustainable livelihood approach
WAD	Women and development
WID	Women in development

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

The European Commission (2011) characterises corporate social responsibility (CSR) as businesses incorporating social and ecological worries into their corporate policies and willingly collaborating with their stakeholders. So, by conferring CSR standards additional to income-generating undertakings, companies should treat society and the local community respectfully (Vila, Sklavounos, Vergos, Rotsios et al. 2020). The company's environmental accountability affects customers and communities. Thus, their social and ecological responsibility should be assessed (Isa 2012). Isa (2012) further describes CSR as a tactic that adds to its long-term growth and sustainable development. The improved knowledge of the encouraging influence of CSR initiatives on customer perspectives drives businesses to accept such strategies regardless of financial costs (Vila et al. 2020).

In developing countries such as India, CSR has revolved around a community-based development approach for various companies. Many have enthusiastically acted on the focus of women's social and economic empowerment (Abraham 2013). Some have advanced the development of self-help groups that favoured taking up income-generating livelihood activities after adequate capacity building and training (Abraham 2013). The development of women's economic empowerment entails enabling women to have equal access to economic resources and the ability to utilise them accordingly to enhance their control and influence over different aspects of their lives (Taylor and Pereznieto 2014).

Various countries have achieved significant accomplishments by including women in economic activities, particularly entrepreneurship ventures (Yeasmin and Yasmin 2020). Women's entrepreneurship inspires social and economic empowerment, which is vital in ensuring sustainable livelihoods for women (Hoque, Bhattacharjee and Islam 2020). Women entrepreneurs are critical in creating employment, human development, poverty alleviation, wealth, health and education, and driving the overall

progress of a country, with a particular emphasis on developing countries (Byrne, Fattoum and Diaz Garcia 2019; Neumeyer, Santos, Caetano and Kalbfleisch 2019).

Women tend to spend more than men, utilising the majority of their family income on education and the welfare of their children. When women are appropriately empowered to make money, accumulate assets, and improve their financial stability, they create new jobs and expand the talent and talent pool available in the country to support industry skills. They also develop and promote economic growth when they are involved in entrepreneurship. It is increasingly acknowledged that women in business play a crucial role as catalysts for sustainable economic growth, emerging as prominent economic contributors (Hasin, Hasan, and Musa 2018; Rugwabiza 2013).

In South Africa, unemployment, inequality, and poverty are the three principal challenges (World Bank 2018). Unemployment, inequality, and poverty issues in South Africa originate from the historical setting and lasting inheritance of apartheid-era policies, administrative authority, and public sector capability (Chibba and Luiz 2011). These three difficulties likewise influence women more than men (Phillips, Moos and Nieman 2014). Statistics South Africa (2021) shows that women represented 43.4% of employment in the second 2021 quarter. Just under 30.1% of females were engaged in the individual services informal social community sector in the 2021 second quarter, appearing differently from 5.5% of men during this period. In the 2021 second quarter, around 36.8% of those occupied with non-market exercises were women.

South Africa distinguishes between two forms of social responsibility: CSR and corporate social investment (CSI). Although these two approaches share similarities, it is essential to note that they are not similar (Knight, Mazibuko and Goldman 2017). CSR defines the type of exercise directed by an organisation towards being a more socially accountable business. At the same time, CSI describes the programmes taken by organisations that are effective in social responsibility (Solomon 2013).

Nevertheless, as Irwin (2003) indicated, South African businesspeople allude to CSR initiatives as CSI. The outcomes of apartheid form the nature of these discernments. CSI is an interestingly South African phenomenon and is a more active form of CSR

focusing on governance and sustainable development (Knight et al. 2017). Frequently, CSI is a type of corporate humanity, where approximately one per cent of a company's benefits that they allocate is a based commitment toward social responsibility activities. These activities have a developmental interest and are central to community upliftment. CSR and CSI are necessary powers in South Africa for poverty alleviation and social change (Knight et al. 2017).

The researcher starts with an introduction and focuses on some content in this chapter. It further describes the research problem, aims and objectives the researcher wants to achieve, and states critical research questions the researcher wants to address. This chapter also briefly provides definitions of important terms. The historical background of the Ezemvelo KwaZulu-Natal Wildlife (EKZNW) is explored, followed by a discussion of the background of the study, and provides a clear basis for the selected topic. It also briefly explains the study's rationale and importance, followed by its research methodology. The concluding part describes the arrangement of the research project and closes with a summary.

1.2 Problem statement

CSR significantly improves community welfare and addresses poverty and ecological protection (Ng'eni, Bukwimba, Kwesigabo and Kaaya 2015). Kahreh, Babania, Tive and Mirmehdi (2014) did a study investigating gender differences in CSR, and Johnstone-Louis (2017) studied women's entrepreneurship and CSR concerning an adequate work theory. As far as the researcher is aware, there have yet to be studies attempting to explore the role of CSR in women's micro-enterprises (Johnstone-Louis 2017).

Examining the role of CSR in women's micro-enterprises requires an in-depth investigation. Having women directly engaged in the entrepreneurship venture was the main factor of the study. They were chosen because most females depend on entrepreneurship to survive socially and economically. The contribution to this examination was to obtain a reasonable comprehension of CSR in women's micro-enterprises. This examination has improved discussions encompassing women's micro-enterprise initiatives, women entrepreneurs, the government, and the community concerning poverty alleviation, employment opportunities, and

empowerment. Indeed, even limited studies examine CSR programmes through women's micro-enterprise.

1.3 Research aim, objectives and questions

This study aims to understand how CSR can contribute to the sustainability of women's micro-enterprise initiatives by using the EKZNW example. In order to accomplish the research goal, several key objectives have been delineated:

- to understand CSR on an international level;
- to explore CSR in the South African context;
- To probe into women's employment and assess the sustainability of their micro-enterprises;
- to determine how the EKZNW CSR programme assists with the sustainability of women's micro-enterprises; and
- to recommend how CSR can contribute to the sustainability of women's micro-enterprise initiatives.

1.4 Definition of key terms

The researcher found CSR, women, micro-enterprises, and women micro-enterprises as critical terms that need to be defined in this study. These terms are defined as follows:

1.4.1 Corporate social responsibility

CSR is a commitment by profit and non-profit organisations to influence stakeholders, the environment, and broader society. It emphasises the transparency and accountability of company activities encompassing social, economic, environmental, and ethical efforts, which are frequently voluntary and located inside and outside the marketplace and business transactions (Filho, Azul, Brandli, Özuyar et al. 2019). The World Business Council for Sustainable Development defines it as the ongoing assurance of the company to act ethically and contribute to economic development while enhancing the value of the life of people at large (Filho et al. 2019).

It has recently received much attention to link sustainable development goals (SDGs) and CSR activities (Schönherr, Findler and Martinuzzi 2017). The SDGs consist of 17 global goals that the member countries use to develop the agenda and policies of their 2015–2030 plan. Each country is responsible for meeting the SDGs. For this reason, governments are encouraging companies to carry out CSR activities to achieve the SDGs. In line with this trend, all international companies implement CSR strategies from a social, economic, and environmental perspective to achieve the globally agreed SDGs (Mo 2019).

1.4.2 Women

Women and girls worldwide are entitled to equal rights and opportunities and the freedom to live without discrimination and violence. Empowering women and promoting gender equality are fundamental objectives of the 17 SDGs. Goal five emphasises the importance of integrating women into sustainable development efforts (United Nations Women 2014). According to Ndimande (2001), the contribution of women to development is crucial as it contributes to the attainment of sustainable development. The active involvement of women in both formal and informal employment plays a vital role in fostering economic development, consequently improving the overall well-being of women's families (Ndimande 2001).

Despite being integral members of our society, women possess less influence and power. The contributions of women are indispensable for shaping society as a whole. Unfortunately, there exists a prevailing pattern of discrimination between men and women. Women need help with every aspect of the workforce. For centuries, society has sought to improve itself without empowering women, but with no success. The living environment of women should be improved for the betterment of society. Both women and men are social mechanisms and are interdependent. However, because men are dominant in society, men want to control women, which leads to gender discrimination and inequality. Men hold positions of power and authority in society, while women are often seen as servants (Sohail 2014).

1.4.3 Micro-enterprise

The term *micro-enterprise* was established in Bangladesh in 1976 by Nobel Award recipient Muhammad Yunus, founder of the Grameen Bank (Bank of the Poor) (Mazumdar and Ahmed 2015). Micro-enterprises primarily focused on utilising and developing entrepreneurial potential and skills for rural women under the poverty line to meet local needs (Sharma, Dua and Hatwal 2012). It improves the creation of jobs for different people in their social system. This is advantageous for rural women as they can increase their families' income while caring for their homes and raising livestock. Micro-entrepreneurship empowers women and eliminates gender inequality.

South Africa's National Small Enterprise Amendment Bill 2023 states that micro-enterprises are entrepreneurial projects with an annual turnover of R2 million (BER, 2016). Micro-enterprises generally do not have a formal tax registration, may not comply with labour laws or standard accounting practices, and typically have less than five workers (South Africa 1996). Employment in micro-enterprises can occur in:

- agriculture (*crop and animal production, hunting, tourism and fishing or aquaculture*);
- labour-intensive manufacturing (*garments, food products*);
- information and communication technologies (*computer programming, consultancy, and related activities*);
- business facilitation services (*legal and accounting activities; office administrative, office support and other business support activities; activities auxiliary to financial service and insurance; advertising and market research*);
- engineering and construction activities (*construction of buildings and specialised construction activities, but also civil engineering and architectural and engineering activities; technical testing and analysis*);
- energy supply and waste management (*electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply industry*);

- retail and wholesale trade; and
- transport (South Africa 2003).

1.4.4 Women's micro-enterprise

Indeed, women micro-enterprises are actively contributing to the economic development of every country. This is common in community development and employment creation (Kim and Sherraden 2014). Women's micro-enterprises in most developing countries are operated and owned by women to survive and make essential contributions to the well-being of their families, community and national economic development (Selamat, Abdul-Razak, Gapor and Sanusi 2011; Sharma et al. 2012). Micro-enterprises are crucial to women because they offer flexibility, fewer restrictions, and less capital and skills while providing self-employment opportunities to realise their potential (Wasihun and Paul 2011). According to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD 2004), micro-enterprises are increasing the ability of women to participate in the labour market.

Ibargüen-Tinley (2015) states that the projects and policies of rural women's micro-enterprises are designed to allow women to work in groups. As a strategy for women's empowerment, many development agencies and projects in Africa target and fund women. This financing strategy strengthens women's social cohesion in rural and developing areas (Ibargüen-Tinley 2015). After defining key terms related to the study, the researcher found it important to give the historical background of EKZNW as a case study.

1.5 Historical background of Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife

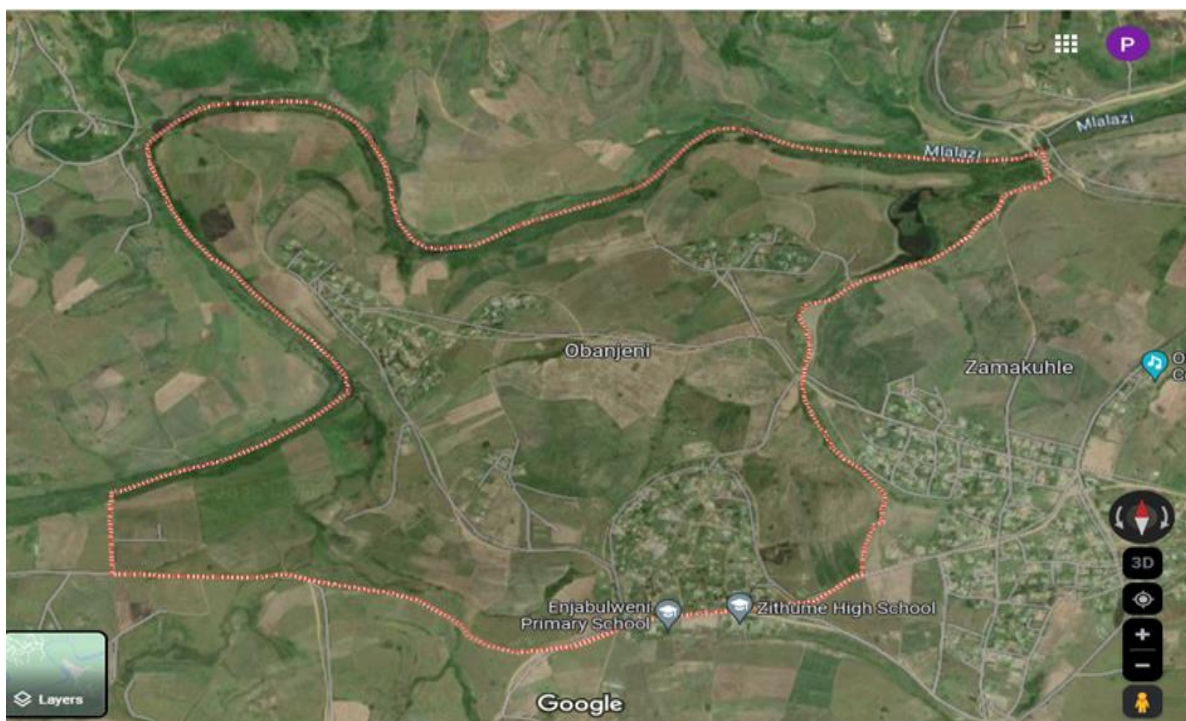
The researcher has managed this study within KwaZulu-Natal (KZN), South Africa. The KwaZulu-Natal Nature Conservation Board, branded as Ezemvulo KwaZulu Natal Wildlife (EKZNW), came about from merging two previous conservation bodies after the democratic elections in 1994. The merger of the Natal Parks Board and the KwaZulu Directorate of Nature Conservation played a significant role in the subsequent establishment of the Nature Conservation Service. This merger was formalised through the KwaZulu-Natal Nature Conservation Management Act No. 9 of 1997. The Nature Conservation Service operates as a government entity under

Schedule 3C of the Public Finance Management Act, No. 1 of 1999. It falls under the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Economic Development, Tourism, and Environmental Affairs (EKZNW 2015a).

EKZNW started the Community Levy Programme. They recognised that sustainable utilisation of natural resources thrives when they benefit the communities residing near protected areas (EKZNW 2010). This programme's general mandate addresses the entity's social responsibility drive. They wanted to share concrete benefits attained through tourism and brand reserves relevant to adjacent societies. This programme was designed to assist and create meaningful partnerships through a broad scope of projects (EKZNW 2015a). To shape a case study, the researcher has engaged women in a micro-enterprise implemented through the EKZNW CSR programme, Masters Primary Co-operative.

1.6 Masters Primary Co-operative location

The Masters Primary Co-operative is in the Obanjeni area, Ward 20 Mthunzini 3867. Figure 1.1 is the Obanjeni area map.



Source: Google Maps (2023)

Figure 1.1: Masters Primary Co-operative location Obanjeni map

The Masters Primary Co-operative is in a deeply rural area of Eshowe, at Obanjeni village in Umlalazi Local Municipality, with a population of 223 140 and a high unemployment rate. Umlalazi Local Municipality is also known for 33% of agricultural services. Because it is on a tourism route, it has 10% of tourism services. The population comprises 20% unschooled, 28.6% with matric, and 6.1% of people with higher education (Statistics South Africa 2016).

1.7 Rationale and significance of the study

According to Phillips et al. (2014), poverty, inequality and unemployment in South Africa are three significant challenges. Poverty is when individuals with limited incomes cannot fulfil their fundamental necessities. This circumstance gives rise to various challenges, such as diminished access to healthcare services, elevated levels of illiteracy, and an overall poor standard of living. Some authors define poverty as a situation where there is insufficient money to meet people's basic needs. Poverty became increasingly concentrated in urban settlements in the 1980s and 1990s for demographic and economic reasons. The steady growth of micro-enterprises and their role in poverty reduction and growth is indisputable. It is an essential source of prosperity and employment creation and is recognised as a means of innovation (Siddig and Hegazi 2014).

The initiation of women empowerment is employed to understand the necessary steps to uplift impoverished, vulnerable, and powerless women. The conditions for women in the Third World and developing nations could be more inspiring. They have minimal prospects and few opportunities to make decisions about their lives. There are many reasons for women's incapacity in developing countries, including poverty (Nadim and Nurlukman 2017). According to Zulfiqar (as cited in Nadim and Nurlukman 2017), women's empowerment is achieved through various factors, including access to education, participation in political processes, financial opportunities, and the privilege of microcredit programmes. Women may need different forms of empowerment depending on their needs and requirements. According to Nadim and Nurlukman (2017), empowerment can be categorised into three distinct forms: economic empowerment, enhancement of well-being, and political empowerment.

The South African government empowers women by distributing benefits to women and improving sustainable development (Moyo, Francis and Ndlovu 2012). The active participation of women entrepreneurs is essential in attaining sustainable development and addressing issues such as poverty, inequality, and unemployment. Women are disproportionately impacted by inequality, poverty, and unemployment, often serving as vital family pillars. This assessment established a Women, Children and People with Disabilities Portfolio, promoting women's social and economic empowerment and gender equality (South Africa 2017). However, in the last two decades, women have not made rapid progress in social and economic participation and gender equality, despite the excess of progressive legislation (South Africa 2017). Statistics South Africa (2021) states that women are still vulnerable to poverty, food security, violence, teenage pregnancy, and employment inequality. In KZN, underprivileged communities live in remote areas and benefit from the CSR programme that EKZNW and other stakeholders run (EKZNW 2010; EKZNW 2015a). There is significant involvement of women entrepreneurs in the community. The realisation was made possible by the number of businesses owned by women.

Women's active involvement in the entrepreneurial process is vital, as most women rely on entrepreneurship to survive economically and socially. Due to the potential involvement of women entrepreneurs in various communities adjacent to EKZNW, finding CSR initiatives in women micro-enterprises requires a thorough analysis. Participating in this study was to comprehensively comprehend the impact of CSR on micro-enterprises owned by women. Women's projects include but are not limited to sewing, poultry farming, desk assembling and gardening (EKZNW 2010; EKZNW 2015a). Therefore, the researcher included women's micro-enterprise implemented through the EKZNW CSR programme to shape the case study. This enterprise is in a remote area of Eshowe named the Masters Primary Co-operative in Umlalazi Local Municipality. This study also facilitated discussions on women's micro-enterprise initiatives for entrepreneurial life concerning poverty reduction, employment opportunities and women's empowerment. The following section explains the research methodology that the researcher has used in this study.

1.8 Research methodology

In this study, the researcher used the interpretivism worldview to perform the research since it comprehends the universe of human experiences. The interpretive paradigm, as defined, is an approach that relies on comprehending the realm of human encounters. It allows researchers to view the world through the lens and understanding of the directly involved individuals (Rahi 2017; Thanh and Thanh 2015). This worldview permitted the researcher to envision the world based on the comprehension and viewpoints of the participants. This worldview allows qualitative research design to comprehend the role of CSR in women's micro-enterprises rather than a quantitative research design. The interpretive paradigm allows researchers to employ interviews to gather data, as it hinges on the participants' perspectives regarding the studied circumstances. Nevertheless, it is contended that interpretivism aims to emphasise subjectivity since it opposes the notion that research on human behaviour can achieve objectivity (Mojtahed, Nunes, Martins and Peng 2014; Thanh and Thanh 2015).

1.8.1 Research approach

In this research, information was gathered employing a qualitative approach. According to Paradis, O'Brien, Nimmon, Bandiera, and Martimianakis (2016), the qualitative research approach aims to elucidate the significance of the central theme within the subject matter to comprehend the intended meaning behind participants' statements. Creswell (2014) indicates that qualitative research gathers rich descriptive information on a situation or phenomenon to understand what is studied in a natural setting. According to Henning, Van Rensburg and Smit (2004), qualitative approaches verify participants' comprehension and interpretations. The process of establishing meaning holds great importance within the qualitative research approach. Conferring to Almalki (2016), qualitative research emphasises gaining insight into and investigating the significance of individuals and groups involved in a human or social matter (Almalki 2016). It additionally identifies the meaning, purpose, or truth. Qualitative approaches are regularly defined as inductive, with the essential belief that realism is a social structure that is hard to compound, quantify and link. Qualitative methods have the subject's significance, and the data collected involved participants' perspectives (Rovai, Baker and Ponton 2014).

Therefore, to understand the role of CSR in women's micro-enterprises, using qualitative methods helped to gain insights from people's perspectives. A benefit of employing a qualitative research method is the thorough and comprehensive examination of a phenomenon (Sutton and Ausin 2015). The adaptable nature of qualitative methods enables researchers to modify their approach as new information unfolds. Nevertheless, criticism has been directed at qualitative research methods for their overreliance on interviews and focus group discussions, with limited utilisation of alternative methods such as ethnography, observations, and document analysis (Petty, Thomson and Stew 2012).

The qualitative research design assisted the researcher in understanding the role of CSR on women's micro-enterprises than using a quantitative research design. While using the qualitative research approach, the researcher communicated in person with the participants, understanding the phenomenon in-depth (Maree 2007). The researcher utilised a qualitative approach because of its flexibility in question structure to obtain the expected outcomes and close association with women entrepreneurs in this research. It also simplified participants' contributions to this study (Eyisi 2016).

1.8.2 Research design

For this investigation, the researcher opted for a case study design that heavily relies on verbal explanations to explore and understand a particular social context being investigated. Creswell (2014) confirms that a case study is an in-depth investigation of a restricted structure. According to McMillan and Schumacher (2010), being restricted indicates being limited, according to participant features, location and time. As per Yin (2014), the case study design is regarded as the emphasis of the investigation and replies to why and how questions because you cannot influence the conduct of research participants.

1.8.3 Data collection methods

The data collection methods employed in this research include semi-structured interviews and focus groups, explained below.

1.8.3.1 Semi-structured interviews

Babbie and Mouton (2001) state that interviews are frequently utilised in exploratory investigations as they prioritise understanding rather than collecting extensive, precise, and replicable information. Semi-structured interviews are chosen as they allow the researcher to pose specific questions while maintaining a conversational and informal discussion style (O'Leary 2004). Gill, Stewart, Treasure and Chadwick (2008) define semi-structured interviews as having essential questions that help describe the areas or aspects under investigation (Appendix D). However, they also allow for flexibility, enabling both the researcher and participant to deviate from strictly tracking answers and delve into a more detailed exploration, often called probing (Gill et al. 2008). While semi-structured interviews offer flexibility, they require meticulous preparation (Laforest 2009). Lodico, Spaulding and Voegtle (2010) emphasise that semi-structured interviews are meticulously organised and planned, which involves the development of an interview guide (Lodico et al. 2010).

1.8.3.2 Focus group discussion

The benefit of focus group discussions is the opportunity to notice much communication on a theme in a restricted time. The conclusion is established on the researcher's competence in facilitating and guiding focus group discussions (Babbie and Mouton 2001). According to Austin and Sutton (2014), focus group discussions are related to in-depth interviews because they involve open-ended questions intended to capture the detailed experience of the participants.

Nevertheless, focus group discussions are a different method to collect information from detailed interviews, which have provided the researcher with evidence that relies upon the communication of the group members to create solutions to the researcher's questions (Appendix D). Therefore, focus group discussions must only be practical to interview a few individuals with a slight investment of time. The choice of which of these methods is best depends upon whether the study question is probing for a group's or individual's opinions of experiences (Rosenthal 2016).

The data-gathering instrument (interview guide) has been taken to the field until the researcher completes the fieldwork. Fusch and Ness (2015) views data saturation as the stage where further data fails to generate new emerging patterns or themes. The

data-gathering instrument must be prepared and supported by the supervisor before collecting data. The interview guide involves two sections, namely the participants' demographic profiles and the second part, enterprise-related questions. The researcher recorded interviews with the consent of the participants. Nieuwenhuis (2016) recommended that the researcher examine the information gathered during recorded discussions. It is also crucial to guarantee that the researcher follows instead of leading participants regarding replies in performing these discussions.

1.8.4 Study population and sampling size

The population for the study is EKZNW and the Master's Primary Co-operative members. According to Creswell, Hanson, Clark Plano and Morales (2007), qualitative study participants must be knowledgeable and capable of relating the experience the researcher desires to investigate. In this investigation, purposive sampling has been utilised. A specific case is selected in purposive sampling because it shows qualities relevant and of interest to a particular investigation (De Vos, Strydom and Delport 2011). According to Nieuwenhuis (2016), purposive sampling implies that members are chosen considering attributes that make them the owners of the information expected to address the study questions for the investigation. The total sample size are 13 participants. The researcher also utilised a purposive sample to obtain comprehensive information required for his case study. This is shown in Table 1.1 in the next section about sampling techniques and selection criteria.

1.8.5 Sampling techniques and selection criteria

Table 1.1 summarises the sample participants who participated in this study.

Table 1.1: Sampling table

Target	Date	Sample size	Description of sample	Sampling method	Instrument and time
Co-operative leadership	4 July 2022	2	Chairperson Treasurer	Purposive	Semi-structured interviews of 30–60 minutes
Government officials	5–8 July 2022	6	1 – KZN Department of Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs 1 – SEDA 4 – Conservation officer from EKZNW		Semi-structured interviews of 30–60 minutes

Co-operative members	4 July 2022	7	All seven members of the Co-operative		Focus group discussion 60–90 minutes
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The researcher used a purposive sampling technique to select participants according to preselected criteria applicable to answer study questions (Etikan, Musa and Alkassim 2016; Palinkas, Horwitz, Green, Wisdom et al. 2015). The sampling of participants depended on EKZNW and women's enterprises implemented through the EKZNW CSR programme. The sample consisted of four community conservation officers employed by EKZNW, one official from the KZN Department of Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs and one from the Small Enterprise Development Agency (SEDA) sampled for semi-structured interviews. In the Masters Primary Co-operative, the chairperson and the treasurer were sampled for individual interviews, and the one focus group discussion consisted of all seven Co-operative members. A total of 13 participants were included in this study. All participants have been chosen based on their availability for data collection activity.

1.8.6 Recruitment strategies of the participants

The researcher has utilised the gatekeeper's letters as a participant recruitment technique for this research (Appendix A). As McFadyen and Rankin (2016) indicated, gatekeeping is a term alluding to the person who restricts or controls researchers' admittance to participants. For instance, a senior executive or top manager in the institution, the individual within a community or a group determines whether they permit the researcher's admittance to embark on the study. Gatekeepers have the influence or power to allow or deny admittance to a research or field setting. Gatekeepers are also associated with permitting or denying admittance to a person or thing (McFadyen and Rankin 2016).

Through an approval and ethical form that the University of Free State has granted (Appendix B), also recognised as the gatekeeper's letter, the researcher requested authorisation from the Acting Chief Executive Officer of EKZNW to conduct this research with EKZNW employees and CSI programme beneficiaries. Additionally, before conducting the interviews, the participants and the researcher agreed to ensure that the collected data would be used solely for research purposes. Through the informed consent process, the safety of the participants was assured by proper

communication between the researcher and the participants (Appendix C). Thus, the participants reacted to the researcher with more confidence after being assured that their identities were kept secret by utilising fictional names when the study was published.

1.8.7 Data analysis

The researcher employed thematic analysis to examine and analyse the transcribed information gathered from the study. As Braun and Clarke (2014) indicated, thematic analysis is an approach that involves the identification, analysis, and reporting of themes in the data. It enables the researcher to combine and label the information in a detailed and comprehensive manner. Nonetheless, it frequently goes beyond this and permits the researcher to interpret various features of the study theme (Braun and Clarke 2014). Thematic analysis is an essential technique for qualitative analysis. This technique is utilised in interpretive phenomenological analysis and other qualitative research methods, such as the grounded theory (Javadi and Zarea 2016).

The initial phase in studying the data for this research involved immersing and familiarising with the information investigated by the researcher by identifying all common theme patterns. The subsequent phase involved categorising themes that shared exact terms, styles, and words. The researcher has used the themes to set up connections. The subjects developed from the transcript have been used, shown in detail, and summarised to vital facts under critical themes specified in the objectives. The third phase in studying data is coding. The information has been marked according to topics utilising the research questions as a guide. Phase four involved separating coded information into themes. The researcher grouped the ideas stated by participants in various ways under one subject and explained each topic in more detail. The last phase involved interpreting and reading the information (Braun and Clarke 2014; Javadi and Zarea 2016; Nowell, Norris, White and Moules 2017).

The researcher has utilised thematic analysis for two primary reasons: accessibility and flexibility (Braun and Clarke 2014; Nowell et al. 2017). For new qualitative research individuals, the thematic analysis could be viewed as theoretically challenging, confusing, unclear, and problematic (Braun and Clarke 2014). However, Nowell et al. (2017) contended that thematic analysis is essential for investigating

various views and making unanticipated perceptions. Braun and Clarke (2014) further indicated that thematic analysis also recommends conducting a qualitative study, which explains the instruments of systematically coding and analysing qualitative information, which can also be associated with broad theoretical or conceptual issues. Thematic analysis is just an information analysis technique for qualitative research (Braun and Clarke 2014).

The researcher used specific methods to guarantee the reliability and validity of the information analysis. Creswell (2014) states that triangulation looks at information from sources and fosters analytical support for topics. Therefore, assuming topics are comprehensive of different sources of information from respondents, the cycle is viewed as the impact invalidating the study. He further recommends that the participant's checking strategy decide the exactness and quality of the discoveries by taking the last report back to members and determining if these members feel that they are true. Therefore, the researcher utilised multiple information sources to obtain many viewpoints on the subject. Triangulation is the best technique to examine legitimacy, reliability, and inflexibility.

McMillan and Schumacher (2010) state that qualitative researchers obtain information first-hand by engaging in extensive interactions with the participants in the study. This cycle permits the researcher to get a thorough comprehension of the phenomenon under review. It could pass in-depth insights concerning the site and individuals that prompt validity. The study made use of focus group discussions and interviews. These interviews have permitted the researcher and the members to connect transparently and extensively. This has further developed trust among the researcher and members. Additionally, participants have gotten more opportunities to share their encounters with the case, improving the information's quality and reliability.

Finally, the other strategy employed to guarantee the reliability and legitimacy of the study was to use the participant's check method. This interaction empowers the researcher to introduce discoveries and appeal to the members' remarks. If members are not content with the discoveries, the researcher has recollected information and examined it to the members' satisfaction (Braun and Clarke 2014). This process assists with confirming prepared information from the vital participants to encourage reliability and trustworthiness.

1.9 Ethical consideration

The code of ethics guided the researcher during the data collection process. Before collecting information from the study members, the researcher obtained a gatekeeper's letter from the University of Free State and EKZNW for authorisation to conduct the study and ensure it is safe for everyone (Appendix A). After the University and EKZNW permitted the researcher to continue the study (Appendix B), the researcher communicated with the participants and briefed them about the objectives. Those who decided to participate in the examination signed the consent forms. Protecting participants' well-being involved the following ethical principles: respecting participants' autonomy, voluntary participation, informed consent, confidentiality, and protection of participants from harm (Kalu and Bwalya 2017). These standards are clarified in the following section.

1.9.1 Informed consent

Informed consent stresses the member's right to independence and the capacity for freedom in real life. During this period, members chose to contribute to this research once they understood the advantages and disadvantages of the study (Akaranga and Makau 2016). The participants and the researcher signed an informed consent form before the interviews. Additionally, members received the informed consent form to eliminate people who were not interested and comfortable with the study question (Appendix C).

1.9.2 Voluntary participation

The researcher clarified the study's purpose and elaborated on any dangers involved before members consented (Akaranga and Makau 2016). Involvement in the study was voluntary. The members were allowed to withdraw from the study without consequences if they decided not to address inquiries (Akaranga and Makau 2016).

1.9.3 Anonymity and confidentiality

Anonymity refers to maintaining confidentiality by not disclosing or identifying participants' cultural or ethnic backgrounds, refraining from using their names and avoiding disclosing any other sensitive information about the individuals involved

(Akaranga and Makau 2016). Hence, during this study, the researcher guaranteed to secure the data given in certainty to the members. However, the members can seek endorsement if any data should be uncovered. This developed honesty regarding the research topic by protecting members from mental and physical damage. The researcher also guaranteed not to pose humiliating inquiries, which can shock members (Akaranga and Makau 2016). Data collected was securely kept in a locked cardboard in the supervisor's office. Data recorded must be erased, soft password-protected copies must be deleted, and written documents must be shredded after five years.

1.10 Structure of the research project

The dissertation has five chapters, each focusing on achieving a specific outcome. Therefore, the following chapters make up the entire study:

Chapter 1:

After introducing the aim and objectives of the study, the problem statement will be presented, followed by an outline of the research design and methodology. This chapter will guide the specific problem being investigated and provides an overview of the anticipated solution.

Chapter 2:

This chapter will discuss the theoretical frameworks of the study that the researcher used, the sustainable livelihood approach (SLA) and the feminist theory.

Chapter 3:

The literature review chapter will focus on previous research on the role of CSR in women's micro-enterprises, specifically highlighting women's micro-enterprises implemented through the CSR programme of EKZNW (Masters Primary Co-operative). It will provide an overview of existing studies and knowledge in this area, contributing to understanding the topic and setting the foundation for the current study.

Chapter 4:

This chapter will be based on data findings. It will present the results that have led to discussions and interpretations.

Chapter 5:

In this chapter the researcher will explain the conclusion and recommendations. The study's final chapter will present conclusions, recommendations, and suggestions for further research.

1.11 Summary

Chapter 1 of the study provided a comprehensive introduction, starting with a detailed problem statement, followed by the purpose and objectives of the study. It also included an explanation of essential terms, a historical background, the rationale for conducting the study, and an exploration of its significance. A brief discussion of the methodology was included, and the chapter concludes with an outline of the dissertation structure. Investigations of this nature have assisted the researcher in examining the role of CSR in women's micro-enterprise through the CSR programme of EKZNW. The following chapter will present the theoretical framework.

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction

Chapter 1 introduced the effort to set the stage. This study uses a sustainable livelihood approach framework and the Marxist feminist theory to capture how women survive. The SLA framework is the leading theory used in this study, taking into account the colonial era of South Africa and the history of apartheid. The Marxist feminist theory presents a hierarchy of oppression for women by reflecting exclusive systems and ideas that may be considered traditional only through patriarchal lenses. Additionally, to understand the origins of Women In Development (WID), Women And Development (WAD), and Gender And Development (GAD) and what caused the shift in these approaches. Examining the experience of women's micro-enterprises will reflect most women's struggle for socio-economic survival in South Africa and globally.

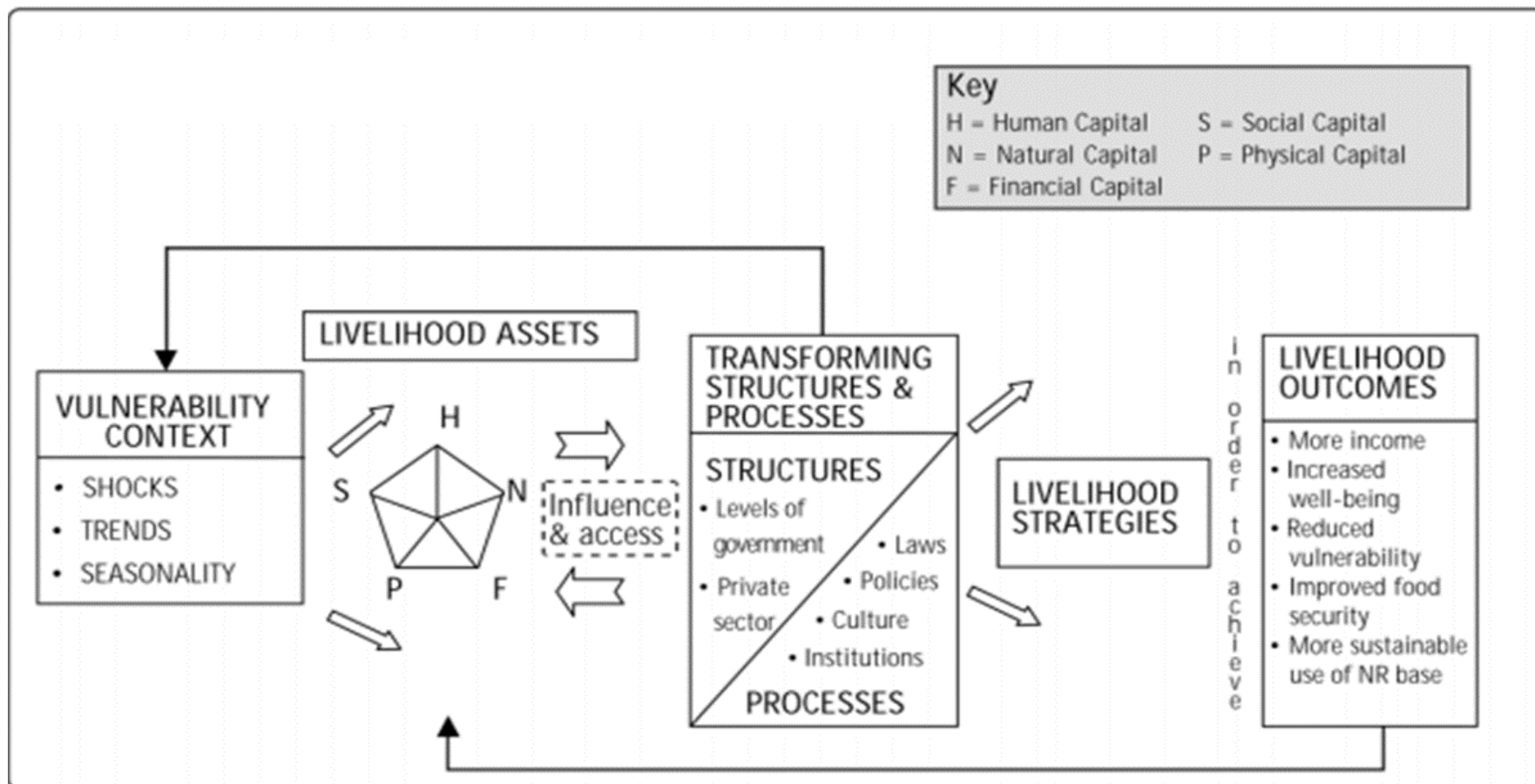
2.2 Sustainable livelihood approach

According to a study by Massoud, Issa, El-Fadel, and Jamali in 2016, around 55% of people in developing nations are in rural areas. Additionally, it is worth mentioning that approximately 75% of the rural population is experiencing poverty. Social and political inequality, wealth scarcity, restricted economic prospects, and inadequate services and education are prevalent challenges in these regions. Rural areas worldwide suffer from weakening small enterprises and the agricultural sector. However, over the last two decades, rural development has been the focus of attention of governments, international organisations, and various stakeholders worldwide with its determination to improve and maintain the quality of life of rural communities (Lundgren 2018). Globally, including in South Africa, these stakeholders promote rural development initiatives focusing on agriculture, wage employment and small-scale enterprises, which are crucial for improving rural areas' socio-economic conditions. These activities can reduce poverty and increase food security, employment, and sustainable development (Cele 2019; Ndlela 2022). An SLA is used to understand this phenomenon, and the primary emphasis is on the empowerment and development of

women. Women's empowerment serves as a mechanism to enhance economic efficiency and productivity.

During the 1980s and 1990s, there was a transition from a top-down approach to a bottom-up one incorporating participatory methods developed by rural communities (Massoud et al. 2016; Serrat 2017). In the 1990s and 2000s, SLAs were introduced to address improved bottom-up development (Massoud et al. 2016; Serrat 2017). Empowering and building people's experience and wealth is essential to alleviate poverty while ensuring good education, healthcare, and property ownership. In addition to addressing poverty at household level, it is essential to focus on poverty reduction strategies that promote economic growth, infrastructure development, and good governance. Rural development is a concern in local, national, and global organisations. Consequently, numerous approaches have been developed to tackle rural development challenges, such as integrated rural development, rights-based approaches, and sector-wide approaches. These approaches have contributed to a shift in mindset regarding other rural development practices (Massoud et al. 2016).

Figure 2.1 shows the diagram of the SLA framework that will be explained in detail. The SLA is a way to think about human development goals, scopes, and priorities. Livelihoods will be sustainable if communities can overcome harmful problems, recover from damage, maintain conditions, and improve current and future skills and wealth (Gai, Soewarni and Sir 2018). The concept of livelihood seeks to define key factors that affect individual or family vulnerabilities or viability. This concept encompasses incorporating people's assets and resources into activities aimed at attaining a satisfactory standard of living and realising their goals (Gai et al. 2018). Livelihood encompasses how individuals can secure income, engage with social institutions, navigate gender relationships, and exercise property rights to protect and sustain their livelihoods. Sustainable approaches aim to balance the social, economic, and environmental aspects in a reasonable and long-term manner (Gai et al. 2018).



Source: Levine (2014)

Figure 2.1: Sustainable livelihood approach framework

The SLA is a research tool and a comprehensive framework that encompasses the measurement of well-being and poverty. It offers a distinctive feature of providing a broad framework for identifying various issues and management strategies to tackle poverty and promote development. The SLA framework allows for a holistic understanding of the complex dynamics of livelihoods and offers insights into effective interventions and strategies. Indeed, the SLA framework places disadvantaged individuals and communities at the centre, recognising their vulnerability and lack of resources. The framework acknowledges the importance of considering the social, economic, and environmental context in which people live. It aims to empower them by providing access to resources, opportunities, and support systems. The SLA framework strives to create a more inclusive and equitable development process by addressing disadvantaged groups' specific needs and priorities. These resources and assets encompass various elements, including *human capital* (comprising knowledge, skills, and employment status), *financial capital* (consisting of earned income, savings, and access to financial resources or credit), *physical capital* (including infrastructure such as water and sanitation facilities, roads, and electricity), *social capital* (referring to social support networks), and *natural capital* (encompassing natural resources such as land and forests) (Goswami and Paul 2012; Massoud et al. 2016; Serrat 2017).

The United Nations Development Programme, Department for International Development and others encourage SLA. Like any framework, it has advantages and disadvantages. The strength is that it is a comprehensive view of poverty reduction. People build a livelihood strategy through available resources, institutional processes, and structures. In connection with this, men and women's unemployment, poverty, and equality are considered questions entrepreneurs can solve (Harmsen 2018). The weakness is that the approach is outside the reality of many local development organisations (Harmsen 2018). McLean (2015) also points out that the livelihood adjustment process plays no role within the framework. This includes questions like "Who or what are adapting systems, institutions, people, and households?" "How is adaptation voluntary or compulsory?" "How are adaptations funded and supported?".

2.2.1 Application of the theory

The context of the vulnerability affects access to livelihood assets. Vulnerability situations include political instability, natural disasters, conflicts, trends, environmental changes, population changes, technological changes, trade changes, and so forth (Goswami and Paul 2012; Massoud et al. 2016; Serrat 2017). Political institutions and processes (PIPs) directly influence asset access, encompassing the social, economic, and political contexts within which individuals pursue self-sufficiency strategies. PIPs include a range of factors, such as policies, laws, social and political institutions, and governance structures. These factors shape the environment in which individuals operate and affect their ability to access and utilise assets effectively. The context of vulnerabilities and the presence of PIPs significantly influence the livelihood strategies to which rural communities adapt. These communities use PIPs as assets, leveraging them to achieve their goals and improve their livelihoods. The interaction between the local context, vulnerabilities, and PIPs shapes the decisions and actions taken by rural communities in their pursuit of sustainable livelihoods (Goswami and Paul 2012; Massoud et al. 2016; Serrat 2017).

Adopting community livelihood strategies can have several positive impacts, including improving overall well-being, reducing vulnerability, increasing income levels, and promoting sustainable utilisation of natural resources. By developing and implementing effective strategies, communities can enhance their quality of life, build resilience against various risks and challenges, and generate sustainable economic opportunities. Community livelihood strategies promote positive outcomes for individuals, communities, and the environment (Goswami and Paul 2012; Massoud et al. 2016; Serrat 2017). The guiding principle of SLA is that human beings are at the heart of development, recognising the diverse impacts on people and identifying relationships between factors that affect their lives. Communities possess the knowledge and adaptability to comprehend and respond to change, ensuring flexibility during shocks or stress without depending on external assistance. This self-reliance contributes to the long-term productivity and sustainability of resources. Finally, by focusing on the strengths of communities instead of their needs, it is possible to bridge the communication gap between communities and political institutions. This approach has the potential to, not only reduce poverty but also foster a more effective and

inclusive dialogue between these two entities. (Goswami and Paul 2012; Massoud et al. 2016; Serrat 2017).

If applied effectively, the application of SLA could contribute to poverty alleviation and investing in people experiencing poverty, along with social, economic and infrastructure services, which is the fundamental skill to achieve higher living standards and productive growth (Goswami and Paul 2012; Massoud et al. 2016; Serrat 2017). However, development participation has eliminated poor people who need more assets and income to invest in development. The experience of SLAs has shown that the increase in representatives of community groups in government has made a bigger impact on policy-making, public awareness, and fostering transparency. (Massoud et al. 2016).

The concept of empowerment is closely linked to factors such as the quality of participation, the nature of involvement, and the inclusiveness of social dynamics. Additionally, empowerment enhances the engagement and abilities of individuals, including women, throughout all project stages. Several development agencies have utilised SLA for poverty reduction and social empowerment, which has positively impacted people's self-assurance and capacity to overcome obstacles and limitations. It also addresses gender relationships between families and communities, strengthens community-based organisations, and builds community member capabilities (Massoud et al. 2016). This study's SLA is crucial because it focuses on long-term viability, social equity, and environmental responsibility. The SLA is crucial for women's micro-enterprises as it fosters economic empowerment, social inclusion, environmental sustainability, resilience, and community development. By adopting this approach, women can build thriving enterprises that contribute to their well-being, the well-being of their communities, and the overall sustainable development of societies. The following section explains the Marxist feminist theory to show how women's micro-enterprises survive.

2.3 Marxist feminist theory

The Marxist feminist theory helps to explore the challenges of women's micro-enterprises. Marxist feminism is a liberation theory that integrates capitalism and feminism and forms gender oppression as a direct and necessary consequence of

capitalism (KhosraviShakib 2010). This theory helps identify and examine the causes that perpetuate gender oppression in economic distinctions. The reasons include the culture and social norms, patriarchy, and the historical system of colonialism that has constantly viewed women as second-class citizens. In this study, the Marxist feminist theory clarifies structural dependence and unfair relationships between men and women, and therefore also women's micro-enterprises (Neves 2010; Rogerson 2007). The acceptance of Marxist feminism in this study offers insights into the role of women in contributing to socio-economic issues that affect them in society and the economy and economic growth.

Marxist feminists see gender imbalances because of capitalism and it highlights class interactions as the primary source of gender relations. Men dominate women by financial means, forcing women to stay home as unpaid workers. Marxist feminists believe women have are valuable workers (Gumede 2018). Marxist feminists suggest that it is essential for both men and women to be equal and should assist one another in childcare, housework, and economic employment (Eddelston and Powell 2012). The emphasis of Marxist feminism is to meet needs. It also emphasises economic life, where prosperity supports the people and allows them to take charge of their finances through self-employment (Shange 2017). The Marxist feminist approach discards dominance and discrimination against others, inadequate economic opportunities, exclusion, and incapacity of others (Matthaei 2015).

Marxist feminists argue that it is essential to recognise and promote equal opportunities for both men and women in the economy. These feminists believe that giving women full participation and empowerment will improve the global economy. (Simmonds 2012). This study uses the Marxist feminist theory because it believes gender inequality persists in all societies, even the economy (Loh and Duhesihsari 2013). The gender roles of women and men are often defined structurally and culturally. There are still cultures where the assumption persists that men are dominant while women are regarded as subordinate. (Njogu and Orchardson-Mazrui 2005). In educational institutions, boys and girls are often subjected to social conditioning that shapes their behaviours and assigns specific roles. Furthermore, in societies where men are perceived as dominant, doubts can arise regarding a girl's capabilities and personality when fulfilling her responsibilities. (Njogu and Orchardson-Mazrui 2005:2).

In some cultures, gender inequality issues starts the moment after a female child is born. Cultural mechanisms, including the use of proverbs, are employed to perpetuate the oppression of African women. Within patriarchal cultures, male children are assigned hierarchical rankings and are taught to perceive themselves as superior based on gender. (Aneke 2015). Whereas female children are less valued, their profession is only considered that of a caregiver (Okeke, Laxmanirayan, Bhutta, Duse, et al. 2005). Feminists have used gender discrimination to explain the levels of subordination and oppression globally (Oyewumi 2016). According to Aneke (2015), gender is an influence that leads to inequality and has many aspects. It concerns influence and power, career opportunities and wages, educational career choices and qualifications.

The study of WAD has received a great deal of attention from government and non-governmental organisations such as the United Nations, the International Development Foundation, and the Ford Foundation (Alahira 2014). During the latter part of the twentieth century, various frameworks such as WID, WAD, and GAD were introduced as initiatives to shape the role of women and transform the discourse surrounding development (Dominelli 2016).

The concept of WID is an approach that advocates for significant attention to be given to women in the design of development policies and projects. It underscores the importance of integrating women into development (Alahira 2014). Development practitioners who shaped this approach are the United States of America and the United States Agency for International Development feminists with WID offices were the leading advocates of this approach. It started with three major feminist moments/waves on the condition of women. First, in 1919, women fought for equal voting rights and political participation. Second, in the 1960s and 1970s, feminism called for confronting the remaining social and cultural inequalities women faced in their daily work. Third, Ester Boserup's influential book, *Woman's Role in Economic Development*, published in 1970, shocked the North's development agencies and humanitarian organisations. It explained why women were deprived of the exact proportions of social and economic benefits as men (Mwije 2014).

Many governments have set up women's offices to participate in women's development. Globally, governments are committed to women's progress and the

hiring of more women's WID professionals. These are the first essential steps governments have taken. However, it is necessary to recognise that the WID perspective has better understood women's development needs, thereby significantly improving women's development projects and providing them with educational and employment opportunities (Alahira 2014). According to Dominelli (2016), WID received some criticism. A 1985 report from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development states that supporting women's interests in development requires much more than just a concern about the need for welfare. Others were concerned that WID ignored the root cause of women's oppression. According to Alahira (2014), the WID approach needed to see the necessity of engaging women-targeted groups in planning and implementing development programmes and projects.

WAD emerged from the First World Conference on Women held in 1975 in Mexico City. Government officials, activists, and representatives from various organisations rejected the predominant portrayal of women as passive beings, as proposed at the WID conferences (Dominelli 2016). According to Mwije (2014), criticism of the modernisation theory and the WID approach have emerged in response to WID's. WAD's approach emphasises that men and women must escape poverty and contribute to and benefit from development efforts (Alahira 2014). According to Mwije (2014), WAD considers both men and women disadvantaged due to global economic structures such as class issues and wealth distribution methods, which worsen inequality. However, WAD also sought to create a women-only space so that women could escape men's dominance and develop their strength within them (Dominelli 2016).

Alahira (2014) supported this by pointing out that WAD recognises the uniqueness and advocates for the unique role women have always played in their development. According to Dominelli (2016), WAD could not effectively manage women's diversity or address the intersectionality of social divisions such as age, class, and ethnicity that interact with gender. Supporters of WAD believed that most women were pushed into poverty to a large extent, leading to the feminisation of poverty. They also think that intervention assumes that development is the process of getting more affluent and poorer (Mwije 2014). WAD also needed to recognise women's social and cultural

capital (Dominelli 2016). Their intervention strategy focused on developing the country's economic, political, and social structure (Mwije 2014).

Gender And Development (GAD) is another development framework designed as an alternative to WID and WAD strategies. The GAD approach focuses on the socially constructed distinctions between men and women, particularly emphasising gender relationships (Alahira 2014). According to Dominelli (2016), the GAD approach uses gender as a socially constructed category rather than a biological one. The GAD approach focuses on unequal power relationships between men and women. GAD theorists such as Amartya Sen, who has extensively studied the connections between gender inequality and economic development in his 1992 study titled *Missing Women*, Stephan Klasen and Francesca Lamanna, in their 2009 study titled *The impact of gender inequality in education and employment on economic growth: new evidence for a panel of countries* and Diane Elson in her 1999 study called *Labor markets as gendered Institutions: equality, efficiency and empowerment issues* were primarily socialist feminists and, very critical of the model of economic growth development, arguing that women's double days benefit both capital and male workers (Mwije 2014). GAD's perspective recognises that the power of patriarchy profoundly influences women in society at international, national, community, and household levels. This means that men overlook women's contributions to social development, as men's roles outweighs women's roles in patriarchal societies (Alahira 2014).

According to Dominelli (2016), GAD emphasises the socially described constructed nature of the relationship between men and women by showing how women have been systematically subordinated and oppressed by the social activities that define gender relationships. In contrast, Alahira (2014) states that the focus of GAD is to provide women with resources and services through the development of women's capacity development and the establishment of income-generating activities, thereby empowering women to reduce their dependence on men. The GAD approach also clarifies how roles, responsibilities and expectations affect men and women and their interactions. Dominelli (2016) also challenged the traditional debate, arguing that men and women can play these roles interchangeably if women are not discriminated against (Dominelli 2016). Therefore, GAD provides a holistic view by examining all aspects of a woman's life and notes the basis for mapping the role of a particular

gender to different genders. This approach accepts that development assistance must consider the roles and responsibilities of women and men in the community to address women's concerns and needs. It is also a strategic and practical approach, considering power issues, decision-making, work allocation, ownership, and resource management. GAD also recognises the state's role in promoting gender equality (Mwije 2014).

2.4 Summary

The researcher used a SLA as the theoretical framework for this research. The Marxist feminist theory is also used in this study. WID, WAD, and GAD researchers describe the emergence and change of these approaches. The SLA and Marxist feminist theory provide different perspectives on women's micro-enterprises. The SLA emphasises the support of women's micro-enterprises the enhancement of their livelihoods and empowerment. At the same time, the Marxist feminist theory critiques the broader capitalist system within which these enterprises operate and calls for systemic change to address gender and class inequalities. The insights gathered from this review regarding the impact of CSR on women's micro-enterprises are analysed and utilised to offer fundamental recommendations for enhancements that can be implemented through the EKZNW CSR programme. The next chapter presents the literature reviewed about CSR contributions to women micro-enterprises.

CHAPTER 3

LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1 Introduction

The preceding chapter explained the research methodology used to conduct this study. This chapter describes literature from previous studies on this topic and focuses on the role of CSR programmes in women's micro-enterprises. The literature review examines the overall understanding of how CSR contributes to developing women's micro-enterprises, specifically in KZN. This study covers all aspects of the topics highlighted by previous studies conducted in similar studies at the local and international levels. This chapter focuses on research that groups researchers into well-understood and studied cases. It allows researchers to discuss CSR's role in women's micro-enterprises.

There is a need to understand CSR from an international to a national level. CSR is significant and must be understood. Another requirement is recognising women's micro-enterprises, entrepreneurship, women empowerment and economic empowerment, and understanding the social responsibility of EKZNW. By understanding these concepts, the researcher will study the role of CSR in women's micro-enterprises. Likewise, these concepts will help researchers from various disciplines reading this examination to have a foundation and transparent research image.

3.2 Corporate social responsibility

The United Nations Sustainable Development Agenda for 2030 emphasises the organisation's engagement in solving and accomplishing sustainable development challenges, poverty eradication, and viable public-private (Medina-Muñoz and Medina-Muñoz 2020). In reducing poverty, organisations should positively influence economic development, particularly in employment, taxable income or investment in a community. However, according to the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (2014), economic growth has not been inclusive, increasing the number of people living in poverty. Renouard and Ezvan (2018) contended that organisations

must accept their social responsibility toward sustainable and human development difficulties. An example of this is when organisations prioritise poverty alleviation efforts, regardless of the potential constraints it may impose on their financial performance (Renouard and Ezvan 2018). Since poverty eradication is an essential social need influencing the most vulnerable community individuals and developing nations, organisations must embrace pro-poor CSR activities (Griffin 2017; Renouard and Ezvan 2018).

The engagement of corporations in CSR activities and their provision of social and environmental assistance to the public are increasing globally. (Tilt 2016). Organisations gradually see the meaning of their part in sustainable development by participating in CSR. Organisations expect to acquire a satisfying balance in their strategic, environmental, social, and economic approaches. CSR is a business system that deals with sustainable development. Thus, organisations voluntarily incorporate social, economic, and ecological challenges in their corporate plans and partner collaboration (Osagie, Wesselink, Blok, Lans et al. 2016). Also, consumers have an increased demand for them to take responsibility for their operational activities that negatively influence society and the environment (Kobo and Ngwakwe 2017).

Businesses in the United States openly acknowledge their moral and societal duties. They recognise that businesses have economic, legal, ethical, and optional obligations (Forte 2013). According to Rim (2018), optional obligation refers to the expectation that a company will willingly contribute to society. This contribution goes beyond economic, legal, and ethical obligations. Many businesses actively support the efforts to combat hunger. The United States Sentencing Commission's *Guidelines for Organisations* help to facilitate these objectives, covering nearly all types of businesses, including labour unions, partnerships, unincorporated organisations and associations, incorporated organisations, nonprofits, pension funds, trusts, and joint stock companies (Forte 2013; Rim 2018). The European Commission introduced a green paper in July 2001, a crucial milestone for European CSR. The green paper *Promoting a European Framework for CSR* defined CSR as voluntarily integrating social and environmental considerations into a company's business practices and stakeholder interactions (Forte 2013).

Since the growth of CSR activities, companies in India have become interested in comprehensive development. Most companies invest in education, health, infrastructure development and capacity building in consultation with their communities (Vinayak and Rao 2017). Indian companies spend about Rs 25 000 on the country's CSR. When used effectively, it has the ability to transform the face of the Indian rural areas. In addition, it is estimated that if required CSR funds are wisely allocated, it can create approximately 75 000 jobs (Governance Now Bureau 2015). Mapping a wider area of intervention emphasises that health, education, women's empowerment, water management and livelihood creation are priorities for CSR activities (Mishra and Modi 2013).

CSR in Africa has also recently acquired more interest because of inequalities and high poverty levels, especially in nations where sustainable development challenges appear most unmanageable (Cheruiyot and Onsando 2016). Idemudia (2014) noticed that the idea of CSR and development in Africa had been introduced previously. Muruviwa, Nekhweyha and Akpan's (2018) proclamation upholds this by expressing that CSR has been dormant in African countries such as Angola, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ghana, Nigeria, and South Africa (Muruviwa et al. 2018). In Africa, CSR is critical because various societies uniquely express their connection between society and business. Extraordinary assumptions emerge from numerous factors, with wealthy communities having more significant assets and demanding assumptions that rise out of more incredible choices wealth brings. Also, as in less industrialised societies, general social assistance is focussed on life necessities, such as food, shelter, education, health, security, and jobs. Governmental or voluntary CSR initiatives or restrictions add costs such societies could not afford (Cheruiyot and Onsando 2016).

In Africa, the concept of CSR is often introduced by countries in the global North and subsequently adopted by southern countries. With this perspective, international projects in Africa primarily prioritise addressing issues related to child labour, HIV/AIDS, fair labour issues, education, and ethics. Simultaneously, critical projects in Africa are expected to adhere to international standards and norms, including principles established by countries in the northern hemisphere. This alignment with international standards ensures that African projects meet the recognised criteria and

guidelines. These criteria affect local or regional suppliers to international businesses (Rampersad and Skinner 2014). According to Hönke (2012), colonial and post-colonial mining companies pursued the paternal nature of corporate community intervention in countries like the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The African continent is plagued by conflict, environmental degradation and severe poverty. It is proper to prioritise overall social responsibility in line with regional needs while maintaining the need to remain globally competitive.

CSR activities in Ghana showcase the diverse range of issues that the corporate sector addresses. These include education, health, community development, sports, philanthropy, and environmental concerns. Several companies demonstrate these efforts, for example, Ghana Commercial Bank utilises technology to improve operational efficiency. It has a dedicated CSI account for educational, health, and sports programme contributions. Multichoice Africa prioritises stakeholder engagement and follows a triple-bottom-line approach, considering economic, social, and environmental performance. It leverages its assets and expertise to promote the development and growth of the communities in which it operates (Rampersad and Skinner 2014; Smit 2013). The Black Stars and Unilever both emphasise the education and skills development of children, students, and teachers. These entities recognise the importance of investing in education and strive to support initiatives that enhance learning opportunities and promote the professional growth of educators.

Additionally, Black Stars and Unilever actively contribute to environmental protection. They engage in recycling initiatives, including waste from palm oil processing and plastic recycling. By promoting sustainable practices and waste management, these organisations demonstrate their commitment to environmental conservation and reducing their ecological footprint, and thereby creating income opportunities for local communities. Furthermore, Black Stars and Unilever extend their support to farmers by assisting them in cultivating new tree crops. This initiative contributes to job creation and enterprise development and promotes biodiversity and sustainable forest management. By empowering farmers and encouraging sustainable agricultural practices, these organisations play a vital role in fostering economic growth while preserving natural resources and promoting environmental stewardship. (Rampersad and Skinner 2014; Smit 2013). Ghana has also established forums and initiatives to

promote CSR: The CSR movement in Ghana organises business dialogues and forums that focus on social responsibility, explicitly emphasising the importance of environmental protection. The CSR Foundation is committed to promoting and encouraging CSR in Ghana. The foundation engages with stakeholders and interest groups to achieve positive change. They aim to integrate CSR into business practices and foster sustainable growth and human progress. These efforts demonstrate the commitment of Ghanaian companies to corporate social responsibility and sustainable development (Rampersad and Skinner 2014; Smit 2013).

The following examples showcase specific CSR initiatives implemented by individual companies in Nigeria. While it is challenging to pinpoint the exact motivations behind each initiative, it is reasonable to assume that various incentives contribute to their implementation. Oando Plc's 'Adopt-A-School' programme is a locally developed project that involves adopting schools in communities located along Oando's pipelines. The goal is to restore and improve the infrastructure of 100 primary schools across West Africa (Rampersad and Skinner 2014; Smit 2013). Zenith Bank actively engages with its host communities and society at large. It focuses on critical areas of need such as healthcare, education, information and communication technology, youth empowerment, sports, and public infrastructure development. Diamond Bank Plc's CSR activities primarily target the well-being of its stakeholders, particularly those in need. The focus is on implementing healthcare, education, and economic empowerment initiatives. MTN Nigeria prioritises CSR efforts in education, health, and economic empowerment in Nigeria (Rampersad and Skinner 2014; Smit 2013). Nigerian Brewery Plc's CSR efforts cover various focus areas, including education, healthcare, sports development, environmental protection, the growth of the Nigerian entertainment industry, and promoting responsible drinking. United Bank for Africa channels its CSR initiatives towards education, environmental conservation, youth development, and economic empowerment in communities across Nigeria. These examples highlight the commitment of Nigerian companies to CSR initiatives, addressing various societal needs (Rampersad and Skinner 2014; Smit 2013).

3.2.1 Corporate social responsibility in the South African context

In South Africa, efforts to level political change and socio-economic inequality are the main drivers of CSR. Before South Africa's democracy in 1994, individuals of African,

Indian, and other black descent faced systemic discrimination that denied them economic opportunities. This resulted in widespread poverty and an imbalanced economy characterised by socio-economic disparities (Juggernath, Rampersad and Reddy 2011). South African-based companies have adopted the broad-based black economic empowerment (BBBEE) framework to incorporate CSR practices within their businesses. The primary goal is to address historical racial imbalances and promote the economic empowerment of historically disadvantaged individuals. Through BBBEE initiatives, these companies aim to foster inclusivity, equal opportunities, and sustainable development within South Africa's business landscape, guided by the law. BBBEE policy encompasses many beneficiaries, including Africans, Indians, coloureds, youth, women, individuals with disabilities, and those residing in rural areas. (Gee 2012).

Under the South African Companies Act 61 of 1973, companies were not legally obliged to undertake CSR projects. However, the Companies Act of 2013, which amended the previous legislation, requires companies to allocate a portion of their net profit to social development projects (Esser and Dekker 2008). In particular, the Act specifies that 2% of a three-year average profit should be allocated to CSR initiatives. Additionally, South Africa's corporate governance policy documents, such as the King II, III, and IV reports, require multinational corporations and other companies operating in South Africa to allocate a specific portion of their profits towards socio-economic development projects and related initiatives (Gumede 2020). Companies failing to comply with this requirement are expected to explain their inaction. However, even before the amendment of the Companies Act in 2013, many companies in South Africa recognised the importance of addressing social objectives beyond financial performance. With CSR contributions now being mandatory, numerous companies have demonstrated an increased dedication to addressing issues such as rural development, poverty alleviation, healthcare improvement, education, and environmental conservation (Philip and Vijayraghavan 2018).

Today, the community needs more opportunities to better their livelihood, unemployment, and a lack of facilities. In this regard, the community accepts that organisations should improve their lives by working inside their environments. CSR must implement their assets to enhance the existence of every single South African.

This model could improve and advance organisational social responsibility and the entire country, acknowledging the demand for sustainable economic development (Malatse and Ramabele 2017). These approaches imply active participation and consistent communication between the community and the organisations to comprehend their requirements and difficulties. South Africa's social conditions challenges are education, healthcare, job creation, and entrepreneurial development (Malatse and Ramabele 2017).

Organisations can intercede and use CSR activities to bid various chances. Other than solving obvious social problems, CSR activities aim to enable neighbouring people to contribute to their development network and economic growth (Malatse and Ramabele 2017). According to Matthews (2013), South African companies have significantly increased their annual expenditure over the years. In 2003 they spent around R2 billion (approximately US\$186 million), which rose to nearly R8 billion (US\$745 million) in 2013. This investment, which accounts for about 1.4% of its total net profit after tax, has exceeded the inflation rate by 77% over the past decade and experienced an 8% growth since 2012. Most CSI spending is allocated to education, with leading corporations dedicating an average of 43% of their budgets, supported by 89% of companies. Social and community development causes come next in importance, receiving 15% of the CSI spending, followed by health at 11%. However, funding for advocacy and human rights activities is not as readily available (Mueller-Hirth 2016).

According to Fernando and Lawrence (2014), it has become a widespread practice for companies in South Africa to increasingly incorporate CSR reports into their financial reports, particularly after recognising a positive correlation between their success and their contributions to society. These companies adopt diverse approaches to social responsibility. For instance, BHP Billiton, a prominent global mining company, utilises its subsidiary, the BHP Billiton Development Trust South Africa, to strategise, implement, and supervise sustainable social development projects. These initiatives encompass healthcare, education and training, capacity building, and social and economic development programmes. Companies like BHP Billiton exemplify their ethical responsibilities by actively engaging in socially responsible practices, even without legal requirements (Gumede 2020). However, a significant concern is the

challenge of accurately assessing the extent to which companies' profits are linked to the CSR projects they undertake in their communities (Mayes 2015).

CSR initiatives are one of several ways corporations attempt to contribute to the development of the communities where they operate, and these efforts have shown initial positive outcomes. However, there are challenges facing CSR. According to Ackers and Eccles (2015), not all CSR initiatives in South Africa result solely from voluntary or subsidiary business decisions. Companies in South Africa implement specific CSR initiatives to comply with the black economic empowerment (BEE) legislation. Established in 2003, the BEE Act requires South African-based corporations to consider all stakeholders in their internal and external operations. This legislation aims to tackle economic and social inequalities that have persisted since the apartheid era. Companies strive to contribute to a more equitable and inclusive society by aligning their CSR efforts with BEE requirements and promoting previously disadvantaged groups' active participation in the country's economy. Non-compliance with the BEE scorecard can lead to negative ratings for companies, which can complicate their ability to operate in South Africa (Avram and Avasilcai 2014).

Another challenge is that corporation's CSR is increasingly assuming a role that traditionally belonged to the government (Steyn 2014). There is an argument that CSR addresses societal, environmental, and economic issues traditionally considered the state's responsibilities. These responsibilities are often seen as more suitable for government intervention and regulation. Market actors are now taking on tasks such as providing basic infrastructure, ensuring access to water, healthcare, and education. The King's Report on corporate governance in South Africa does not discourage organisations from taking on a broader role and participating in initiatives to address poverty. Instead, it encourages companies to embrace a broader societal role and actively contribute to poverty alleviation efforts. (Knudsen, Moon and Slager 2015).

3.3 Female entrepreneurs

Women entrepreneurs are characterised as confident, imaginative, and inventing women. Who are fit to accomplish self-economic autonomy individually or jointly with other women? They also produce employment by starting and running enterprises (Sunanda and Hiremani 2017). Nevertheless, most developed nations' previous

economic improvements have remained consistent because their economies are stable, and women have little business interest. In contrast, women in developing countries have progressively advanced entrepreneurial capacity (Agholor, Smith, Akeem and Seriki 2015).

Micro-enterprise projects in South Africa, commonly called chicken farming, sewing co-operatives, gardening, candle-making, and arts and crafts, are closely associated with women entrepreneurs in the country. These activities allow women to establish and develop their businesses on a smaller scale. The operations incorporate women's homemaking abilities with other income-generating or domestic exercises (Mandipaka 2014). Women entrepreneurs, by definition, are women who initiate and own at least 50% of a company, actively participating in its operations. Micro-enterprises, driven by the scarcity of employment opportunities and income generation, focus on poverty reduction, job creation, and income opportunities. (Sharma 2015; Shah and Saurabh 2015).

Women entrepreneurs fight unemployment and alleviate poverty in South Africa. Expanding the number of women entrepreneurs is essential for employment opportunities, commitment, and economic development (Chinomona and Maziriri 2015). The role of women entrepreneurs is significant in enhancing employment opportunities. Their involvement contributes to creating more job prospects and addressing unemployment challenges. Chinomona and Maziriri (2015) highlight that women entrepreneurs' role incorporates management, leadership, effectiveness, productivity, competitiveness, and new organisation establishment. Women's entrepreneurship is rapidly developing, and women are starting their businesses.

3.3.1 Factors motivating female entrepreneurs

There are inspirational influences that drive women to become business visionaries. The business venture is testing and is undoubtedly not planned for those individuals who cannot withstand difficult periods (Sunanda and Hiremani 2017). Women undertake diverse journeys and initiate their businesses before embarking on entrepreneurship as a career path. Women who choose to pursue entrepreneurship as a vocation are motivated by a combination of financial and non-financial factors, as highlighted by Sunanda and Hiremani (2017). Zimmerman and Chu (2013) further

explain that entrepreneurs' motivations include ensuring family security, desiring autonomy and freedom, seeking personal fulfilment, pursuing financial benefits, aiming for growth, and recognising opportunities for success (Zimmerman and Chu 2013).

Educational qualification, family occupation, self-identity, government policies and schemes, ideal citizen, supplementary income, bright future, employment generations, liberty in making decisions, innovation, creativity and thinking, employment generations, self-satisfaction and transformation in the business atmosphere are features encouraging women to become entrepreneurs (Balhara and Singh 2015; Barman and Chanu 2016; Jesurajan and Gnanadhas 2011; Pandey 2013). Matharu, Changle and Chowdhury (2016) have recognised factors like independence, confidence, ambition, affluence, support, work environment, initiative, and responsiveness as the crucial factors motivating women to be entrepreneurs. According to Saikia (2017), the diverse motivational influences influencing women to join entrepreneurship are economic needs, educational qualifications, independence, self-esteem, and so forth. Therefore, several motivational factors drove women into entrepreneurship endeavours.

According to the study by Mumuni, Insah and Bowan (2013), various types of entrepreneurs are identified when seeking to understand entrepreneurial intentions. Entrepreneurs are motivated by financial requirements and are individuals who seek to engage in self-acknowledgement. Owusu, Quartey and Bawakyilllenou (2014) clarify that limited opportunities inspire entrepreneurs to want freedom and take advantage of entrepreneurship opportunities. A study conducted by Adom and Rim (2018) on women in informal businesses discovered that women are driven by their needs rather than the deliberate intention often found among male informal entrepreneurs. The study also revealed that some women transitioned from being entrepreneurs out of necessity to becoming entrepreneurs driven by opportunity.

3.3.2 Factors challenging female entrepreneurs

Moreover, it is also clear that there are difficulties in entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurs face numerous challenges such as gender-based discrimination, government rules and guidelines, lack of financial access, the duty of being new in the field, competition,

as well as different capabilities that encourage their viability and business development (Chinomona and Maziriri 2015; Shah and Saurabh 2015; Sunanda and Hiremani 2017; Zimmerman and Chu 2013). Chinomona and Maziriri (2015), and Hodges, Watchravesringkan, Yurchisin, Karpova, et al. (2015), states that the most fundamental obstacles are financials, since finance is the backbone of any small or big enterprise. They also accept that financial blocks are women's most fundamental challenges when creating and setting up a business (Hodges et al. 2015).

According to Phillips et al. (2014), women entrepreneurs in South Africa have faced disadvantages due to factors such as not having land ownership that could be used as collateral for loans and requiring spousal consent to enter into financial agreements. These barriers have hindered their access to financial resources and limited their entrepreneurial opportunities. Women business visionaries need more financial assets and working capital. Accordingly, they cannot get external financial assistance because of the market's lack of credit and tangible security (Phillips et al. 2014).

The other test confronted by women is gender bias and discrimination. Most female entrepreneurs are victimised by male-ruled communities, discouraging female entrepreneurs from progressing (Chinomona and Maziriri 2015; Hodges et al. 2015). Gender inequality in South Africa is a significant issue, and women are still experiencing problems having similar rights and benefits as men in South Africa (Baipai 2014; Mandipaka 2014). Besides the danger entrepreneurs face, women confront more challenges in a male-controlled society. Despite working in the same environment as male entrepreneurs, women face gender biase deeply rooted in society. These biases limit their access to business development services and hinder their financial inclusion and active economic participation (Chinomona and Maziriri 2015).

Managing entrepreneurship is exceptionally hazardous for any entrepreneur. Even more so for female entrepreneurs who lack education and training in this field and survive in a male-controlled atmosphere (Hodges et al. 2015; Phillips et al. 2014). In developing nations, many women live in poor communities and remain uneducated. Female entrepreneurs need more financial and educational backup. The most common way of running a business for female entrepreneurs can be complex in formal and informal sectors since they usually require more education and training

(Chinomona & Maziriri 2015; Hodges et al. 2015). This explanation clarifies that most female entrepreneurs need more training and education, creating challenges in setting up and running business enterprises.

Based on the reviewed literature, it is evident that women continue to face social and economic disadvantages in most countries. These disparities persist in various aspects of life, including access to education, employment opportunities, economic resources, and societal roles. Efforts are needed to address these inequalities and create a more equitable and inclusive society for women. Since income-generating job opportunities are lacking, they have stepped up and structured their initiative to form their enterprises. Women's basic economic activities react to a need for more employment opportunities, poverty, and income-generation. The accompanying section gives reasons why women should be socially and economically empowered.

3.4 Women's empowerment and women's economic empowerment

Women are still socially and economically disadvantaged in many nations. Therefore, women empowerment and gender equality are necessary, as stipulated in Goal 5 of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (Bayeh 2016; Véras 2015). According to Bayeh (2016), the knowledge of the destructive impacts of the predominant gender inequality, the 2008 Ethiopian Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development acknowledged that any development initiative has to involve and ensure that both women and men benefit and contribute equally from it (Bayeh 2016). Influenced by this statement, the researcher further contends that women should be engaged and equally permitted to benefit and contribute from all development dimensions to sustainability. Reforming policies at a national and global level is necessary to address social inequalities (Aborisade and Adedayo 2018).

Women experience issues concerning every aspect of the labour force. Societies have not succeeded for quite a long time because they have been attempting to improve without giving women their privileges (Sohail 2014; Véras 2015). Both genders are subject to each other, and they are systems of society. However, males want to control women since males dominate institutions, thus gender inequality and discrimination exist. Men are empowered in communities, and women are viewed as servants (Sohail

2014). The strengthening of women is critical for the advancement of societies. Everybody's voice should be attended to, irrespective of race and sex. There is also expanding attention to women's empowerment (Sultana, Jamal and Najaf 2017; Nadim and Nurlukman 2017). Empowering women is not only advantageous to them but also to communities. If both men and women equally run the community, it will develop. Women's empowerment incorporates control of their lives inside and outside their homes, self-confidence, awareness of their human rights, and capacity to change communities (Sohail 2014).

To expand women's economic opportunities, they should have better access to jobs, job security, a business environment that upholds them in working together, and access to the financial sector that addresses their requirements. Protecting women's legal rights and ensuring their voices are heard is a fundamental empowerment component. Women's empowerment helps accomplish development goals like poverty alleviation, education, welfare, health, economic growth, and women's rights (Sarania 2015; Sohail 2014). Domestic economies suffer when they oppress women. Women having opportunities and abilities helps organisations develop (Sohail 2014). Economically empowered women add to their national, societal, and family economies. Therefore, they need capabilities, assets and equivalent access to financial institutes. Women should have the control to act and make economic decisions (Sarania 2015; Sohail 2014).

According to Taylor and Perezniето (2014), women's economic empowerment accomplishes equal access and control over financial resources. It ensures they can utilise them to exercise powers over numerous parts of their lives. Gender equality advances economic development. Education and employment opportunities for women decrease poverty in households. Ensuring women have access to capital to contribute to economic growth is crucial. However, there are existing challenges highlighted by Nadim and Nurlukman (2017) regarding women's labour force participation and gender discrimination in labour markets. These challenges include limited access to training and education, lack of credit opportunities, vulnerability in land ownership, complex business registration processes, and limited access to business networks. Addressing these issues is essential for promoting gender equality and empowering women to thrive as entrepreneurs and economic contributors.

Economically empowered women will increase through improved well-being, such as giving access to fruitful data, reducing early marriages, and assisting women with alleviating poverty and getting degrees (Sohail 2014).

The proof that gender equality, particularly in employment and education, prompts economic development to be more consistent and imperative; economic development drives gender equality regarding rights, prosperity, and health (Nadim and Nurlukman 2017). The advancement in certain parts of gender equality will introduce a mutually beneficial arrangement from a developmental setting. From a gender equity opinion, development's vulnerability is essential to gender equality. From the Smart Economics perspective, economic empowerment is crucial in creating market opportunities for women and enabling their active participation in various business sectors (Sohail 2014). According to Hunt and Samman (2016), the development of improving women's economic empowerment is restricted or empowered by six crucial factors that directly affect women's collective and individual lived experiences. Access to quality paid work, assets, property and financial services, educational skills training and development, social protection, unpaid care and work burdens, collective action, and leadership.

3.5 Women's micro-enterprises

Women comprise around 56% of the global population, making them the more prominent segment of society (Maina and Mwiti 2016). (Maina and Mwiti 2016). Earlier, women generally used to perform family duties as mothers and spouses. Women have played a significant role in contributing to the advancement of entrepreneurship, often giving men a competitive edge (Ongachi and Bwisa 2013). As of late, women worldwide have begun taking on entrepreneurial responsibilities (Maina and Mwiti 2016). Women contribute different plans to their community, generate employment opportunities, and generate extra jobs for suppliers (Maina and Mwiti 2016). They are significant parts of the informal sector and add to the developing and developed nation's economic growth (Siwadi and Mhangami 2011; Sharma 2015). Women are enthusiastic about their entrepreneurial endeavours, and their abilities have enabled them to initiate and establish micro-enterprises (Ongachi and Bwisa 2013).

The South African government has started developing micro-enterprise to address poverty and create income and employment opportunities (Peters and Naicker 2013;

Hills 2015). Female entrepreneurs, specifically, choose to begin micro-enterprise ventures associated with food selling, sewing clothes, hairdressing and running marketed shops in wholesale and retail. The informal sector is more worthwhile to women because it requires less capital to start the enterprise, and no specific abilities are required (Berg and Fuchs 2013). Akram, Shaheen and Kiymani (2015) described micro-enterprises as small businesses with low social benefits. They sell items, render services, or consolidate products and services, utilising their entrepreneurial efforts. Different enterprises working under a self-motivated foundation have difficulties and financial issues (Akram et al. 2015).

According to Samwel (2014), a micro-enterprise utilises up to four people. It uses a straightforward production process with labour-intensive innovation. It relies upon community markets; its credit depends upon investment funds or family and is situated in a shop, home or chosen location (Samwel 2014). These micro-enterprises react to the market necessities and get economic benefits, resulting in advancement and development. Micro-enterprises in developed nations incorporate the small business sector's smallest size. In developing countries, micro-enterprises comprise a significant majority of the small business sector, primarily due to the limited availability of formal job opportunities for individuals from economically disadvantaged backgrounds (Peters and Naicker 2013; Akram et al. 2015).

Micro-enterprises' role is essential in terms of standards of living and employment, both individually and nationally. Countries frequently assist registered and unregistered micro-enterprises that guarantee small-scale production, provide restricted or closed markets and provide micro-enterprises that serve the general public. While micro-enterprise contributions to development and progress are recognised, the challenge is that micro-enterprise entrepreneurs confront several difficulties in long-term progress and survival. Further, micro-enterprises' progress shows that developing countries have a much higher failing rate than developed countries (Arinaitwe 2006; Charman 2017).

Micro-enterprises are also facing competition from their peers, along with macro companies participating in markets that were once considered a small business privilege (Nabintu 2013). There are many obstacles to successfully protect micro-enterprises, and the main issue is negative perceptions of micro-enterprises. Potential

clients know that small businesses cannot provide high-quality services and cannot handle several projects simultaneously (Amyx 2005; Cant and Wiid 2013). On the other hand, Bowen, Morara and Murethi (2009) state that the leading causes of micro-enterprise decline are poor management, planning and financing. Having women associated with entrepreneurship development is the main feature of the study because most women depend on entrepreneurship to survive socially and financially.

3.6 Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife social responsibility programme

The EKZNW protected areas are surrounded by diverse communities, some of which are poor. Communities adjacent to EKZNW protected areas have political and traditional governance structures. These protected areas can create development opportunities, employment and businesses for neighbouring communities. The difficulty of local communities is the consequence of the historical relationship, where local communities need more access to resources inside and outside protected areas, which leads these neighbouring communities to perceive protected area management negatively. Sustainable biodiversity management inside protected areas can only be achieved through the participation of local communities. Due to limited financial, natural and human resources, many diverse needs of the communities cannot be met (EKZNW 2003; EKZNW 2006).

Communities neighbouring protected areas have expectations created by their relationship with the protected areas. Some of these communities have experiences and interests in these protected areas' biodiversity resources and cultural heritage (EKZNW 2022). EKZNW has provided local communities in the province with funding from the community levy fund to share benefits generated from tourism revenues and connect protected areas to their neighbouring communities. This funding was introduced to help create practical, people-driven and owned projects contributing toward employment creation, skills development, economic employment and poverty alleviation in rural communities (EKZNW 2016).

Each person who visits the EKZNW protected area and uses the facility contributes a certain percentage at the gate entrance and accommodation fee to the community levy fund (EKZNW 2015a). Since the programme's inception, several projects that fall under EKZNW CSR have been implemented. These include renovating and

constructing classrooms, administrative buildings and offices, fully furnished computer laboratories in local schools, fully equipped early childhood development centres (crèches) and income-generating projects such as tent rental, bicycle rental, bakeries, laundry services, poultry farming and other projects providing self-employment opportunities and skills development to the unemployed communities of the EKZNW area of operations (EKZNW 2015a). The summary of projects implemented in the past ten years is as follows.

Table 3.1: Projects implemented

PROJECT TYPES	PROJECTS SUMMARY	TOTAL BUDGET
Education related projects	Construction and renovations of classrooms and administration blocks. Fencing, environmental education, bursary schemes, purchasing computers, furniture, and so forth.	6 256 267.79
Early development (creche) related projects	Construction of creches, renovation, fencing, furniture, equipment, and so forth.	1 938 945.00
Income generating projects	Establishment of poultries, lodges, sewing, and purchasing tents, trucks, machines, and so forth.	14 118 383.01
Other projects	Construction of dams, ritual houses, renovations, fencing, boreholes, furniture and equipment, and so forth.	4 213 804.39
		26 527 400.19

Source: EKZNW (2022)

Table 3.1 summarises the CSR initiatives of EKZNW in the past ten years. It shows that they have spent more than R6 million rand on education-related projects, where they have constructed and renovated classrooms and administration blocks, fenced schools, did environmental education, provided bursary schemes, purchased computers, furniture. More than R1 million was spent on early childhood-related projects, where they have constructed creches, renovated creches, fencing, buying furniture, equipment. More than R14 million was spent on income-generating projects where they established poultries, lodges, sewing projects, and purchasing tents, trucks, machines, and more than R4 million on other projects such as constructing dams, ritual houses, renovations, fencing, boreholes, purchasing furniture and equipment, and so forth.

3.7 Summary

The findings from this review regarding the impact of CSR on women's micro-enterprises were analysed and utilised to offer practical recommendations for enhancing the EKZNW CSR programme. These recommendations aim to guide ways to improve the programme and its support for female entrepreneurs in micro-enterprises. The researcher explained in detail about women entrepreneurs. The motivations and challenges for women to become entrepreneurs, and also explain the motivations for women to become entrepreneurs and their challenges. CSR programmes were defined and explained how it works. Women's micro-enterprises were explained, what women's micro-enterprises are, and their role. The next chapter presents the research data collection.

CHAPTER 4

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

The researcher used a combination of semi-structured interviews and focus groups to collect data. Three sets of data were collected from members of the Masters Primary Co-operative, the leadership of the co-operative, and government officials from EKZNW. This data was analysed using thematic analysis, allowing the researcher to develop themes that adequately represent the experiences of the study participants. The main advantage of thematic analysis is that it gives the researcher thematic freedom. As Nowell et al. (2017) stated, the thematic analysis provided a flexible approach to providing a detailed data account. The purpose of this chapter is thus twofold. First, the results obtained from the thematic analysis are presented in the chapter. In line with the qualitative nature of the study, the researcher's purpose in presenting the findings is to concisely convey critical information obtained from the participants. Second, the chapter will also include a discussion based on those results. This allows for the analysis and interpretation of the results in light of the study's primary aim. The presentation of the results and the discussion will be conducted concurrently.

4.2 Background of women's micro-enterprise engagement: Masters Primary Co-operative

During data collection (Appendix D) and analysis, the first assessment was on the foundational issues of women's micro-enterprise engagement. In essence, there was a need to understand how engagements originated, together with the struggles of women during these initial stages. Three main themes were identified on this matter, and they captured the experiences of the women who operate the Masters Primary Co-operative.

Results revealed that the entrepreneurial engagement of the women who are in Master's Primary Co-operative *"started as a club, sewing collectively to complete a garment"* (CL1). Another participant confirmed this by saying, *"Initially, we were called*

clubs...." (CL2). It became apparent that the women's interest in sewing or tailoring was why they decided to work together. South African women tend to base their enterprises on activities rooted in their home-making abilities, such as sewing and chicken farming (Mandipaka 2014). This is because these activities align with their home-making abilities and cultural context. These ventures allow women to leverage their existing skills, work from home, and contribute to their households' income, making them attractive options for women entrepreneurs in the country (Mandipaka 2014; Agholor et al. 2015). After starting as a club, the women were able to develop a better vision based on their interest in sewing, which was beginning to yield economic rewards.

Having started as a club founded by community women, the initial projects of Masters Primary Co-operative were conducted from home. A participant stated, *"We didn't have a place to work, Mrs M offered us a room at her house, and we worked there until the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform assisted us with a park home"* (CL1). On the same issue, another participant revealed that *"we were working in a back room at one of the member's houses until we started getting funding which made us reach this far"* (CM4). The lack of a workplace space is a common feature of many microeconomic activities. Therefore, this is a situation that was not unique to the Masters Primary Co-operative.

The lack of a working space can have many adverse consequences for micro-enterprises (Obokoh and Goldman 2016). Results revealed that this was one of the experiences of the members of Masters Primary Co-operative. They required assistance from the government or other organisations through CSR initiatives to develop their business. To this end, one member stated, *"Then things started to open up as we had been working in a backroom of one of the members' house. We couldn't get assistance from the government while there."* (CM4). The business premises were thus a hindrance to obtaining assistance. A traceable business premise proves to potential assistance givers that there is a commitment to the business. Limited space or lack thereof can thus lead to inefficient production processes, lower quality products, and decreased productivity. It can also make it difficult for businesses to expand or take on new projects and limit their ability to hire additional workers.

Therefore, the core aspect of organisational and governmental programmes is that they address the realised need to focus on micro-enterprise challenges, particularly those operated by marginalised groups like women. Moreover, there is a recognition that there is a need to provide both support and resources that are essential towards sustainability (Malm 2012; Peters and Naicker 2013). This could encompass the offering of financial assistance to help businesses secure working spaces, which was one of the essential needs of the Masters Primary Co-operative. Nevertheless, the financial issue was one of the core challenges these women experienced from the beginning.

4.3 Perspectives from Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife

During the study, the researcher collected data from government officials representing EKZNW. The data sheds light and gives their perspectives regarding their organisation's CSR efforts.

4.3.1 Corporate social responsibility benefits are given to organisations that initiate the process

Through CSR-reserved funds, companies can positively influence societies and the environment. By using these funds, companies can play a significant role in making a positive difference in societies and the environment, contributing to a more sustainable and inclusive future (Tilt 2016). For micro-enterprises, accessing these funds can be a much-needed step towards achieving sustainability. They can access support for their business and resources that they would have otherwise not been able to afford.

Data provided in the study led to the realisation that for micro-enterprises to benefit from the funds that corporations set aside for CSR, they must be proactive. Their proactiveness is what positions them as attractive recipients. Government officials who were interviewed shared sentiments that support this notion. According to one of the government officials, *"The community typically initiates projects, and they request funding from our organisation. There is where we start working with them"* (G2). Another participant indicated that *"they regrouped themselves, and I became the first contact person they approached to ask for assistance because of my position in my organisation"* (G1). This data is consistent with the findings from the members of the Masters Primary Co-operative, who also reported numerous times that they were the

ones who approached EKZNW for assistance. When the participants were asked about what they do in their enterprise, one participant reported, *"We manufacture school uniforms and have just introduced custom-making outfits, but we specialise in uniforms. We have schools we supply.... They buy all their school uniforms from us, jerseys, but we don't make them from scratch"* (CL1). Another participant reported that *"we sew everything. I am discussing wedding gowns, traditional attire, and school and church uniforms. We are also fashion designers. You tell us what you have in mind, and we draw it for you, and then we sew it here at Masters"* (CL2).

Inherent in being proactive in seeking CSR funding is that members of micro-enterprises need to build valuable relationships with members of corporations. This is one of the critical factors that determine their ability to benefit from CSR programmes (Bielawska 2022; Vega Vidal and Bujo Davó 2018). G1 indicated that *"they wanted to know more. They wanted to learn something new. This makes me realise that I can work with these women because they are the ones who made the first efforts"*. In seeking CSR assistance, therefore, members of micro-enterprises can build relationships with corporations by showing that they are interested in being developed. Another participant reported, *"Since I work with communities bordering protected areas, one has to attend community meetings where beneficiaries identify community development projects"* (G3). There is thus a need for co-operatives to take advantage of organised conferences and business events to network with employees of big corporations. As is demonstrated in the study, it then becomes easier to secure funding.

Having a clear project plan, being able to demonstrate impact, together with being able to communicate effectively are also inherent aspects of being proactive in seeking CSR-designated funding. When members of a micro-enterprise identify a corporation that can potentially fund them, they are more likely to succeed when they have a project plan that is clear on what their goals and objectives are (Cheruiyot-Koech and Reddy 2022). The plan needs specific details about budgets and timelines to prove capability or potential for success (Porter and Kramer 2011). Furthermore, the project plan should be able to show the potential impacts of the funding. Corporations are especially interested in social and environmental impacts (Marquis and Qian 2014). Lastly, micro-enterprises need to communicate effectively with corporations to ensure

they know funding opportunities and can present their projects in the best possible light.

4.3.2 Businesses need to be formally registered

One of the critical pieces of information shared by the members of EKZNW interviewed is that micro-enterprises that receive CSR-designated funding need to be formally registered. Concerning her interactions with the members of the Masters Primary Co-operative, one of the participants indicated that *"they came stating that they have these types of businesses, and I asked how our organisation could assist them. We then arranged a meeting where I visited them to discuss if they were registered and had a certificate. In our discussion, they stated that they were not yet registered. I then organised the municipality to come and assist them in registering"* (G3). The importance of being a registered business was also discussed by members of the co-operative themselves, who explained that this was an essential requirement that funding was contingent on. For this reason, Hillenbrand, Money and Ghobadian (2013) state that micro-enterprises seeking assistance must thoroughly understand the criteria that funders use. Being a registered organisation is thus one of the critical definitive criteria.

4.3.3 Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife's vision to develop communities

EKZNW's agenda for engaging in CSR initiatives is similar to corporations' motivations worldwide. The background and the literature review (Section 2.2.1.) determined that CSR initiatives revolve around community-based development (Rampersad and Skinner 2014; Smit 2013). Therefore, the development of CSR in South Africa appears to be in line with its fundamental principles throughout the world. According to one of the government officials, *"It is very fulfilling to work with the previously disadvantaged communities when you all have the goal of changing their lives for the better"* (G1). Another official added that *"these types of businesses will benefit the community and our organisation as it will create a good relationship and reduce the burden on our communities to depend on Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife"* (G3).

Therefore, the kind of CSR that EKZNW chooses to practice is philanthropic. They engage in philanthropic activities, including supporting local infrastructure initiatives

and donating funds. Matei and Zilberklang (2022) agreed that the philanthropic endeavours of organisations should be considered. They have effectively addressed economic and social issues, particularly in rural communities. The philanthropic efforts of EKZNW have proven this in the case of Master's Primary Co-operative, and the women who are benefiting continue to bear witness to that fact.

4.3.4 Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife levy fund for corporate social responsibility initiatives

To fund their CSR initiatives, which are not limited to the Masters Primary Co-operative, EKZNW has a levy fund specifically for that purpose. *"When introducing myself, I also explained that we have a community levy fund designed to assist the neighbouring community of our reserves in education, income-generating projects and other types"* (G3). Another explained further that *"Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife implemented the projects by funding them through the Community Levy Fund that is generated through tourism revenue and gave those co-operates enough resources to work as small and successful businesses"* (G1). Information provided by the government officials is confirmed in a study conducted by EKZNW (2015b), who explains that the community levy EKZNW is a provincial conservation agency. They manage biodiversity in the protected areas of KZN and manage the community levy fund.

Additionally, Mkhwanazi (2018) explains that the principal purpose of the fund include raising awareness of conservation efforts in surrounding communities, coupled with social and economic development. While it is collected from visitors, its sole purpose is to fund the developmental projects of micro-enterprises in surrounding communities (Mkhwanazi 2018).

The micro businesses they fund are wide-ranging; hence they cover a broad spectrum of community development areas, including capacity building, education, and training (Naidoo, Weaver, Diggle, Matongo, et al. 2016). Some projects funded through the programme include establishing community-led ecotourism enterprises, conservation education programmes in local schools, and creating conservation-focused employment opportunities for local communities.

According to Mkhwanazi (2018), EKZNW's levy fund is a unique initiative. This observation is premised on the fact that it is regarded as inclusive and equitable; thus,

it is geared towards increasing conservation efforts in South Africa. When EKZNW provides funding for a micro-enterprise, the effects are not just on the co-operatives. Hence, they also benefit because it is a form of advocacy that gives beneficiaries an active role in their conservation efforts.

4.3.5 Need for continuous training in micro-enterprises

The last theme unique to the data provided by the government officials representing EKZNW is that members of the Masters Primary Co-operative and their other *"beneficiaries need continuous training, especially in business management"* (G2). This recommendation was also made by another participant who said that *"they also need business management and financial management training"* (G3). This became a significant recommendation among the participants, who explained that co-operative members were *"failing to manage their cashflows properly"* (G1).

4.4 Effects of corporate social responsibility on women's micro-enterprises

One of the main objectives that guided the study was understanding what CSR is in the context of South Africa. The researcher was interested in utilising the study to gain an enhanced perspective on the exact effect of CSR on women's micro-enterprises. The identified impacts that the CSR initiatives towards the Masters Primary Co-operative proved to be essential towards that endeavour. There are thus three main aspects that were identified.

4.4.1 Corporate social responsibility combats financial and infrastructural struggles

CSR is integral in diminishing financial and infrastructural struggles in women's micro-enterprises. This was demonstrated in developing Masters Primary Co-operative. Having established that the co-operative struggled financially in its infancy, CSR brought the financial assistance required to boost production. To this effect, one participant reported, *"We now have sewing machines that can do almost everything. We have the computers that help us with emails, photocopying and loading all the designs we do for embroidery"* (CL1). Another participant was also able to highlight the significant changes that were made since the co-operation started benefitting from

CSR initiatives stating, *"There is a lot that has changed since the co-op was established. We are now at a point where we tailor wedding outfits and advertise them on our social media platforms. We are in the process of starting sewing classes"* (CL2). It is, therefore, apparent that because of CSR, members of the Masters Primary Co-operative have expanded their business, purchased the necessary equipment, and increased their production capacity, leading to higher revenue and profits.

One of the significant things that the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform was able to assist the Master's Primary Co-operative with was a much-needed workspace. The former intervened when co-operative members were working in a backroom made available by one of their members. A participant highlighted the effect of being offered alternative space: *"We worked there until the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform assisted us with a park home. We had gone to ask for the land at the local chief. They also provided us with the sewing machines you see here; working was never the same"* (CL1). Following this, the co-operative received further infrastructural assistance from EKZNW, resulting in a significant positive impact. The extent of the impact is captured in the words of a participant who indicated, *"Wildlife (Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife) noted our call and built this building together with storing cabinets mounted on the wall. We felt some burden lifted from our shoulders, and our prayers were answered"* (CL1). CSR initiatives have alleviated infrastructural challenges in the Masters Primary Co-operative and the obtained data captures the tremendous benefits the members enjoy. This is why one member stated, *"That elevated us to the next big level, and we are forever grateful for that"* (CL2).

4.4.2 Establishment of a reputable brand in the community

One of the crucial impacts that EKZNW has had on the Masters Primary Co-operative is that it has facilitated the establishment of the co-operative's brand within the community. *"Customers recognise us easily through the structure donated by Ezemvelo. It made us look professional in the community"* (CM5). Because of the structure that EKZNW built for the Masters Primary Co-operative, they increased their visibility, one of the main reasons that facilitated the creation of their brand. Additionally, there was a boost in the image of the co-operative, which is why the participant alluded to the fact that they started to look more professional. Having

established a well-known brand within their enterprise community, it is apparent also that the help that EKZNW provided was access to a broader market base.

Interviewees who participated in the study highlighted the extent to which EKZNW had facilitated the expansion of the Masters Primary Co-operative's customer base. When members were asked about their challenges before receiving assistance, they indicated that they took turns sewing one dress because they could not do more. However, they have since been able to expand their products and services, thus expanding their customer base and revenue; hence all this can be attributed to the assistance they received through CSR initiatives.

4.4.3 Employment creation and reduced poverty

CSR entails organisations' actions motivated by recognised responsibility towards local communities and societies. It reflects an organisation's commitment to be a responsible corporate citizen and positively impact society by going beyond legal obligations and actively contributing to the well-being of communities and the environment (Fernando and Lawrence 2014). Thus, several ways companies formulate CSR initiatives are critical towards employment creation and poverty reduction.

In developing countries, unprecedented economic struggles usually significantly impact the labour market. One significant characteristic common in many African economies, including South Africa, is the high unemployment rate that continues to increase (Nene 2020). One of the effects of a high unemployment rate is that members of the population tend to engage in small-scale, informal economic activities to combat unemployment and poverty. Therefore, when companies, through their CSR initiatives, decide to promote the development of such micro-enterprises, they not only necessitate economic and social development but also create employment opportunities for people. CSR is one of the vital job creation initiatives that can help combat high unemployment and poverty in developing nations (Rampersad and Skinner 2014; Smit 2013). Hence, this is an assertion whose results were proven in the case of this study concerning the Masters Primary Co-operative.

A summative view on the impacts of CSR in this regard is that when companies assist micro-enterprises, they do not just promote entrepreneurship. They are also facilitating

the development of local communities. While assessing the motivations behind the Masters Primary Co-operative, it became apparent that CSR initiatives are vital for breaking the cycle of poverty and dependence in rural communities. A significant theme concerning women's motivation is their desire to create employment. Women continually see the need to empower themselves and break the abovementioned cycle of poverty and exclusion. One participant stated, *"I joined because I saw the opportunity to be self-employed and be able to provide for my children and make money for myself. We know it's our money, unlike asking your husband for money to buy salt. You can use what you have worked for, get salt, and continue cooking"* (CM8). This response shows how unemployed women are dependent on their husbands even for seemingly cheap and essential things. The dependence of unemployed women on their husbands for basic things can be a complex issue (Hakim 2016). The participant joined co-operatives aimed at self-empowerment and the need to decrease her dependence on her husband. Though there was no further probing to understand why there was a need to do so, the words of the participants exhibited connotations of negative feelings and experiences associated with being unable to provide for oneself and one's children.

On the same issue, during the interviews, one participant said that *"We wanted to create employment for ourselves where we generate income that will assist our families and us, especially our children, to go to school"* (CL). Another participant indicated that *"we wanted a source of income as women. Though we don't get paid every month, the co-op assists us in many ways. All of us here don't buy school uniforms. We manufacture it ourselves..."* (CL2). It is thus apparent that by creating micro-enterprises, women increase the fight against poverty in their homes. Women who establish micro-enterprises generate employment opportunities for themselves and fellow women in their community. By hiring other women, they are creating jobs and enabling them to become independent.

4.4.4 Training and capacity building

The fourth implication of CSR identified in the study is that it is an avenue through which training and capacity building can be afforded to women who are part of micro-enterprises. Previously, there was a discussion (Section 3.3.2.) about rural women's usual lack of primary education and how they struggle to handle business

responsibilities. Therefore, through CSR, such women can be trained and capacitated to succeed in their business ventures. The essential nature of training and capacity building in the study was also demonstrated through the CSR initiatives that the Masters Primary Co-operative benefited from.

In the training case, one participant reported that *"we then registered into Ingonyama Trust Board. Some organisations used to assist us with training from time to time."* (CL2). When participants were asked about the support they had received, that had contributed to the sustainable development of their co-operative, a participant reported, *"Economic Development provided training, machines and fabrics, as well as SEDA who provided pieces of training, brand and signage. In the case of capacity building, the various CSR-based contributions that different organisations made were all geared towards capacitating them towards being profitable and sustainable businesses"* (CM4).

When companies endeavour to help local micro-enterprises through education and training, they equip and capacitate them with the knowledge and skills to participate in economic activities (Lekhanya 2015). For example, financial management, marketing, and customer service training can help micro-enterprises manage their businesses more efficiently and effectively, leading to better financial outcomes.

4.5 Sustainability achievement in women's micro-enterprises

Having established the effects of CSR on women's micro-enterprises, the researcher identified three critical aspects that aid in achieving sustainability in women's micro-enterprises through the data provided.

4.5.1 Teamwork

The sustainable development of women's micro-enterprises is contingent on teamwork, among other things. Teamwork is one of the contributing factors that has facilitated the growth and development of the Masters Primary Co-operative. One participant indicated that *"we are united and committed to our work. We have a good working relationship with each other and are respectful as well"* (CL1). Apart from this, teamwork is demonstrated throughout the data provided for the study. Through teamwork, women can pool together the knowledge, skills, and resources to work

towards their shared vision and achieve their goals. When Masters Primary Co-operative was established, one woman could provide a working space and work collaboratively in that small space, taking turns sewing one garment.

Through teamwork, women in micro-enterprise can also build emotional support for each other. Rural women are particularly vulnerable and must navigate complex socio-economic and cultural issues daily. The teamwork aspect among rural women is vital to their resilience, community development, and capacity building. By joining forces, they can overcome challenges, share resources, and create sustainable change in their lives and communities (Aterido, Beck and Iacovone 2011; Gidarakou 2015). As was proven by participants in the study, teamwork is essential in overcoming challenges and increases their motivation to succeed as entrepreneurs. Through these networks, they encourage each other and learn from their failures.

Additionally, teamwork and collaboration among women in micro-enterprises lead to better decision-making and problem-solving. This is because teamwork provides an avenue for sharing diverse perspectives and experiences. The women can thus benefit from a wide range of perspectives they share and may not have encountered otherwise. To some extent, this knowledge sharing helps cover up individual deficits caused by a general lack of formal and business education among rural women. By leveraging teamwork in decision-making, rural women can make more informed and effective choices that benefit themselves and their communities. The collaborative nature of teamwork ensures that decisions are inclusive, equitable, and reflective of rural women's diverse needs and aspirations (Aterido et al. 2011).

4.5.2 Commitment to work

Commitment to work is an essential factor that contributes to sustainability in women's micro-enterprises. Women can reap several benefits that are inherent in commitment to work. To begin with, commitment to work results in consistency when the necessary effort to succeed is exerted. The women in Master's Primary Co-operative have shown how they have benefited from being consistent and committed to their work. During the interviews, one of the women reported that *"we treat ourselves as employees of the co-op and that has played a huge role in ensuring that we're successful. We come to work daily, even if we don't have any orders, but for those who might walk in. They*

must find us ready anytime. We report if one cannot make it to work. We are committed to succeeding" (CL2).

Additionally, when women who form micro-enterprises are committed to their work, they also work towards producing products of good quality, being innovative, and being resilient against the challenges they encounter. Commitment is vital in improving work performance and driving overall improvement in enterprises. It creates a positive work culture, motivates employees, fosters collaboration, and promotes resilience and adaptability. By nurturing employee commitment, enterprises can create an environment that encourages continuous improvement, innovation, and long-term success (Amara, Baklouti and Haned 2019; Chinomona and Maziriri 2015; Sharma et al. 2012).

4.5.3 Having a future focus

One of the notable realisations made about the members of the Masters Primary Co-operative during data collection is that they have a future focus. This is one of the factors that has played a significant role in promoting sustainable development in their micro-enterprise. A vital attribute of these women is that their vision of the co-operative extends beyond themselves. To this end, one participant stated, *"We normally tell our children to ensure that the place is taken good care of as we get old"* (CL1). They would be the ones responsible for it in the future. In addition to this, they are in the process of starting sewing classes to empower others to do what they do. A future focus enables female entrepreneurs to create long-term business plans, considering market trends, customer needs, and environmental impact. By considering these factors, women's micro-enterprises can create sustainable business models that are environmentally and socially responsible. Women's micro-enterprises must be future-focused as this can translate into cost savings, reduced waste and the ability to reinvest in the business for business growth.

4.6 Challenges for the co-operative

Results revealed that the Masters Primary Co-operative encounters ongoing challenges. These continually pose a threat to daily operations and future

sustainability. The identified challenges include financial constraints, lack of security and load shedding.

4.6.1 Financial constraints

The results indicate the financial struggles experienced within the Masters Primary Co-operative when the business started. During the interviews, the participants spoke extensively on this issue, highlighting how this affected operations and the co-operative's membership. To this effect, one participant cited that *"when it was time for us to register our co-op, others had left along the way to look for better opportunities due to financial constraints"* (CL2). Another participant spoke on the same matter and said, *"We were too many when we started, but others failed along the way because there was no money. They believed it was a waste of time; they wanted something to make them money. While others worked individually in their homes"* (CL1). Data gathered from the focus group corroborated *"About eleven women came together and registered the co-op. Some have passed away, whereas some left to pursue other ventures"* (CL2). These findings thus confirm that the women of the Masters Primary Co-operative struggled financially before they received assistance.

Financial struggles are common because micro-enterprises are small businesses that typically have few members. Micro-enterprises often encounter financial problems due to their small scale and limited resources. These challenges can include difficulty in accessing capital and loans, managing cash flow effectively, competing with larger businesses, and handling multiple roles with limited expertise. The lack of financial resources can hinder investment in necessary equipment, technology, or marketing efforts, thus hindering growth opportunities. Inconsistent revenue streams, delayed payments, and limited financial expertise further compound these issues (Hodges et al. 2015). In the case of Master's Primary Co-operative, they started with 11 members and now report that they currently have eight members. Previously, it was revealed that the co-operative started as a club that was later turned into a business without operational premises. This reveals that the members of Masters Primary Co-operative faced one of the common challenges of micro-enterprises: lack of capital. The interviews that were conducted, together with the focus group, provide further evidence of this. These businesses often lack the financial resources needed to start or expand their operations, which limits their ability to invest in equipment, inventory,

marketing, or hiring new employees. This included sewing machines, fabric, a building, furniture, signage and a vehicle, all of which are important for any business.

It is imperative to note that while the Masters Primary Co-operative has grown tremendously, they are still not financially secure. The researcher was able to establish that members of the co-operative receive salaries from the profits that they make. However, there is no assurance of this every month because the salaries are contingent on generating enough profit to allow for that. Participants were asked if the enterprise had developed enough for the members to receive salaries and dividends. One participant indicated, *"We have been able to pay ourselves through the profit we make, but it depends on the volume of orders we have and the income we generate"* (CM4). Another participant said, *"We don't have a stable salary. It depends on the orders we receive"* (CL1). Again, another participant confirmed this, saying, *"Yes, we do get paid, but it depends on how much we make monthly. We must pay the bills first, save some, and then we can with what remains"* (CL2). There is a struggle centred on cash flow management. Concerning this, micro-enterprises often experience fluctuating revenue, making managing their expenses and cash flow difficult. The unpredictable nature of cash flow, influenced by fluctuating member contributions and market demand, makes it difficult for co-operatives to plan and allocate resources effectively. Limited access to capital further hampers their ability to invest in infrastructure, technology, and expansion (Kshetri 2018). This means they may struggle to pay their bills, purchase inventory, or cover unexpected expenses.

Another cause of financial challenges in micro-enterprises is the lack of adequate infrastructure for the business. In the case of Master's Primary Co-operative, this is an issue that was continually highlighted as a challenge that was faced and inhibited growth during the initial establishment phase. Again, due consideration must be given to micro-enterprises operating mainly in rural locations. This makes it challenging to have and afford infrastructural resources like business premises, electricity and other equipment needed for increased production.

While the Masters Primary Co-operative has been able to thrive thus far and become a well-established business within the community, they continue to face challenges that threaten business productivity.

4.6.2 Lack of security

For women, entrepreneurs, particularly rural women, security challenges are a constant obstacle. The Masters Primary Co-operative continually deals with physical security issues. One of the participants in the study reported that *"we want a security guard to protect our building. Some of our neighbours are misbehaving. There is one that tampered with our electricity meter box"* (CL2). Before moving to the building that EKZNW built, the co-operative had also dealt with physical security issues. To this effect, one of the participants reported that *"we faced several challenges of break-ins"* (CL2). It is apparent, therefore, that the lack of physical security is a significant challenge that Master Primary Co-operative is encountering. In rural areas, the need for more security services is likely exacerbating this challenge. Security issues in rural areas can pose significant challenges and concerns. Rural regions' remoteness and limited infrastructure can make them more vulnerable to various security threats. These may include crimes such as theft, burglary, vandalism, and issues related to personal safety and public order.

Additionally, rural areas may face challenges like inadequate law enforcement resources, longer response times, and limited access to emergency services. Factors such as geographical isolation, lack of community surveillance, and socio-economic conditions can contribute to the persistence of security issues in rural areas (Esterhuyzen and Louw 2019; Ojiagu and Nzewi 2019). Moreover, women entrepreneurs are more likely to be targeted by criminals who practice theft and burglary because they perceive them as easy targets. For women who own micro-enterprises, this challenge may be magnified by the lack of financial resources to invest in important security measures like hiring guards, installing alarms and installing surveillance cameras.

4.6.3 Load shedding

It was identified that load shedding is yet another challenge that the Masters Primary Co-operative is facing. Concerning this, one participant cited, *"We now manufacture more products that we sell at our stall in Gingindlovu. But, I must say, load shedding is hindering us. It makes business slow as it switches off while we are still busy sewing"* (CL1). Another participant identified the same challenge, indicating that *"load shedding*

has been one of the major challenges. Electricity switches off while we are busy with sewing" (CM6).

In South Africa, load shedding has become an aspect of personal and business life. It is characterised as the controlled, intentional disruption or switching off of electricity according to a predetermined schedule. Unfortunately, business areas are not spared from load shedding, adversely affecting business organisations, especially micro-enterprises (Orderson 2023). Because these businesses are characteristically small, they tend to rely heavily on the electricity provided through the national grid. They need it to power their production process, including machinery and lighting. According to the Masters Primary Co-operative, electricity interruptions affect workflow in such small businesses. This, in turn, leads to adverse delays in production and meeting deadlines. Therefore, enterprises affected by load shedding find it particularly damaging to their businesses. Even when micro-enterprises find alternative energy sources like generators, they cannot cope with the costs they incur due to extended use. In light of this, load shedding is a burden for all organisations.

4.7 Application of the sustainable livelihood approach to corporate social responsibility

The sustainable livelihood approach highlights the struggles of people who reside in rural areas. In so doing, it focuses on improving opportunities afforded to them so that they can access valuable resources (Massoud et al. 2016). In the same manner, the CSR efforts of EKZNW are premised on the same values; thus, the data provided on the Masters Primary Co-operative confirms the manifestation of the sustainable livelihood approach in their CSR efforts. Hence, participant G2 indicated that EKZNW is *"implementing empowerment projects that will assist in changing their lives"*.

The training, infrastructure, and other forms of support given to the Masters Primary Co-operative demonstrate the importance of improving community members' assets and capacities, which the SLA emphasises. EKZNW emerges as a perfect example of how investments made in community enterprises improve their knowledge and education and their ability to create employment opportunities.

In the SLA framework, there is an emphasis that attention must be given to economic and social realities within a community (Lundgren 2018). This is one of the things that

EKZNW has been able to do, identifying a need to empower people in surrounding communities to combat unemployment and poverty. To this effect, again participant G2 reported that *"we work with them to fight poverty as they have a shortage of resources"*. Their initiatives are specifically tailored to suit the educational capacity of people in the community, which is why they chose to fund sewing and poultry projects.

The SLA framework aims to promote inclusivity and equity in the development process. It considers disadvantaged groups' specific needs and priorities to create a more balanced and fair approach to development. The framework recognises various resources and assets that are crucial for inclusive development. These resources can be categorised into five main elements (Goswami and Paul 2012; Massoud et al. 2016; Serrat 2017). The CSR has assisted micro-enterprises with four of these elements, namely *human, financial, physical, and social resources*, and has to consider assisting them with *natural capital* in the future.

Human capital includes individuals' knowledge, skills, and employment status. It emphasises the importance of education, training, and employment opportunities to empower disadvantaged groups and enhance their capabilities.

Financial capital refers to the economic resources available to individuals or communities, such as earned income, savings, and access to financial services or credit. Financial inclusion and access to capital are essential for enabling economic activities and promoting self-sufficiency (Goswami and Paul 2012; Massoud et al. 2016; Serrat 2017).

Physical capital encompasses the infrastructure and basic amenities necessary for development, such as water and sanitation facilities, roads, electricity, and other vital services. Access to adequate infrastructure is crucial for improving living conditions and equal opportunities.

Social capital pertains to the social support networks and relationships within a community. Substantial social capital can provide support, co-operation, and collective action among disadvantaged groups, improving well-being and empowerment.

Natural capital includes the natural resources available within a region, such as land, forests, water bodies, and biodiversity. Sustainable management and equitable

distribution of natural resources are essential to ensure long-term environmental and economic sustainability (Goswami and Paul 2012; Massoud et al. 2016; Serrat 2017).

Considering these different components, the SLA framework addresses disadvantaged groups' specific needs and challenges. It provides a holistic approach to development that considers the multidimensional aspects of inclusivity and equity, enabling more comprehensive and effective interventions (Goswami and Paul 2012; Massoud et al. 2016; Serrat 2017).

4.8 Application of the Marxist feminist theory to corporate social responsibility

The Marxist feminist theory focuses primarily on issues related to women. In this theory, class and gender inequality are examined, particularly concerning how they reinforce each other (Rogerson 2007; Neves 2010). In rural communities in South Africa, gender and class inequality are inherent issues. Women are discriminated against based on both their gender and the patriarchal regard of them as second-class citizens (Rogerson 2007; Neves 2010). Therefore, the Marxist feminist theory is strategically positioned in this study to challenge the exploitation of women and their vulnerable position in rural communities. The prior vulnerability and dependence of women in the Masters Primary Co-operative were revealed by one of the participants who said, *"I joined because I saw the opportunity that I could be self-employed and be able to provide for my children and make money for myself. We know that it's our money, unlike going to your husband to ask for money to buy salt, you can use what you have worked for, get salt and continue cooking"* (CM8). Therefore, in the case of EKZNW, their CSR initiatives have proven to be reminiscent of the fundamental ideas of the Marxist feminist theory. The support given to the Masters Primary Co-operative and other women's micro-enterprises challenges gender inequality in rural communities; thus, they empower women to have a stake in the direction of their destinies.

Another vital feature of the Marxist feminist theory is that it advocates for collective action and the need to initiate transformative change. Marxist feminism combines Marxist analysis of capitalism with feminist analysis of patriarchy to understand how gender oppression is intricately connected to economic exploitation. According to this

perspective, capitalism and patriarchy mutually reinforce each other, as they rely on hierarchies and inequalities to maintain power and control (Rogerson 2007; Neves 2010). Hence, one participant who represented EKZNW revealed how the organisation supports collective action for transformative change in rural communities. Participant G1 indicated that *"we support these projects financially by funding them. Business support by giving training and help to link/network with other sister departments to help them where our department cannot"*. Essentially, the challenge is on existing power structures that render women powerless. Again, the CSR initiatives of EKZNW firmly uphold the fundamental principles of CSR in this regard. If anything, EKZNW has proven that its CSR initiatives are not just for show. Still, they are influential in forming part of a broader movement that advocates for social and economic justice.

4.9 Summary of key findings

Table 4.1 summarises the study's key findings on data collected from the Masters Primary Co-operative at Ishowe.

In the context of women's micro-enterprise engagement in the Masters Primary Co-operative, several themes and subthemes emerged from the findings. Here is a breakdown of the themes and their respective subthemes.

Background of women's micro-enterprise engagement: The co-operative's evolution: The co-operative began as a club and progressed towards developing into a well-established business. Due to financial constraints, the initial work of the co-operative was conducted from a backroom in one of the members' homes.

Perspectives from EKZNW: EKZNW provides CSR benefits to organisations that initiate the process. The enterprises seeking support from EKZNW or government programmes must be formally registered. EKZNW's community development vision aims to foster the development of communities. The Community Levy Fund is a dedicated fund for CSR initiatives. Micro-enterprises require ongoing training to enhance their capacity and operate successful businesses.

Table 4.1: Summary of key findings

Themes	Subthemes	Findings
The background of women's micro-enterprises engagement: Masters Primary Co-operative		The co-operative started as a club. After that, the women worked towards a greater vision of developing the club into a well-established business. The initial work of the Masters Primary Co-operative was conducted from a backroom at one of the members' homes. This was due to a lack of finance and workspace.
Perspectives from Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife	4.3.1. CSR benefits are given to organisations that initiate the process 4.3.2. Businesses need to be formally registered 4.3.3. EKZNW's vision is to develop communities 4.3.4 EKZNW has a levy fund for CSR initiatives 4.3.5. There is a need for continuous training in micro-enterprises	Members of micro-enterprises need to seek assistance from government programmes proactively. They must have a clear project plan and build and maintain relationships with valuable stakeholders to succeed. Government entities offering support make it a requirement that enterprises requiring support must be formally registered. In the case of EKZNW, they have a levy fund specifically set up to assist community micro-enterprises. Results also revealed that members of micro-enterprises require continuous training to build their capacity to operate successful and sustainable businesses.
The effect of CSR on women's micro-enterprises	4.4.1. CSR combats financial and infrastructural struggles 4.4.2. The establishment of a reputable brand in the community 4.4.3. Employment creation and reduced poverty 4.4.4. Training and capacity building	Two major challenges experienced at the inception of the Masters Primary Co-operative were a lack of finance and infrastructure for the business. Therefore, CSR is imperative towards alleviating these challenges. Because of the assistance of EKZNW, the Masters Primary Co-operative has been able to build a reputable brand in their community. Moreover, the CSR efforts of EKZNW have proven to be instrumental towards creating employment for community members and reducing the prevalence of poverty. Results also revealed that organisations use CSR to provide training and capacity building to members of micro-enterprises.

Sustainability achievement in women's micro-enterprises	4.5.1. Teamwork 4.5.2. Commitment to the work 4.5.3. Having a future focus	The women in the Masters Primary Co-operative work as a team, which has been instrumental towards goal attainment. They are also highly committed to their work and have a sustainable vision of the future of their business.
Challenges for the co-operative	4.6.1 Financial constraints 4.6.2. Lack of security 4.6.3. Load shedding	Three identified challenges continue to threaten the sustainability of the Masters Primary Co-operative. These are financial constraints, lack of security on their business premises, and ongoing load shedding in South Africa.
Application of the SLA to CSR		In line with SLA, EKZNW considers the social and economic realities of members in its surrounding communities. CSR is thus used as a means of empowering and improving their livelihoods. The CSR provide human capital such as training, financial capital access to financial institutions, physical capital such as infrastructure and social capital such as networks with other public and private institutions.
Application of the Marxist feminist theory to CSR		The CSR efforts of EKZNW are premised on the Marxist feminist theory. Fundamentally, they empower rural women who are vulnerable members of society and often dependent on men.

The effect of CSR on women's micro-enterprises: CSR efforts alleviate financial and infrastructure struggles micro-enterprises face. CSR support contributes to building a reputable brand within the community. Employment creation and poverty reduction: CSR initiatives lead to job creation and poverty reduction.

Sustainability achievement in women's micro-enterprises: The co-operative members work collaboratively, contributing to goal attainment. The members demonstrate high commitment to their work.

Future focus: They have a sustainable vision for the future of their business.

Challenges for the co-operative: Limited financial resources pose a challenge to the sustainability of the co-operative. The lack of security on their business premises is a concern. Ongoing power outages (load shedding) in South Africa affect their operations.

Application of the SLA to CSR: EKZNW aligns its CSR efforts with the principles of SLA, considering the social and economic realities of community members to empower and improve their livelihoods.

Application of the Marxist feminist theory to CSR: EKZNW's CSR efforts are guided by the Marxist feminist theory, aiming to empower rural women who are vulnerable and often economically dependent on men. These findings provide insights into the experiences, challenges, and opportunities encountered by women's micro-enterprises in the Masters Primary Co-operative and the role of CSR in supporting their development and sustainability.

4.10 Chapter summary

The results obtained during the study were presented in this chapter. The following chapter encompasses the various conclusions and recommendations made by the researcher based on the results presented and discussed in this chapter. The results provided sufficient information to answer the research questions that guided the study.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

Based on the findings of Chapter 4, this chapter provides a concise overview of the research findings, conclusions, and recommendations derived from the study. The researcher starts by restating the study's purpose and research questions and summarising the content covered in each preceding chapter. The findings are then presented, emphasising the key conclusions and recommendations drawn from the study. Additionally, the chapter explores the originality of the research and its impact on policy, practice, and theory. Lastly, the researcher outlines potential future research directions to conclude the chapter.

5.2 Summary of chapters

Chapter 1 of the study comprehensively introduces CSR from the international to South African context (Section 1.1). The chapter highlighted the research problem identified as unemployment, inequality, and poverty; the three principal challenges women's micro-enterprises face. The chapter outlined the consequences of non-attendance to this problem, emphasising the adverse effects on the country's economic development and citizens' well-being (Section 1.2).

The chapter presented the research aim and objectives the researcher wanted to achieve in addressing the research problem. It also included essential research questions the researcher aimed to answer, guiding the study towards its desired outcomes (Section 1.3). Additionally, the chapter provided definitions of essential terms, ensuring the reader understood the key concepts used throughout the research project (Section 1.4).

The historical background of EKZNW was presented, followed by a discussion of the background of the study, which provided a clear basis for the selected topic (Section 1.5). The chapter briefly explained the study's rationale and importance, emphasising the need for research in this field to achieve social and economic development (Section 1.7). It then described the research methodology, outlining the

research approach, design and data collection methods used in the study. It emphasised the importance of collecting reliable and valid data to support the research findings and conclusions (Section 1.8). The chapter's last section describes the research project's structure, providing a roadmap for the reader to follow the study's progression (Section 1.10). Finally, the summary concluded the chapter, providing a brief overview of the key points covered and a preview of what to expect in the following chapters (Section 1.11).

In conclusion, Chapter 1 served as an informative and comprehensive introduction to the research project, providing the reader with a clear understanding of the research problem, aim, objectives, and methodology. In addition, it provided a solid foundation for the subsequent chapters, guiding the reader towards a deeper understanding of the topic and its significance for social and economic development.

In **Chapter 2**, a theoretical framework was presented. The researcher utilised the SLA framework and the Marxist feminist theory to understand how rural women in South Africa survive. The SLA framework was chosen as the primary theory for the study due to its relevance to the colonial era and the history of apartheid in South Africa. This framework focuses on people's assets and capabilities to support their livelihoods and sustain their well-being (Section 2.2). The Marxist feminist theory was also employed to provide a more nuanced understanding of the oppression experienced by women. This theory recognises the intersectionality of various forms of oppression, including race, class, and gender. It also acknowledges how exclusive systems and ideas are perpetuated through patriarchal lenses (Section 2.3).

The chapter also explored the evolution of approaches to women's development, including WID, WAD, and GAD. These approaches have shifted from emphasising integrating women into development projects to a more transformative approach that seeks to challenge patriarchal structures and promote gender equality (Section 2.3). In addition, it examined the experiences of women's micro-enterprises, highlighting the challenges they face in achieving socio-economic survival in South Africa and globally. By examining these experiences, the study aimed to gain a deeper understanding of the complexities of women's entrepreneurship and the various factors that impact their ability to succeed (Section 2.3).

Overall, Chapter 2 provided a theoretical framework for the study, drawing on the SLA framework and the Marxist feminist theory to analyse the experiences of women's micro-enterprises. The chapter also contextualised the study within the broader history of women's development approaches. Finally, it highlighted the need for a more transformative approach to achieve gender equality and promote women's socio-economic empowerment.

In **Chapter 3**, a comprehensive literature review was conducted to explore previous studies on CSR programmes in women's micro-enterprises. The review focused on gathering insights from various scholarly works and research conducted internationally and locally in KZN.

The literature review encompassed a wide range of aspects related to the role of CSR in women's micro-enterprises, considering the findings and perspectives from previous studies. In addition, it aimed to thoroughly understand the existing knowledge and research gaps in this field. By synthesising the literature, the chapter grouped researchers into well-established and well-studied topics, allowing for a cohesive discussion of CSR's role in women's micro-enterprises (Section 3). Furthermore, this approach enabled the researcher to examine and analyse CSR programmes' various dimensions, challenges, and potential benefits in this context. The literature review highlighted the essential findings and insights from previous studies and identified any inconsistencies, contradictions, or gaps in the existing literature. This provided a foundation for the current study to contribute new knowledge and build upon the existing body of research.

Chapter 3 critically examined the literature on CSR programmes in women's micro-enterprises, drawing from local and international studies. It provided a comprehensive overview of the previous research, allowing researchers to identify key themes, patterns, and research gaps in this area. This chapter laid the groundwork for the subsequent chapters by establishing the context and theoretical framework for the study.

Chapter 4 presented and discussed the findings of the study. The collected data was analysed using thematic analysis to present and discuss the results in detail. This

allowed the researcher to identify and develop themes that effectively represented the experiences and perspectives of the study participants.

The chapter had a twofold purpose. First, it presented the results obtained from a combination of semi-structured interviews and focus groups to collect data from three different sources: members of the Masters Primary Co-operative, the co-operative's leadership, and government officials from EKZNW and KZN Provincial Government, in line with the qualitative nature of the study. The researcher aimed to succinctly convey critical information, highlighting the crucial findings from the participants' responses. Second, the chapter included discussions based on these results, enabling the analysis and interpretation of the findings concerning the study's primary aim.

The results and discussions were presented concurrently, following the research questions posed in the study. The first research question examined the status of women's employment and the sustainability of their micro-enterprises. The findings revealed that the entrepreneurial engagement of women in the Masters Primary Co-operative started as a club and grew with the support of funding (Section 4.). However, despite the significant growth facilitated by the CSR initiatives of EKZNW and other organisations, the co-operative members still needed help with financial security. As a result, they relied on profits to receive salaries (Section 4.2). The second research question focused on how the CSR programme of EKZNW contributed to the sustainability of women's micro-enterprises. The findings indicated that the programme had a positive impact by helping the women generate income, expand their businesses, acquire necessary equipment, and increase production capacity, leading to higher revenue and profits. The CSR programme also provided infrastructural assistance, access to a broader market base, essential nature training, and capacity-building opportunities. The achievements in sustainability for women's micro-enterprises through CSR were attributed to factors such as teamwork, commitment, and a future-oriented approach (Section 4.3). Based on these findings, the chapter suggested that EKZNW could adopt the Marxist feminist theory (Section 4) and SLA to CSR (Section 4). Additionally, continuous training in micro-enterprises was recommended to enhance the effectiveness of their CSR programme.

In a nutshell, Chapter 4 presented the results of the data analysis, providing insights into the status of women's employment and sustainability in their micro-enterprises,

as well as the impact of EKZNW's CSR programme. The findings were discussed with the study's primary aim, and recommendations were made for improving the CSR programme and its alignment with relevant theories and approaches.

5.3 Summary of research findings

The study's main findings are summarised below and organised according to research questions.

5.3.1 Research objective 1: To understand corporate social responsibility on an international level

This research objective was addressed through a comprehensive review of global CSR literature. The review of CSR from an international perspective highlights the growing emphasis on CSR to address sustainable development challenges, poverty eradication, and the importance of public-private partnerships (Section 3.2). The United Nations Sustainable Development Agenda for 2030 underscores firms' engagement in solving these challenges through CSR initiatives (Medina-Muñoz and Medina-Muñoz 2020). The reviewed literature established that CSR is becoming more popular worldwide, with companies investing in sustainable development by voluntarily incorporating social, economic, and ecological challenges into their corporate plans and collaborating with partners. In India, companies invest in education, health, infrastructure development, and capacity building to transform rural areas. In Africa, CSR is critical in reducing high poverty levels, and CSR activities are brought to southern countries by northern countries (Section 3.2). In South Africa, BBBEE addresses racial imbalances and promotes economic empowerment. The literature identified that CSR should involve active participation and consistent communication between companies and communities to understand their requirements and challenges. Prioritising overall social responsibility in line with regional needs while maintaining global competitiveness is crucial for sustainable economic development (Section 3.2.1).

Overall, the study addressed the research objective and highlighted the international perspective of CSR in detail, emphasising its role in sustainable development, poverty alleviation, and addressing social challenges in different regions. It underscores the

need for organisations to embrace their social responsibility, engage in partnerships, and address the specific needs of communities in their CSR initiatives.

5.3.2 Research objective 2: To explore what corporate social responsibility is in the South African context

The second research objective was addressed by reviewing the literature on CSR in South Africa. The study identified that CSR is driven by efforts to address political change and socio-economic inequality. Before the country's democracy in 1994, certain racial groups were deprived of economic opportunities, resulting in severe poverty and an imbalanced economy (Section 3.2.1) (Juggernath et al. 2011). South African-based companies are now utilising BBBEE to promote economic empowerment and address historical imbalances, focusing on various demographic groups (Gee 2012). The community acknowledges the role of organisations in improving livelihoods. It supports implementing CSR and CSI initiatives to enhance the well-being of all South Africans (Section 3.2.1). This model recognises the need for sustainable economic development and emphasises active participation and consistent communication between companies and communities to understand their specific needs and challenges. Key social challenges in South Africa include education, healthcare, job creation, and entrepreneurial development. CSR activities address immediate social problems and enable local communities to actively contribute to their development and economic growth (Section 3.2.1).

In conclusion, CSR in South Africa is driven by the need to address historical socio-economic inequalities and promote inclusive economic growth. The use of BBBEE policies by companies in South Africa is one of the ways CSR is being implemented. CSR in South Africa focuses on improving social conditions such as education, healthcare, job creation, and entrepreneurial development while promoting community involvement and participation. Through CSR activities, organisations aim to contribute to sustainable economic development and enhance the lives of every single South African.

5.3.3 Research objective 3: To probe into women's employment and assess the sustainability of their micro-enterprises

The study sought to establish women's employment and sustainability of their micro-enterprises. The review of the literature and in-depth interviews were crucial in addressing the study objective. The review of existing literature established that female entrepreneurs have started taking on entrepreneurial responsibilities, contributing different plans to their communities, generating employment opportunities, and generating extra jobs for suppliers (Section 4.4). Micro-enterprises are essential in terms of standards of living and employment, both individually and nationally. However, micro-enterprise entrepreneurs face long-term progress and survival difficulties, including competition from their peers, negative perceptions of micro-enterprises, and poor management, planning and financing. Female entrepreneurs fight unemployment and alleviate poverty in many countries, and their role is evident in improving employment opportunities, management, leadership, effectiveness, productivity, competitiveness, and new organisation establishment (Chinomona and Maziriri 2015; Shah and Saurabh 2015; Sunanda and Hiremani 2017; Zimmerman and Chu 2013). Factors motivating female entrepreneurs include financial needs, the desire to be independent, fulfilling a need, and creating employment opportunities (Section 4.4).

The in-depth interviews established that the entrepreneurial engagement of the women who are in the Masters Primary Co-operative started as a club, and its members sew collectively to complete garments. The women's interest in sewing or tailoring was why the women decided to work together (Section 4.4). The initial projects of the Masters Primary Co-operative were conducted from home. Masters Primary Co-operative has grown tremendously due to the CSR initiatives of EKZNW and other organisations. They were not financially secure. Members of the co-operative receive salaries from the profits that they make. The motivation for the women's entrepreneurial engagement was employment creation for women and poverty alleviation. The women experienced challenges from the beginning, especially regarding finance, which is why CSR proved critical (Section 4.4).

In conclusion, female entrepreneurs play a vital role in society by contributing to employment creation, poverty alleviation, and economic growth. Micro-enterprises,

particularly those initiated by women, address the lack of employment opportunities and income generation. However, these female entrepreneurs face various challenges, including financial constraints, gender bias and discrimination, limited access to resources, and lack of education and training. Despite these obstacles, women's entrepreneurs demonstrate resilience and motivation, driven by financial independence, self-satisfaction, and the desire for autonomy (Sunanda and Hiremani 2017). Empowering women socially and economically is crucial for promoting gender equality and fostering sustainable development. The case of the Masters Primary Co-operative highlights the importance of CSR initiatives in supporting women's micro-enterprises and overcoming financial challenges.

5.3.4 Research objective 4: To determine how the Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife corporate social responsibility programme assists in the sustainability of women's micro-enterprises

The study conducted in-depth interviews to understand how the CSR programme of EKZNW contributes to the sustainability of women's micro-enterprises. The findings revealed that CSR initiatives are crucial in addressing these enterprises' financial and infrastructural challenges. One significant impact of CSR initiatives is their ability to provide funding to organisations that may not be eligible for traditional financing due to a lack of credit history or security (Section 4.5). This financial assistance helps micro-enterprises to secure working spaces, often a crucial need. Technical assistance provided through CSR programmes also helps optimise production processes and advocates for policies supporting the growth and development of small businesses (Section 4.5).

The study identified how EKZNW created shared working spaces where multiple micro-enterprises can collaborate, which is another potential solution. This approach reduces costs for individual businesses and fosters a sense of community, enabling knowledge sharing and collaboration. EKZNW's support has facilitated the establishment of the Masters Primary Co-operative's brand within the community (Section 4.5). CSR initiatives have significantly impacted the co-operative by addressing infrastructural challenges, such as providing workspace and necessary equipment like sewing machines. The improved infrastructure has allowed them to expand their product offerings and customer base, increasing revenue. EKZNW's

assistance has also increased the visibility and professionalism of the co-operative, contributing to its reputation and access to a broader market base. They specialise in manufacturing school uniforms and have recently introduced custom-made outfits (Section 4.5).

In summary, the findings highlight the critical role of CSR initiatives, particularly in addressing financial and infrastructural challenges faced by women's micro-enterprises. The support provided by EKZNW has helped these enterprises establish their brands, expand their customer base, and enhance their overall sustainability.

5.3.5 Research objective 5: To recommend corporate social responsibility that can contribute to the sustainability of women's micro-enterprise initiatives

The study aimed to identify measures that EKZNW can take to improve their CSR programme. The findings emphasise the importance of providing continuous training, particularly in business and financial management to the programme's beneficiaries, such as the members of the Masters Primary Co-operative. These training programmes are crucial for enhancing their skills and knowledge and improving cash flow management (Section 4.9).

The study found that one recommended approach for CSR is the SLA, which focuses on improving opportunities and access to valuable resources for people living in rural areas. The data from Masters Primary Co-operative confirms that EKZNW's CSR efforts align with the principles of SLA. The support provided, including human capital, is training and physical capital and infrastructure, improves the assets and capacities of community members, empowering them to create employment opportunities and improve their livelihoods (Section 4.9).

In addition, the study established that EKZNW should consider applying the Marxist feminist theory to their CSR initiatives. This theory highlights gender and class inequalities, particularly how they reinforce each other. In rural communities in South Africa, gender and class inequality are significant issues. By supporting women's micro-enterprises like the Masters Primary Co-operative, EKZNW challenges gender inequality and empowers women to have agency. The CSR initiatives align with the principles of the Marxist feminist theory, advocating for collective action and

transformative change to address power imbalances and promote social and economic justice (Section 4.9).

Another important consideration is establishing a power backup strategy to mitigate the impact of load shedding. Load shedding, the intentional disruption of electricity supply, is a significant challenge in South Africa, affecting personal and business life. Micro-enterprises heavily rely on electricity for their production processes, and load shedding poses a significant obstacle. Finding alternative energy sources like generators is costly for these small businesses. Therefore, EKZNW should address this issue to support the stability and continuity of women-owned micro-enterprises (Section 4.9). Table 5.1 summarises the study's key findings on data collected from the Masters Primary Co-operative at Ishowe (Section 4.9).

The background of women's micro-enterprise engagement at the Masters Primary Co-operative initially began as a club but gradually evolved into a well-established business. Due to limited funds and workspace, the early operations of the co-operative were conducted from a backroom in one of the member's homes. To succeed, micro-enterprises must actively seek assistance from government programmes, have a clear project plan, and cultivate relationships with valuable stakeholders. Government support programmes require formal registration, and national policies should facilitate easy registration for women in business. The co-operative members stressed the importance of formal registration as it is often required to access funding. Continuous training is also crucial for the capacity building of micro-enterprises to operate sustainable and successful businesses.

Table 5.1: Summary of key findings

Themes	Subthemes	Findings	Recommendations
The background of women's micro-enterprise engagement: Masters Primary Co-operative		The co-operative started as a club. After that, the women worked towards a better vision of developing the club into a well-established business. The initial work of the Masters Primary Co-operative was conducted from a backroom at one of the member's homes. This was due to a lack of finance and workspace.	
Perspectives from EKZNW	4.3.1 CSR benefits are given to organisations that initiate the process 4.3.2 Businesses need to be formally registered 4.3.3 EKZNW's vision is to develop communities 4.3.4 EKZNW has a levy fund for CSR initiatives 4.3.5 There is a need for continuous training in micro-enterprises	Members of micro-enterprises need to seek assistance from government programmes proactively. They must have a clear project plan and build and maintain relationships with valuable stakeholders to succeed. Government entities offering support requires that enterprises asking for support must be formally registered. In the case of EKZNW, they have a levy fund expressly set up to assist community micro-enterprises. Results also revealed that members of micro-enterprises require continuous training to build their capacity to operate successful and sustainable businesses.	National policies for women in business should provide access to register their enterprises easily. Businesses need to be formally registered. The municipalities should assist them in registering. The importance of being a registered business was also discussed by members of the co-operative, who explained that this was an essential requirement that funding was contingent. Being a registered organisation is thus one of the essential definitive criteria.
The effect of CSR on women's micro-enterprises	4.4.1 CSR combats financial and infrastructural struggles 4.4.2 The establishment of a reputable brand in the community 4.4.3 Employment creation and reduced poverty 4.4.4 Training and capacity building	Significant challenges experienced at the inception of the Masters Primary Co-operative were a lack of finance and infrastructure for the business. Therefore, CSR is imperative towards alleviating these challenges. Because of the assistance of EKZNW, the Masters Primary Co-operative has been able to build a reputable brand in their community. Moreover, the CSR efforts of EKZNW have proven to be instrumental towards creating employment for community members and reducing the prevalence of poverty.	Government and other stakeholders should adopt a policy that provides training to women in business to empower them. The training, infrastructure, as well as other forms of support that have been given to the Masters Primary Co-operative, demonstrates the importance of improving the assets, as well as capacities of community members, that is emphasised in SLA. EKZNW emerges as a perfect example of how investments made in community enterprises improve their knowledge and education and their ability to create employment opportunities.

		Results also revealed that organisations use CSR to provide training and capacity building to members of micro-enterprises.	
Sustainability achievement in women's micro-enterprises	4.5.1 Teamwork 4.5.2 Commitment to the work 4.5.3 Having a future focus	The women in the Masters Primary Co-operative work as a team, which has been instrumental towards goal attainment. They are also highly committed to their work and have a sustainable vision of the future of their business.	Government and other stakeholders should offer mentorships to co-operatives as a way of guidance and assist in creating markets for these co-operatives so that they can generate better income and receive salaries that will add to motivate them to continue with their business.
Challenges for the co-operative	4.6.1 Financial constraints 4.6.2 Lack of security 4.6.3 Load shedding	Three identified challenges continue to threaten the sustainability of the Masters Primary Co-operative. These are financial constraints, lack of security on their business premises, and ongoing load shedding in South Africa.	The co-operative should invest in solar systems or generators to curb load shedding. In South Africa, load shedding has become an aspect of personal and business life. It is characterised as the controlled, intentional disruption or switching off of electricity according to a predetermined schedule. Unfortunately, business areas are not spared from load shedding, adversely affecting business organisations, especially micro-enterprises. Because these businesses are characteristically small, they tend to rely heavily on the electricity provided through the national grid. They need it to power their production process, including machinery and lighting.
Application of the SLA to CSR		In line with the SLA, EKZNW considers the social and economic realities of members in its surrounding communities. CSR is thus used as a means of empowering and improving their livelihoods.	The SLA highlights the struggles of people who reside in rural areas. In doing so, it focuses on improving opportunities afforded to them so they can access valuable resources. Similarly, the CSR efforts of EKZNW are premised on the same values. Thus, the data provided by the Masters Primary Co-operative confirms that they should continue supporting local communities.
Application of the Marxist feminist theory to CSR		The CSR efforts of EKZNW are premised on the Marxist feminist theory. Fundamentally, they empower rural women who are vulnerable members of society and often dependent on men.	The Marxist feminist theory focuses primarily on issues related to women. In theory, class and gender inequality are examined, particularly concerning how they reinforce each other. In rural communities in South Africa, gender and class inequality are

			inherent issues. Women are discriminated against based on both their gender and the patriarchal regard of them as second-class citizens. Therefore, the Marxist feminist theory is strategically positioned in this study to challenge the exploitation of women and their vulnerable position in rural communities. In the case of EKZNW, their CSR initiatives have proven to be reminiscent of the fundamental ideas of the Marxist feminist theory. The support given to the Masters Primary Co-operative and other women's micro-enterprises challenges gender inequality in rural communities. Thus, they empower women to have a stake in the direction of their destinies. Another important feature of the Marxist feminist theory discussed in the theoretical framework is that it advocates for collective action in conjunction with the need to initiate transformative change. Essentially, the challenge is on existing power structures that render women powerless. Again, the CSR initiatives of EKZNW firmly uphold the fundamental principles of CSR in this regard. If anything, EKZNW has proven that its CSR initiatives are not just for show. Still, they are part of a broader movement advocating social and economic justice.
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The effect of CSR on women's micro-enterprises is significant. CSR initiatives combat financial and infrastructural challenges faced by these enterprises. By supporting the Masters Primary Co-operative, EKZNW has helped the co-operative establish a reputable brand within the community, create employment opportunities, and reduce poverty. Furthermore, CSR efforts provide training and capacity building for members of micro-enterprises. EKZNW's investment in community enterprises illustrates the positive impact of supporting local businesses through improving knowledge, education, and employment prospects. Women's micro-enterprises emphasise teamwork, commitment, and a future-focused mindset to ensure sustainability. However, financial constraints, lack of security, and frequent power outages (load shedding) threaten the co-operative's sustainability. Implementing solar systems or generators could mitigate the adverse effects of load shedding.

Applying the SLA to CSR aligns with EKZNW's consideration of community members' social and economic realities. By empowering and improving livelihoods, CSR initiatives at EKZNW aim to enhance opportunities and access to five valuable resources, namely, human, social, financial, physical and natural, for rural communities. Additionally, the application of the Marxist feminist theory to CSR is evident in EKZNW's efforts. Their CSR initiatives challenge gender and class inequalities by empowering vulnerable rural women and providing them with opportunities for self-determination. EKZNW's support for the Masters Primary Co-operative and other women's micro-enterprises contributes to collective action and transformative change, addressing the power structures that marginalise women. EKZNW demonstrates a commitment to social and economic justice beyond mere superficial gestures through their CSR initiatives.

To ensure that Master Primary Co-operative members are adequately trained and capacitated to succeed in their business ventures, it is proposed that they should organise regular training workshops and seminars that cover a range of relevant topics, including business management, financial literacy, marketing, and product/service development. These sessions should be designed to equip members with practical skills and knowledge. They should establish a mentorship program within the cooperative where experienced members can guide and support those new to business ventures. This can help in the transfer of knowledge and practical insights. They should encourage collaborative learning among members by creating a space

for them to share their experiences, challenges, and success stories. Regular meetings can facilitate this exchange of knowledge. Invite guests and industry experts to conduct specialised training sessions or workshops. Their expertise can provide valuable insights and perspectives. Foster a culture of continuous learning within the cooperative by emphasising the importance of staying updated with industry trends and innovations. By prioritising training and capacitation initiatives, Masters Primary Co-operative can empower members with the knowledge and skills to succeed and thrive in their respective business ventures.

In order to address the three critical challenges facing the Masters Primary Co-operative, it is recommended that the following strategies be utilised. Financial constraints pose a significant threat to the cooperative's sustainability. To overcome this challenge, Masters Primary Co-operative should explore opportunities to broaden their sources of income. This might involve offering new products or services that align with their mission. They should develop a comprehensive financial plan and budget that outlines income, expenses, and savings goals. Regularly review and adjust this plan to ensure financial stability. Also, to actively seek out grants, subsidies, or financial support programs available to cooperatives and small businesses. These funds can alleviate immediate financial constraints as EKZNW CIS assisted them. The lack of security on Masters Primary Co-operative business premises is a pressing concern. To mitigate this risk, Masters Primary Co-operative should invest in security measures like alarms, surveillance cameras, and secure locks to safeguard their business premises. Consider hiring security personnel if feasible. They should ensure that the cooperative's assets, including the business premises and inventory, are adequately insured against theft and damage. Also, to collaborate with the local community and neighbourhood watch programs to enhance security in the surrounding area. As well as explore government programs or incentives that support small businesses in improving security infrastructure.

The ongoing load shedding in South Africa disrupts their operations. To navigate this challenge, Masters Primary Co-operative, should invest in alternative energy sources, such as solar panels or generators, to reduce the impact of load shedding and maintain essential operations during power outages. They should also create a schedule that aligns critical tasks with times when electricity is more likely to be available. Prioritise essential operations during load-shedding hours. Also join local business associations

or cooperatives to collectively advocate for improved electricity infrastructure and a more reliable power supply in their area. These recommendations require commitment, collaboration, and adaptation from Masters Primary Co-operative members and leadership. Regular monitoring, evaluation, and open communication will be vital in successfully implementing these strategies and securing the long-term sustainability of the Masters Primary Co-operative.

5.4 Future research

For many years, private and public sectors and academics have been attracted to CSR, and it appears that they will remain to do so. CSR is believed to become an even greater aspect of the corporate environment as customer and stakeholder requests for businesses to incorporate social and environmental matters in their decision-making remain to increase on these issues. The increasing incorporation of sustainability into business operations is undoubtedly one primary movement in CSR in the future. Businesses must implement an extra angle and long-term vision on their functions to reach this and consider all participants their decisions may influence.

The future of CSR is likely to continue to stress honesty and accountability. Businesses must be clearer about their CSR programmes and be capable of displaying the influence of these efforts as stakeholders ask for more evidence on the social and environmental influences of business activities. This will require the establishment of more stable and trustworthy reporting techniques and measuring systems of CSR. Future research on accessing CSR in business may focus on several important issues. Researchers could investigate how they are aided through CSR programmes of organisations and how they know about companies' CSR programmes. Additionally, they might research the criteria of considered project proposals for business CRS programmes and their impact on social and environmental issues. Researchers could also examine the influence of beneficiaries in the decision-making of projects that will change their lives and the mentorship provided by businesses' CSR programmes to those projects.

5.5 Overall study conclusion

In conclusion, this qualitative research study was conducted with women under EKZNW's CSR programme. The study found that the women in the Masters Primary

Co-operative began their entrepreneurial engagement as a club. They have significantly benefited from co-operatives in accessing working space, funding, training, and market share. EKZNW's CSR programme has helped to sustain women's micro-enterprises by increasing income generation, business expansion, purchasing necessary equipment, and improving their production capacity, leading to higher revenue and profits. The women also received infrastructural assistance, access to a broader market base, and essential training and capacity building. The study demonstrated that women's micro-enterprises achieve sustainability through teamwork, commitment, and future focus. The study recommends that EKZNW adopt the Marxist feminist theory approach, the SLA to CSR and offer continuous training in micro-enterprises to improve their CSR programme further.

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APPENDIX A

GATEKEEPER'S LETTER



INFRASTRUCTURE, PARTNERSHIPS AND PROJECTS MANAGEMENT UNIT

EXTERNAL MEMO

DATE :	Tuesday, July 18, 2023	FILE NR :	University Of Free State
TO :	Mr. Ntsikelelo Dlulane Acting Chief Executive Officer	FROM :	Mr. Phumlani Sosibo Internal Social Responsibility Programme Administrator

SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT MASTERS DEGREE RESEARCH STUDY

I now request permission to conduct a research study in partial fulfilment of the degree of Masters in Development Development Studies requirements.

The study aims to understand the factors contributing to sustainability of women's micro-enterprise initiatives through the Corporate Social Investment (CSI) programme of Ezemvelo KwaZulu-Natal Wildlife (EKZNW). The following objectives support this aim:

- To understand CSR on an international level.
- To explore CSR in the South African Context.
- To probe the women's employment and sustainability of their micro-enterprises.
- To determine how the EKZNW CSR programme assists with the sustainability of women's micro-enterprises.
- To recommend how CSR can contribute to the sustainability of women's micro-enterprise initiatives.

The research questions are:

- What is the role of Ezemvelo KwaZulu-Natal Wildlife Corporate Social Responsibility on women's micro-enterprises?
- What factors contribute to the sustainability of women's micro-enterprise initiatives through the Ezemvelo KwaZulu-Natal Wildlife Corporate Social Responsibility programme?
- How was the sustainability of women's micro-enterprises achieved through the Ezemvelo KwaZulu-Natal Wildlife Corporate Social Responsibility programme?
- Why do women engage in micro-enterprise initiatives through the Ezemvelo KwaZulu-Natal Wildlife Corporate Social Responsibility programme?
- What needs to be adopted by Ezemvelo KwaZulu-Natal Wildlife to improve its Corporate Social Responsibility programme?

Upon completing the study, I undertake to provide EKZNW with a bound copy of the entire research report. If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

I thank you for your time and consideration in this matter.



Kind regards,
Phumlani Sosibo
Internal Social Responsibility Programme Administrator

Approved / Not Approved



Mr Ntsikelelo Dlulane
Acting Chief Executive Officer

APPENDIX B

ETHICAL CLEARANCE LETTER

UNIVERSITY OF THE
FREE STATE
UNIVERSITEIT VAN DIE
VRYSTAAT
YUNIVESITHI YA
FREISTATA



GENERAL/HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (GHREC)

18-Jul-2022

Dear Mr Phumlani Sosibo

Application Approved

Research Project Title:

**The Role Of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) On Women's Micro-Enterprises:
The Case Of Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife.**

Ethical Clearance number:

UFS-HSD2022/0753/22

We are pleased to inform you that your application for ethical clearance has been approved. Your ethical clearance is valid for twelve (12) months from the date of issue. We request that any changes that may take place during the course of your study/research project be submitted to the ethics office to ensure ethical transparency. Furthermore, you are requested to submit the final report of your study/research project to the ethics office. Should you require more time to complete this research, please apply for an extension. Thank you for submitting your proposal for ethical clearance; we wish you the best of luck and success with your research.

Yours sincerely

Dr Adri Du Plessis

Chairperson: General/Human Research Ethics Committee

Dr Adri
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APPENDIX C

CONSENT FORM



CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY

I, the undersigned, _____ (participant's full names to be included), (the "**Participant**")

confirm that I voluntarily agree to participate in the research study referred to as the _____ (the "**Study**") in relation to _____

and which study is being conducted by _____

(insert the name of the researcher), (the "**Researcher**").

I, the undersigned participant, further confirm that—

1. the researcher has explained the nature, procedure, potential benefits and anticipated inconvenience of my participation in the study;
2. I have read (or had explained to me) and understood the study as explained in the attached information sheet;
3. I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and am prepared to participate in the study;
4. I understand that my participation in the study is entirely voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without penalty (if applicable);
5. I voluntarily provide the UFS and the researcher with my personal information and consent to the UFS and the Researcher collecting, disclosing and processing my personal information in order to conduct the study and any related activities in relation thereto;
6. I hereby acknowledge and confirm that I understand the purpose for which the UFS and the researcher may collect, store, use, delete, destroy, outsource, transfer or otherwise process, as the context and circumstances may require and as contemplated in terms of POPIA, my personal information as set out herein;
7. I am aware that the findings of the study will be anonymously processed into a research report, journal publications and/or conference proceedings and that my personal information will be aggregated and deidentified at such stage;
8. I also give the UFS permission to share, without notification, the collected data with other researchers at the UFS or other Higher Education Institutions. This permission is dependent on the same principles of ethical research practices, anonymity/confidentiality, safekeeping of information, and other issues listed above applying.

I, the participant, agree to the recording of the **insert specific data collection method.**

Full Name of Participant: _____

Signature of Participant: _____ Date: _____

Full Name(s) of Researcher(s): _____

Signature of Researcher: _____ Date: _____



APPENDIX D

INTERVIEWS AND FOCUS GROUP

Appendix A: Interview Schedule with the leadership of the co-operative

General Background Information

1. Age of a participant:
2. Position:
3. Education level:
4. Name of enterprise:

Women Micro-Entrepreneurs Engagement

1. Could you tell me the background of your enterprise
 - 1.1 When did you start the enterprise?
 - 1.2 How did you form your enterprise?
 - 1.3 What is done in this enterprise (your livelihood strategy)?
 - 1.4 What factors make you form the enterprise (Vulnerability)?
 - 1.5 How many members were involved in the beginning?
2. What makes you seek support from Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife (EKZNW)?
3. How did you seek support from EKZNW?
4. When did you seek support from EKZNW?

Role of CSR on women's micro-enterprises

1. Could you also share how you know about Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife CSI programme in detail?
2. Please also share with me how your micro enterprise got implemented through the CSI programme of EKZNW?
3. Could you also share with me what supports your enterprise received from the EKZNW CSI programme?
 - 3.1 Does the support received from EKZNW make your business sustainable?
4. Please also share with me when was it, when your enterprise received support from EKZNW?

Women's Micro-Enterprise Sustainability Achievement

1. Please share with me what makes your enterprise to be sustainable?
2. Could you also share with me who also contributed to your enterprise to be sustainable (Transforming Structures and Processes)?
 - 2.1 Please also share with me what support they provided for your enterprise to be sustainable?
3. When was your enterprise receive support from these stakeholders?

Women's Micro-Enterprises Additional Information

1. In your own review, can you tell me more about what has changed in your lives since you started the enterprise?
2. Is your enterprise in a stage whereby the members receive salaries or dividends?
3. What challenges are facing the enterprise?
4. Is there anything else that you would like to add?

Appendix B: Focus Group schedule for women entrepreneur groups

General Background Information

1. No. of participants:
2. Name of enterprise:

Women Micro-Entrepreneurs Engagement

1. Could you tell me the background of your enterprise
 - 1.1 When did you start the enterprise?
 - 1.2 How did you form your enterprise?
 - 1.3 What is done in this enterprise (your livelihood strategy)?
 - 1.4 What factors make you form the enterprise (Vulnerability)?
 - 1.5 How many members were involved in the beginning?
2. What makes you seek support from Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife (EKZNW)?
3. How did you seek support from EKZNW?
4. When did you seek support from EKZNW?

Role of CSR on Women Micro-Enterprises

1. Could you also share how you know about Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife CSI programme in detail?
2. Please also share with me how your micro enterprise got implemented through the CSI programme of EKZNW?
3. Could you also share with me what supports your enterprise received from the EKZNW CSI programme?
 - 3.1 Does the support received from EKZNW make your business sustainable?
4. Please also share with me when was it, when your enterprise received support from EKZNW?

Women's Micro-Enterprise Sustainability Achievement

1. Please share with me what makes your enterprise to be sustainable?
2. Could you also share with me who also contributed to your enterprise to be sustainable (Transforming Structures and Processes)?
 - 2.1 Please also share with me what support they provided for your enterprise to be sustainable?
3. When was your enterprise receive support from these stakeholders?

Women's Micro-Enterprises Additional Information

1. In your own review, can you tell me more about the impact of the enterprise in your lives?
2. Is your enterprise in a stage whereby you members receive salaries or dividends?
3. What challenges facing your enterprise?
4. Is there anything else that you would like to add?

Appendix C: Interview schedule for Government Officials

General Background Information

1. Name of participant:
2. Organisation:
3. Position:
4. Education level:

Organisational Engagement in Women Micro-Entrepreneurs

1. Could you tell me the background of your organisational working relationship with Masters?
 - 4.1 When did you start working together?
 - 4.2 How did you start working together?
 - 4.3 What is it that you are doing together?
 - 4.4 What factors make you work together?
 - 4.5 How many members were involved in the beginning?
 - 4.6 What makes them seek support from your organisation?
5. How did they seek support from your organisation?
6. When did they seek support from your organisation?

Role of CSR on women's micro-enterprises

1. Could you also share in detail how did you know about masters?
2. Please also share with me how did your organisation implement Masters?
3. Could you also share with me what support your organisation provides to Masters?
 - 3.1 Does the support provided to Masters make their business sustainable?
4. Please also share with me when was it, when your organisation provided support to Masters?

Women's Micro-Enterprise Sustainability Achievement

1. Please share with me what makes Masters sustainable?
2. Could you also share with me who also contributed to master to be sustainable (Transforming Structures and Processes)?
 - 2.1 Please also share with me what support they provided to Masters to be sustainable?
3. When was it when they received support from these stakeholders?

Women's Micro-Enterprises Additional Information

1. In your own review, can you tell me more about what has changed in the lives of the beneficiaries since the Masters started?
2. Is the enterprise in a stage whereby the members receive salaries or dividends?
3. What challenges are facing Masters?
4. Is there anything else that you would like to add?

APPENDIX E

PLAGIARISM REPORT

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APPENDIX F

PROOF OF EDITING

Nicolene Barnard

Proofreading | Technical Editing | Metadata Specialist | Indexing

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28 July 2023

CONFIRMATION OF EDITING

I hereby confirm that I have done the technical layout and editing for the following thesis:

Student: Phumlani Victor Sosibo

Title: The Role of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) on Women's Micro-Enterprises: The Case of Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife

Degree: Master of Development Studies

Department: Centre for Development Support, Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences, University of the Free State

My work for the student included the technical layout of the document, as well as language editing for grammar, punctuation, spelling, and sentence structure. I tried to keep as much as possible of the student's own writing style while making sure that the student's intended meaning was not altered in the editing process. I also checked the list of references making sure that dates, spelling, and names used in the text are consistent with those listed in the reference list.

I have a B.Bibl. (Hons.) Degree and have been working as a cataloguer, metadata specialist and librarian for 31 years. I am an expert in the field of bibliographic information and resources. I have also completed a 10-week Copy-Editing course at the University of Cape Town.

Disclaimer: The ultimate responsibility for accepting or rejecting the changes and recommendations rests with the student and I cannot be held responsible for any layout or language issues that might have emerged as a result of subsequent amendments to the text.

Yours sincerely,



Nicolene Barnard